

# From Archaic Globalism to Open Regionalism: Toward an Architecture of Cultural Place in Iran

SHIMA MOHAJERI

Texas A&M University

Only a living culture, at once faithful to its origins and ready for creativity on the levels of art, literature, philosophy and spirituality, is capable of sustaining the encounter of other cultures—not merely capable of sustaining but also of giving meaning to that encounter. When the meeting is a confrontation of creative impulses, then it is itself creative.  
– Paul Ricoeur, *Civilization and National Cultures*, in *History and Truth*

The formulation of the question of modernity in its nuanced variations as it spreads into other geographies would suggest the phenomenon of globalization. Whether the newly perceived globalism ought to be the result of a homogenized fusion made of multiplicity of different cultures, or whether it should originate from the dynamic tension between modern and regional values is still a formidable question. However, it is time to acknowledge the failure of the project of modernity to superimpose its central tenets upon others with the aim of creating a unified culture as a symptom of colonialism, or, the equal misfortunes of those naïve attempts to invent a non-Western model in the face of the destructive forces of the former. Although postcolonial scholarship on the project of modernity in its encounter with the space of 'other' geographies have posed a decisive challenge to many colonial assumptions from the exclusion of contextual and regional factors to the unidirectional authoritative influences, these criticisms nevertheless fall short of the contemporary expectation for a better understanding of the diversity of modern projects as they repeatedly generate at the global scale. Then how specifically, can we characterize the relationship between modernity and its movement and transformation toward a more complex structure as 'modern globalism'? And what would be the

products of this phenomenon in the contemporary landscape of architecture?

Some of *Paul Ricoeur's* most critical answer to these questions is predicated upon the authentic inter-cultural dialogues that inspire and invigorate the creative genes of modernity in every culture. In this sense, the dialectics of cultures is no more recognized as a negative act of appropriation in which the Western modernity borrows non-Western cultures for hegemonic intentions, but rather, it gives rise to potential isomorphic relations that might exist in between the two contexts of West and non-West. Thus, in order to capture the essence of modern globalism and its new possibilities from the standpoint of Ricoeur's dialectic response, I wish to examine the unrealized cross-cultural event of architecture in Iran in the 1970s. This architectural event may provide new insights into the so-called paradoxical negotiation of modern global premises distant from the syncretism of global cultures, or any form of autonomous modernity.

Although the discourse of modernity initiated in the 19th century in the sociopolitical life of people in Iran, it was during the two Pahlavi's reign in the 20th century that modernization attempts culminated mainly in architectural and urban realms with predominantly political ambitions. The architectural event under study is a result of a grand building campaign of the Shah of Iran that launched after the White Revolution of 1963 as a land reform program, but eventually came to a halt prior to the Iranian Revolution of 1979. Set within the global socio-economic background of the 1970s, these architectural and urban projects unfold a previ-

ously unaddressed architectural event that is distinguished in form and essence from the holistic modernization ambitions of the Shah of Iran being stigmatized as an outdated or 'archaic' modernity. No doubt much of the interpretation and understanding of these modernization projects is reflected in *Michel Foucault's* criticism of the Shah:

Modernization as a political project and as a principle of social transformation is a thing of a past in Iran. [...] Do not tell us about the fortunes and misfortunes of a monarch who is too modern for a country that is too old. What is old here in Iran is the Shah. [...] He has the old-fashioned dream of opening his country through secularization and industrialization. Today, it is his project of modernization, his despotic weapons and his system of corruption that are archaic. It is 'the regime' that is the archaism.<sup>1</sup>

Given that Foucault cherished the 'irreducible force'<sup>2</sup> that traversed the people in Iran in the face of the detested modernization belonged to the state – a case that much aligned with his philosophical and political project – his interpretation is nonetheless grounded in the idea of autonomous modernity independent of Western agents and as such stems merely from the Iranian-Islamic 'way of life'. On the contrary, as I wish to argue, the Iranian hope for an alternative modernity one that originates from immanent regional values would come through only if it is viewed in the light of a constructive dialogue with Western modernity. Therefore, although Foucault's reading of the Shah's modernization projects seems to be right in its critique of the uncompromising assemblage of modernity and despotism, yet he dismisses any positive dialectic force that might help to build rapport between Iran and the West. For the same reason, I attempt to demonstrate how the architectural project of the 1970s exhibit a promising event for realizing the tenets of modern globalism.

Therefore, in order to conceive of the structural dynamics of global modernity through the cross-cultural event of architecture in Iran, we must first reflect upon the notions of cultural geography and the nature of place. Seen from the standpoint of the philosophical discourse between Martin Heidegger and Gilles Deleuze, cultural place may be understood to function as a 'thing' released from the dominance of the subjective powers and from the traditional identity of a people, and thereby as always already porous, and dynamic establishes rapport with other geographies by moving toward them.

## ON HEIDEGGER'S AND DELEUZE'S DIALECTIC OF PLACE

The new theoretical model at issue in this study suggests an alternative understanding of the cultural place. The notion of place is not simply characterized with the things and object-volumes, but, instead, stands in between things, places, and events in order to articulate meaningful relations to be discovered and experienced by means of their materiality. This model of place arises from the philosophical discourse between Heidegger and Deleuze. At first view, Heidegger seems to have nothing in common with Deleuze, as if their philosophies would never converge. However, an encounter between the two thinkers can be imagined by the way of Heidegger's shift in his later philosophy. In this respect, Heidegger declared the constant happening of place through the 'thing', as opposed to a rather subjectivist understanding of place. In other words, for Heidegger 'things themselves are places and do not merely belong to a place.'<sup>3</sup> In fact, it is Heidegger's turn to the *thingly* character of place that prepared the ground for a productive dialogue with Deleuze. In a sense, both philosophers tend to liberate place from its subjective-oriented character belonged to a transcendental unified realm, thereby bestowing place with an *immanent* spatiality and 'difference' that yields to release of new places.

Heidegger's and Deleuze's accounts of spatiality eschew traditional assumptions about the subject and infuse place with a quality of suspension that is continually prepared to gather alternative meanings within its boundary. In his example of bridge as a thing, Heidegger illustrates how the fourfold<sup>4</sup> – earth, sky, divinities and mortals – as the 'world' full of visible and invisible forces gathers multiplicity of other places within itself:

The bridge is a place [*Ort*]. As such a thing, it allows a space [*Raum*] into which earth and heaven, divinities and mortals are admitted. The space allowed by the bridge contains many locations [*Plätze*] variously near or far from the bridge.<sup>5</sup>

In a sense, the thing as a place constantly gathers the fourfold as different forces in to its unity. Heidegger indicates that the unity of the fourfold as the world is not achieved by the individual elements losing their singularities by means of coming together in the thing, nor are they separately juxtaposed in place. Rather, the unity of the differ-

ent elements is attained through their belonging together in the open region. As Heidegger argues, 'In it [Place] everything flows together.'<sup>6</sup>

Although Heidegger chose the path of interconnected places in his later philosophy, it is not still evident whether he espoused the possibility of bringing near the places of other cultures including those that do not represent the Western Greek paradigm. But, in contrast to Heidegger's account, Deleuze has sought to understand place in regards with the idea of multiplicity that infinitely proliferates new spatial ideas belonging to different places. For Deleuze, space is constantly multiplying itself; these spatial proliferations along with qualitative changes will bring about multiple connections with others. In a sense, Deleuze's consideration of place as a differential world is indeed capable of embracing other worlds and their pertaining cultures as it continually seeks new structures of space.

Therefore, Heidegger's and Deleuze's dedication to the material character of place along with the concept of difference illuminate the significant dimension of place that calls for a continual shift among the territorial home and the differential network of displacements. Place, in this sense, becomes a moving concept always in a spatial 'relation' with others, as it repeatedly unsettles the secure sense of belongingness to home in order to present other possibilities of inhabiting. It follows, then, that the new understanding of place as difference will indicate the ability of inhabiting among fragmented spaces, between home and unhomeliness, while at the same time embracing the transitional passage of differentiations. This sense of place in tune with difference also bears upon the ethical dimension of architecture as a ground for 'connectedness' and rapport with multiplicity of places, itself remains without *grounding*.

From this cosmopolitan standpoint, architectural place holds the concept of cultural differences and interspatial identities in a primordial sense far from the identical and universal representation of space, which helps to initiate the mobility and transformation of cultures. Architecture, in this sense, maintains a critical distance from the nationalistic ideas of territory and place formed by an exclusive singular culture, while approaching an inclusive yet, disjunctive culture of place. In fact, this relational aspect of place in regards to the culture of difference is both acknowledged by Heidegger

and Deleuze as a mode of inhabiting the 'openness' in close relationship to journey. This form of dwelling in 'nomadism' designates the state of suspension and constant passage in between spaces also liberates a place from fixed 'ethos' belonged to an individual tradition, thereby moving it forward to alternative cultures of dwelling.

As a matter of fact, Heidegger speaks of the unhomely (*Unheimlich*) as 'that which is not at home' in relation to the concept of Open. It seems, for Heidegger, the point of departure in understanding of the ethos of place is by means of a journey from unhomeliness toward the homely and the familiar. It is a 'coming to be at home in not being at home' and a way of 'coming to be at home via *journeying*' as Heidegger reads from Hölderlin's poetic insight.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, the ethos of place for Heidegger is not an unchanging state of dwelling; rather, it is a manner of dwelling in transition toward dispersion and in the uncanny. It is a manner of being in relation with another ethos by means of inhabiting in the realm of the Open.

It appears then that Heidegger conceives dwelling in the Open where differences are appropriated as a way of coming near to place, while for Deleuze the Open initiates as a 'line of flight'<sup>8</sup> within the territory towards articulating differences in-between spaces; a movement away from place within the place. In a sense, Deleuze's view of place runs in a counter-direction as that of Heidegger's, where dwelling in the domain of territoriality is continually broken open. This tendency toward *deterritorialization* is thus privileged in Deleuzian thinking as it creates new territories.<sup>9</sup> Deleuze's project thus introduces a mode of dwelling in relation to 'externality' and openness in regards to other places. In a sense, each territory is already pregnant with nomadic significances and trajectories. As Deleuze maintains, 'there is no need to effectively leave the territory to go this route [en route to deterritorialization].'<sup>10</sup>

Thus, a different concept of place is being released in the Open. While Heidegger interpreted the Open as *spacing* in the dynamic region for gathering different other forces and spaces unto itself, for Deleuze, the openness of place is derived from its inherent predisposition toward differences to form virtual continuity with other spaces. Therefore, the conception of nomadism and movement along with place for both philosophers is a manner of dwelling by multi-

plicity of spaces away from demarcating borders of land and territory, and the art of dwelling for them resides in the ability to articulate novel connections among heterogeneity of spaces. After all, the significant contribution of Heidegger and Deleuze to a new understanding of place away from a bounded territory as a 'whole' presents us with an alternative ethos of dwelling in open nomadic space along with difference which would eventually bring about new concepts of place. This theoretical approach to place, which endures the notion of other spaces within itself, provides a significant framework for studying the dynamic contours of the modern globalism through one of its historical examples in Iran.

### **THE ARCHITECTURAL EVENT: LOUIS KAHN'S DESIGN FOR A NEW CIVIC CENTER IN TEHRAN, 1973-4**

Although the originary principle for the design of the new civic center for Tehran seem to indicate the land reform program of the Shah, the so-called 'White Revolution' of 1963,<sup>11</sup> I will demonstrate how Louis Kahn challenged some of the foundational features of this modernization movement that unfolded, above all, through the politics of place and its modern institutional norms. Following the White Revolution which introduced a democratization of land ownership for urban and rural inhabitants in Iran, Tehran's Master Plan was prepared by Victor Gruen and Aziz Farmanfarman in 1968. This master plan identified a piece of beautiful virgin land in Abbasabad district as a central site for a new civic center. In 1973, Louis Kahn and Kenzo Tange were commissioned by the Shah to collaborate in the design proposal for the new center that was supposed to house the growing population of Tehran within the focal point of modern social and economic institutions. Analyzed from the perspective of the new sense of place, Kahn's urban design purports to set up a dialectical relation between modern premises and traditional values as a means to characterize modern globalism and its cultural implications in architecture.

#### **Architecture of Beginning**

Louis Kahn's global approach to modernity is manifested in his design theory toward tradition and the notion of time. Kahn's view of tradition brings about the idea of architecture of Beginning that gives rise to new institutions itself coming from originary institutions of man different in every culture. Each insti-

tution, according to Kahn, exhibits a different 'way of life' which is reflected on its Form<sup>12</sup> as the primordial point of beginning which is yet the dimensionless, non-existent concept. As Kahn maintains, 'the architectural realizations sensitive to the institution's particular Form would set a new precedent, a new beginning.'<sup>13</sup> In this sense, as Kahn searched for historical examples, he resisted formal imitations by seeking to capture the institution's underlying Form that guides the works of the precedent. Adopting this methodology in design, Kahn often consulted the 'treasury' full of Forms as the place of tradition, which for him was nothing but the 'golden dust'<sup>14</sup> as the indication of amorphous ideas belong to multiplicity of times and spaces being held together.

To study Kahn's project for the new civic center in Tehran through the lens of tradition as the primordial place of difference carrying diversity of Forms belong to the global culture, one can find numerous references to the Persian and Western institutions that are brought together into a harmonious whole. Kahn writes,

The city becomes the place of the assembled institutions. A city is more than the assembled institutions [...] the measure of the greatness of a city must come from the character of its institutions, established by those sensitive to commonness and dedication to man's desire of higher levels of expression.<sup>15</sup>

Perhaps one of the most influential Forms for Kahn was the historic design of Isfahan and Naghsh-e Jahan Square (Image of the World) from 16th century. Archival documents show that this historical example was studied by Kahn in terms of its different institutions as the characterization of the 'cultural (rel)' 'way of life' and the 'religious art' brought together in one place (Fig. 1). Of course, Kahn's globalism reaches its height when he summoned other Forms from Piazza San Pietro designed by Lorenzo Bernini (1656-1667), perhaps as an indication of the originary image of assembly and the gathering of all men in their commonness. The image of the Naghsh-e Jahan Square is thus joined the Saint Peter's Square in Louis Kahn's design to begin a dialogue in between the two Persian and Western models for encountering different others (Fig. 2).

These Formal appropriations of Kahn from the treasury of tradition as the point of beginning set the stage for his further inquiry in Persian literature including *Rumi* and *Suhrawardi*, which establish deep resonances with his wellknown conception of

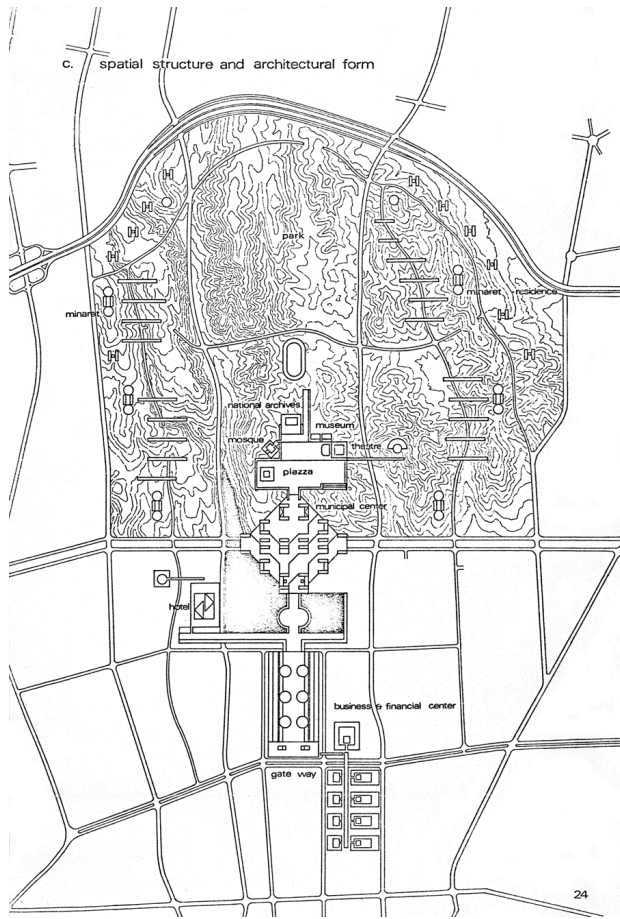


Figure 1. Plan of the Abbasabad Civic Center, Tehran, Iran, 1974. Kahn appropriated the architectural Form from both Persian and Western urban precedents. (Copyright The Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania.)

'Silence and Light'.<sup>16</sup> Therefore, the architecture of Beginning, as it builds a rapport with history and tradition in its global form free from the constraints of chronological time and bounded geography, becomes the basis for the architecture of Connection through its overcoming of the singular place and the introduction of placial differences.

**Architecture of Connection**

Kahn's global project in search of new institutions of man holds a rather openness that embraces the idea of agreement. From Kahn's standpoint, institution does not suggest a spatial construct that is 'shackled and confined and running in one direction only.'<sup>17</sup> Rather, it implies a meeting house as an 'open space' that allows the architecture of



Figure 2. Aerial view of the preliminary site model, Abbasabad New Civic Center, Tehran, Iran, 1973-4. (Copyright The Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania.)

Connection to take place. Thus, the architecture of Connection for Kahn is not only a critique to the central tenets of modern urbanism and the zoning ordinances that separates activities and functions in the life of the city, but also challenges the modern territorial conception that constantly put borders and limits on geographies and their pertinent cultures. For this reason, Kahn calls for the connection of geographies, at the level of social, cultural and economic relations through architecture that contributes to the coming of new institutions in Iran through the global rapport with the world.

In fact, this global approach to the openness of the territorial boundaries is already present in the Persian spatial culture. Perhaps above all, the Persian globalized attitude toward the notion of place is reflected by the design of the garden as it projects

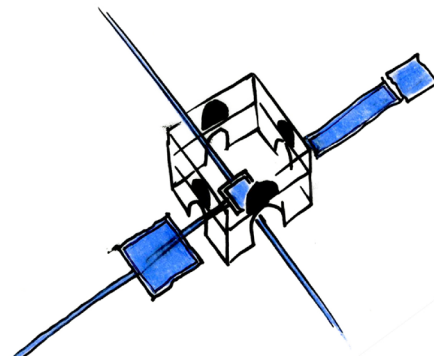


Figure 3. Schematic view of the *Charbagh*, in Persian garden design as the global image of the new place to come. (Sketch by Author.)

the presence of other places, East and West, as the 'world' within its nomadic system of flow. The Persian's global project of spatiality is well expressed in the term *charbagh*, namely the four-garden. In this regards, the aspect of the fifth place as the intersection and the place of gathering does not appear in the Persian term, as if the place of the Persian is becoming the locus for the reflection of the world synthesized into a new place yet to come (Fig. 3).

This Persian territorial thinking develops into a more nuanced structure in the design of Louis Kahn for Tehran, as he introduces places for 'civic and national meeting in regard to the way of life' in juxtaposition with the congress hall for 'Asiatic, Europeans and Africans' for the discourse on cultures (Fig. 4).<sup>18</sup> Here Kahn includes the image of the palace of congress in Venice (1968), an unbuilt project he designed earlier, next to his notes and sketches for the Abbasabad civic center to emphasize the 'east=west symposium' and coming together of the global culture (Fig. 5). This meeting place and the civic theater thus becomes a constituent element of the city plaza being connected to the mosque, opera philharmonic, museums and national archives. It is, therefore, in the forum as the place of happening and the meeting of thoughts that the city planning begins. As Kahn suggested, 'Let place be a place for the meeting of men.'

Further, the architecture of connection involves the co-existence of cultural and economic institutions and their horizontal distributions in the city, where the art galleries, rug symposiums, etc. sit next to the banks, stock exchange and other financial activities. Kahn believed that 'a bank is also culture' that is to be regarded in terms of cultural agreement at both local and global levels, and thereby introducing the global economy in close relation to the global culture at every place.

### Architecture of Viaduct

The expression of modern globalism reaches its highest point in Louis Kahn's design when he incorporates the architecture of movement for crossing territories within the city. This nomadic sensibility and the architecture of voids, streets and paths originate from Kahn's desire for Beginnings, which for him symbolizes the order of water. Thus, Kahn characterizes a new urban nomadism by translating the architecture of water into the machinic space. By associating the

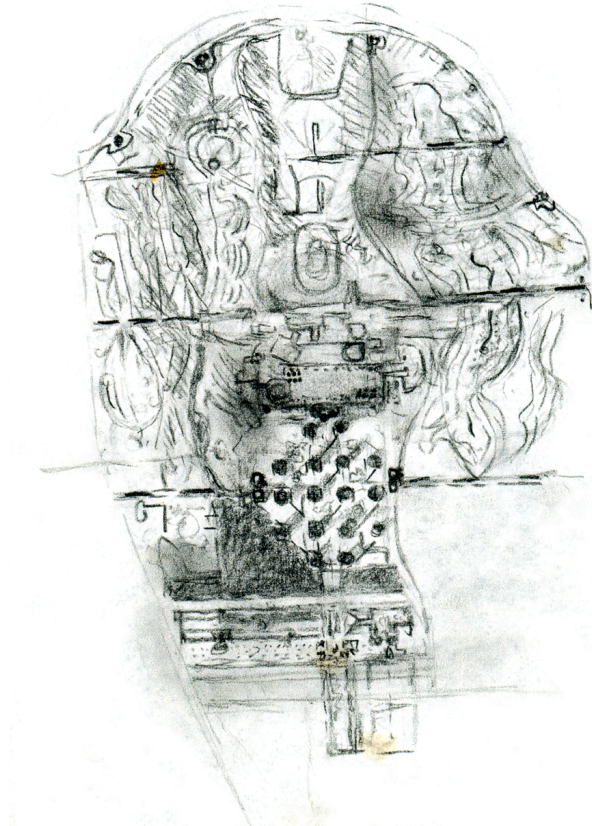


Figure 4. Kahn's final sketch for the realization of From in Abbasabad Project, Tehran, Iran, 1974. (Copyright The Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania.)

water movement with the machine, both metaphorically and physically, Kahn turned the architecture of street from its previously anti-architecture dilemma into the architecture of Viaduct in connection with the spaces of the institutions of man.

The order of water in the historic Iranian cities gives a geometric configuration and a grid-like pattern to the urban fabric, thereby determining the morphology of the city.<sup>19</sup> In a sense, the irrigation system and the water paths as the subterranean invisible layers coming from the peripheries into the urban structure give form to the streets, gardens and finally the architectural spaces in the city. Tracing the path of one of the existing aqueducts canals, also known as Qanat, in the Abbasabad site, Kahn diagrams the water movement as an essential factor in articulating the architecture of the streets with other spaces (Fig. 6).

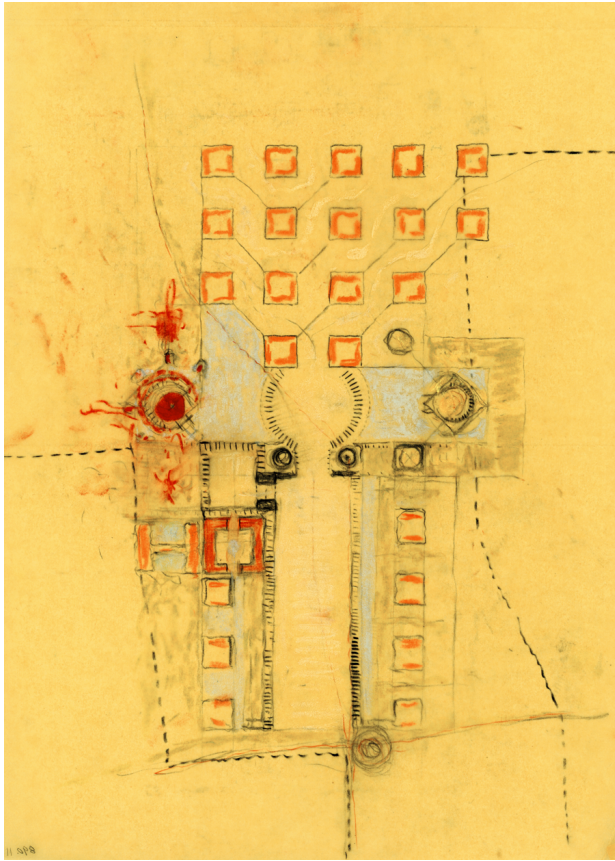


Figure 5. The Architecture of Connection, Kahn's sketch for Abbasabad project, Tehran, Iran, 1973-4. (Copyright The Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania.)

Metaphorically, Kahn employs the order of water to theorize the movement of machines and urban voyages in the city. Working on the architecture of the Viaduct for the Midtown Philadelphia in 1952-1953, he writes,

Expressways are like **RIVERS**  
 These **RIVERS** frame the area to be served  
**RIVERS** have **HARBORS**  
**HARBORS** are municipal parking towers  
 From the **HARBORS** branch a system of  
**CANALS** that serve the interior  
 The **CANALS** are the go streets  
 From the **CANALS** branch cul-de-sac **DOCKS**  
 The **DOCKS** serve as entrance halls to the buildings.<sup>20</sup>

Building on the system of water movement in the urban areas, Kahn similarly gives a new interpretation to the design of the streets, the expressways and the garages in the modern city of Tehran. The image of the rotated square checkered board in this project signifies Kahn's ideas for the archi-

itecture of the Viaduct. The squares in this pattern are the indication of the municipal buildings, commercial spaces and their parking garages, while the main gateways-terminals on the outlying areas signal the urban landmarks as it connects to the surrounding districts through the freeways (Fig. 7). Therefore, Kahn's futuristic approach to the design



Figure 6. The extension of the existing water canal, Qanat, into the design of the new center by Kahn. The water as the indication of the Beginning gives shape to the forms in the city. (Copyright The Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania.)

of the street as an architectural object through reading, mapping and reinterpreting the nature and order of water, uncovers the modern theme of movement in the Persian territorial thinking as it is almost ready to join the machinic sensibility and its operation in the modern aesthetics of globalism.

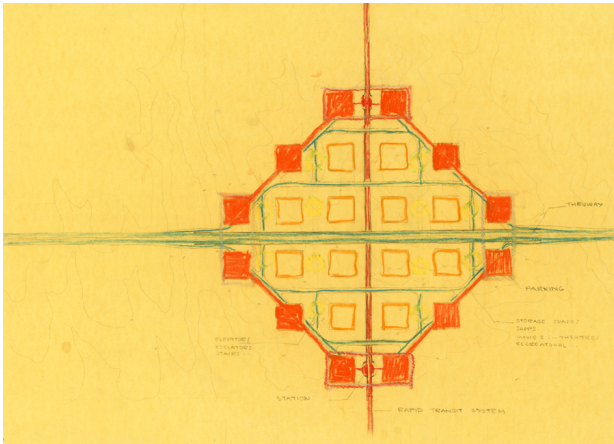


Figure 7. The Architecture of Movement reflected in Kahn's sketch for the urban traffic in Abbasabad site, Tehran, Iran. The horizontal blue lines (rivers) indicate the expressways, the orange squares (harbors) are garages, the thin interior blue lines (canals) are go streets, and the internal squares (docks) represents municipal buildings, recreational, shopping and storage spaces. (Copyright The Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania.)

## CONCLUSION

Louis Kahn's representation of the global landscape of modern architecture is thus understood through his design theory reflected in the tripartite ensemble of the architecture of Beginning, the architecture of Connection and the architecture of the Viaduct. In this light, the present analysis on the urban project for Tehran shows that Kahn's design strategy did not serve to threaten the integrity, identity, and boundaries of a culture by means of superimposing the Western modernity at its face value, but rather, it aimed to cultivate the Persian themes of modernity through the concept of cultural place and open regionalism. Yet, despite Shah's ambition for a contested modernization by means of the White Revolution that merely bears upon the equality of means and land with familiar sociopolitical agenda, Kahn instead provided him with a design that challenged Shah's archaic modernization. Therefore, Kahn's global approach to the phenomenon of modernity in architecture is not only considered as a critique to the Shah's pre-Islamic revivalist and nationalistic movement characteristic of the modern state, but also offered a critical approach to the notion of tradition and the culture of place in its open global sense.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This study was supported by the Melburn G. Glasscock Center for Humanities Research at Texas A&M University, and the Architectural League of New York.

## ENDNOTES

- 1 Michel Foucault, "The Dead Weight of Modernization (The Shah Is a Hundred Years Behind the Times)," in *Foucault and the Iranian Revolution: Gender and the Seduction of Islamism*. Janet Afary and Kevin B. Anderson (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), 198.
- 2 Craig Keating, "Reflections on the Revolution in Iran: Foucault on Resistance." *Journal of European Studies* 27, no. 106 (1997): 181-97.
- 3 Martin Heidegger, "Art & Space." trans. Charles Seibert, *Man and World* 4, no. 1 (1973): 6.
- 4 The concept of 'Fourfold' (Geviert) first introduced by Heidegger in his essay, "The Thing," in 1949 & 1950. For Heidegger, world is that which comes about in the happening of the fourfold. According to de Beistegui, fourfold 'suggests a power of gathering ('Ge-'), or the gathering together of different horizons'. Miguel de Beistegui, "Four-Fold," in *A Dictionary of Continental Philosophy*, ed. John Protevi (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), 228.
- 5 Martin Heidegger, "Building Dwelling Thinking," in *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 155.
- 6 Martin Heidegger, "Language in the Poem," in *On the Way to Language*, trans. Peter D. Herz (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), 159. Also, cited in Jeff Malpas, *Heidegger's Topology: Being, Place, World* (Cambridge, London: MIT Press, 2006), 29.
- 7 Jeff Malpas, *Heidegger's Topology: Being, Place, World*, 310; Also see: Martin Heidegger, Hölderlin's Hymn 'The Ister,' trans. William McNeill and Julia Davis (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996). Cited in William McNeill, *The Time of Life: Heidegger and Ethos* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2006), 146.
- 8 Brian Massumi translates the 'lines of flight' (lignes de fuite) as that which is 'flowing, leaking and disappearing into the distance'. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), xvi.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 Ibid., 324.
- 11 The term 'white Revolution' reads among Kahn's notes which appears next to his sketch for Abbasabad design. See: Heinz Ronner and Sharad Jhaveri, *Louis I. Kahn: Complete Work 1935-1974* (Basel, Boston: Birkhauser, 1994), 420.
- 12 Kahn identifies 'Form' as the realization of different institutions, and thereby is distinguished from the shape in design. To understand Form is to grasp the idea of difference as it separates one space or one institution from the other. It should be mentioned that Kahn's approach to Form is different from the Platonic Forms, which occupies a transcendental, ideal space. In contrast, the notion of Form for Kahn is embedded in the



nucleus of each culture as the inseparable parts of that institution.

13 Richard Saul Wurman, ed. *What Will BE Has Always Been: The Words of Louis I. Kahn*, (New York: Rizzoli, 1986), 257.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid., 82-83.

16 In his reading of Rumi recorded in his notes and lectures, Kahn captures the idea of 'threshold' as the Sanctuary of Art or the place where everything originary, belonging to the treasury of shadows and silence, comes into light. This dual becoming of light through silence and silence through light within the interstitial space of the threshold and its varied layers, not unlike the Persian philosophy of light theorized by Suhrawardi, give rise to the coming of new works of art. In order to achieve the status of beginning through tradition in its global condition, as Kahn suggests, it is necessary to turn to the state of 'silence' and its essence of 'commonness' among multiplicity of Forms. See: Richard Saul Wurman, ed. *What Will BE Has Always Been: The Words of Louis I. Kahn, the Notebooks of Louis I. Kahn*.

17 Ibid., 141.

18 Heinz Ronner and Sharad Jhaveri, *Louis I. Kahn: Complete Work 1935-1974*, 420.

19 Michael E. Bonine, "The Morphogenesis of Iranian Cities." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* (69), no. 2 (June 1979): 208-224.

20 Heinz Ronner and Sharad Jhaveri, *Louis I. Kahn: Complete Work 1935-1974*, 27.