

New Approaches to the Study of Persian Architecture

Deadline: Apr 30, 2012

Mohammad Gharipour

Call for Papers: Special Issue of Iranian Studies Journal
Revisiting the Historiography: New Approaches to the Study of Persian Architecture

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Guest-editor: Dr. Mohammad Gharipour

Initiated in the nineteenth century, the study of Persian architecture was advanced by such twentieth-century archeologists and Iranologists as Arthur Upham Pope, Ernst Herzfeld, Andre Godard, Roman Ghirshman, and Erich Schmidt. These studies, accompanied by archaeological discoveries, the establishment of archives, and the activities of the British and German Institutes in Tehran, resulted in numerous publications, including chronological surveys of Persian art and architecture. These surveys covered the cultural boundaries of the Persianate world, including but not limited to modern day Iran, Afghanistan, Central Asia and the Caucasus, and subcontinent India. Despite their limitations, including an Orientalist bent, these works challenged the Eurocentric views of the architectural history of the Near East, and evolved historical understandings of the region that were less projections of pre-conceived European mentality and more based on facts emerging from the locale. This research approach based its theories on archeological findings, field investigations, and analysis of buildings and artifacts, a trend that has defined, and somewhat dominated historiography of Persian architecture to date.

While this approach offers valuable knowledge derived from the analytical documentation of monuments in situ, it can be argued that it neglected a wide range of primary historical resources. This was due to the scholars' unfamiliarity with the culture and, most importantly, a research atmosphere that prioritized data collection and fact-based historical research. Now, in the twenty-first century, scholarship has shifted from strict documentation and its analysis, as conducted by investigators like Pope and Herzfeld, to more interpretative studies. This transformation also accords with the

emergence of qualitative research and a passage from a positivist paradigm in the academic community, particularly in the last decades of the 20th century. Although we will certainly continue to see the imprint of early 20th century perspectives, further developments in the field are contingent upon re-visiting past literature and advancing new approaches to the study of Persian architecture.

This special thematic issue of the Journal of Iranian Studies offers the opportunity to publish new interdisciplinary research on aspects of the history and historiography of Persian architecture. We will particularly welcome research that considers the historiography of the study of Persian architecture from the early 20th-century to the present, and reconsideration of historical sources from all periods. This issue invites papers that address the following issues:

1. Examining basic definitions and terminologies in the field;
2. Introducing and analyzing new resources for the study of Persian architecture;
3. Addressing challenges, complexities, and contradictions regarding the historical and geographical diversity of Persian architecture, particularly issues that seem to be lacking in the 20th century historiography;
4. Investigating the history of vernacular architecture, since the traditionally dominant research paradigm concentrated on major cities and monuments;
5. Continuity and disjuncture in Persian architecture, especially between the pre-Islamic and Islamic eras;
6. Mutual exchange and interaction between Persia and neighboring cultures and courts;
7. The impact of cultural, social, and political conflicts and symbioses on the development of monumental and vernacular architecture;
8. Sociopolitical, religious, economic, or cultural dimensions of patronage and its role in the development of Persian architecture;
9. Investigation of style from a macro-scale (city) to micro-scale (ornamentation) in relation to local, regional, and national identities;
10. Patterns of using and inhabiting architectural space and human behavior in certain typologies of spaces in select precedents from macro to micro;
11. Processes of construction and elements of the built environment in different historical periods in terms of form, construction, and material.

The submitted papers should bring new insights supported by historical documents, archeological data, treatises (e.g. artisan manuals), and

visual materials (e.g. book illustrations). Authors are encouraged to question and challenge pre-existing historiographical frameworks, especially through the study of specific cases. Please send a paper title and a 400-word abstract to the guest-editor, Dr. Mohammad Gharipour (mohammad@gatech.edu) by April 30, 2012. Authors of selected proposals must submit the full paper by November 30, 2012. All papers will be subject to peer review. All papers should follow ISIS journal guidelines in terms of format and transliteration.

Journal of Iranian Studies is published on behalf of the International Society for Iranian Studies. Articles must be submitted electronically as email attachments. The articles should be between 6,000 and 10,000 words in length, including notes and proper citations (in lieu of a separate bibliography). Submissions – abstracts and final articles – must be in Word document, double-spaced, with at least one-inch margins, in a standard typeface (preferably Times New Roman), of 12 points font. A maximum of eight images are allowed per article. Please include the title of your intended illustrations along with the abstract. If the article is accepted, illustrations may be submitted either electronically as TIFF files at 300 dpi or as scanner-ready hard copy. For more information, please consult with the journal website: www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/00210862.asp

Reference:

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