

# Role of Aesthetic Values in the Formation of the Ilchikhan Complex of Yazd City\*

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## ABSTRACT

Aesthetics is considered one of the core practical concepts in the protection and assessment of the visual and content components of landscapes as well as architectural and urban heritage. This concept is a criterion for investigating residents' visual preferences and revitalizing the historical buildings. Being constructed based on Safavid architecture, the Ilchikhan Complex is one of the most valuable historical works of Yazd city representative of various historical, social, cultural, economic, scientific, and aesthetic values. The main problem of the research is the devaluation of the significance and identity of the Ilchikhan complex. In this regard, ignorance and misrecognition of values have an unfortunate consequence on the protection of the complex and its values. Now, the greater part of this complex has been destroyed and left without protection and preservation, and the procedure of changing the complex's physical and functional identity is accelerating. The present research is associated with two questions: What are the aesthetic values in the Ilchikhan historical complex? What role did the aesthetic values play in the formation of the Ilchikhan Complex? This research aims to introduce the aesthetic elements and their role in the formation of the Ilchikhan Complex of Yazd city. This study is an applied research with a qualitative approach that focuses on a case study of the Ilchikhan Complex. The research method entails a combination of historical interpretation and survey strategies, and field studies, aerial images, and documentary research are the tools used in the research. While exploring the aesthetic values from different perspectives, especially architecture, and urban planning, this research has investigated the Ilchikhan Complex based on historical documents as well as physical and functional components. Research on this field shows that the aesthetic values in this complex include two physical and content aspects. For this reason, it has been effective in the formation, construction, and preservation of the building and has been regarded as the foundation of its sustainability.

**Keywords:** Ilchikhan Complex, Yazd, Godal Ali, Dar-al-Shifa Neighborhood, Aesthetic Values.

\* This article is derived from the first author's master's thesis entitled "Understanding and Preservation of Aesthetic Values in Dar-al-Shifa Neighborhood of Yazd City" which was presented with the help of the second and third authors as supervisors at the University of Science and Technology in 2022.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The historical fabric of Yazd City includes several neighborhoods that, despite similar components, each of them has its own identity and special value from different perspectives and often have organic and event-led growth (Shamseh 2006 83). This research has focused on the Dar-al-Shifa neighborhood as one of the oldest historical neighborhoods of Yazd city (Table 1). This neighborhood ends in Chaharsooq and Bazaar neighborhoods from the north and south, and Imam Khomeini Street and Labkhandagh neighborhood from the east and west.

**Table 1. Neighborhoods within the Historical Texture of Yazd City Registered Globally**

Koushk Now	Ghahadan	Labkhan- dagh	Ghale Kohneh	Vaght-va- Saat	Bazaar-e Now	Shah Abul- ghasem	Darvazeh Shahi	Dar-al-Shifa	Chaharsooq
Bazaar	Emamzadeh	Sarpolak	Amirkhamaq	Sahl-ibn Ali	Mirghotb	Shah Tah- masb	Godal-e Mosala	Pirborj	Gazargah

In the central part of Dar al-Shifa neighborhood, there is an area with a depth of approximately 9 meters from the ground floor, which is called Godal Ali (Jabarnia 1994). One of the important features of this area is the existence of some architectural buildings belonging to the Safavid period, and the density of these exquisite historical buildings is of utmost importance due to the number of buildings constructed during this period in Yazd City (Alavi Rad 2004). Some different residential buildings had been constructed inside Godal Ali, which have been destroyed in recent years through a consolidation plan, and only a part of the Ilchikhan complex has remained. The Ilchikhan complex might belong to Ghiyāth al-Dīn Naqshband (Safavi period), Shahzadeh Vali Mirza (ruler of Yazd city during the Qajars) and the Sadr-ul-Ulama dynasty (late Qajar period).

The main problem of the research is the devaluation of the significance and identity of the Ilchikhan complex. Now, the greater part of this complex has been destroyed and left without protection and preservation, and the procedure of changing the physical and functional identity of the complex is accelerating. This research attempts to help raise awareness of the Ilchikhan complex by explaining its aesthetic values as one of the fundamental concepts in the physical and content valuation of architectural works. This research aims to introduce the aesthetic elements and their role in the formation of the Ilchikhan Complex of Yazd City. This study is an applied research with a qualitative approach that focuses on a case study of the Ilchikhan Complex. The research method entails a combination of historical interpretation and survey strategies, and field studies, aerial images, and documentary research are the tools used in the research. Accordingly, the aesthetics as he intended research criteria will be examined in both physical and content areas. Then, they will be classified concerning the Ilchikhan complex.

This neighborhood has been entitled to this name due to the existence of the Dar-al-Shifa building in it. The existence of buildings such as the Fart Mosque (which was introduced in the narations of the resting place of Imam Reza (PBUH) in the 2nd century AH), the Bagh Behesht Mosque (it has an inscription dated 1136 AH), the Tomb of Abu Darda (decorations belonging to the Al-Motfar period), Sadr-ul-Ulama's house, Ilchikhan's house and Maleksabet house in Dar al-Shifa neighborhood indicates its significance in different historical periods (Khademzadeh 2009, 118).

### 1.1. Research Questions

1. What are the aesthetic values in the Ilchikhan historical complex?
2. What role did the aesthetic values play in the formation of the Ilchikhan Complex?

## 2. RESEARCH LITERATURE

No separate research has been done on the Dar-al-Shifa neighborhood of Yazd city concerning its recognition and existing aesthetic values, and some research including Yazd monuments (Afshar 1998), Jame Mofidi (Mostofi Bafghi 2006), New History of Yazd (Kateb Yazdi 2007), and Historical neighborhoods of Yazd (Khademzadeh 2009) have referred to the neighborhood, its location, and history. Meanwhile, studies are focusing on the central part of the neighborhood and residence in its texture. In this respect, firstly, can be referred to the project of the "Supportive residential complex in Ilchikhan neighborhood of Yazd". In this project, firstly, all the houses on the sides of the pass and the southern pit of the pass "Godal Ali" of rôleve, and then the plan of the supportive residential complex in the pit area has been presented (Jabarnia 1994). Next, the project "Foundations of designing a residential complex in Ilchikhan neighborhood of Yazd" in which a plan has been designed for the construction of a residential complex in the Dar-al-Shifa neighborhood of Yazd regarding the basics of house design in historical fabric (Alavi Rad 2004). Then, a plan was proposed by the consulting engineers of Yazd Architectural Art Gallery in the Godal Ali area, which included the design of 28 residential units with the traditional pattern structure of Yazd City (Honarsaray Memari 2008). To continue, we can be referred to the thesis entitled "Architectural Infill Design in Historic Fabrics". In this research, a theoretical model has

been presented for the evaluation of infill design in the historical fabric of Yazd City and the development of a design instruction for the Ilchikhan complex of Yazd City (Qhaderian 2013). Moreover, in a thesis entitled "Study and Restoration Plan of Ilchikhan House in Yazd City", the researcher has focused on the knowledge of Ilchikhan House and the relationship between the properties in its composition for presenting its preservation and restoration plan by identifying valuable components and properties of Safavid period houses constructed in Yazd city (Kamali 2018).

In addition to the Western experts' and Islamic thinkers' views on aesthetics (Table 2), some research

has been proposed in terms of aesthetics of urban spaces including: "approach and methods in urban aesthetics" (Karimi Moshaver 2013), "Rereading the dimensions of the environmental aesthetics of the urban form" (Poor Jafar et al. 2014), and "new approaches to landscape aesthetics research" (Habibi 2017). In all these studies, different approaches have been applied to the evaluation of environmental aesthetics. In a continuation of previous works, this research aims to classify the aesthetic elements in the area of Godal Ali and Ilchikhan Complex and to be helpful in the formation of the Ilchikhan Complex and other valuable works with historical context.

**Table 2. Western Experts and Islamic Thinkers' Views on Aesthetics**

Western Experts' Views		Islamic Thinkers' View	
Plato	Aesthetics can be expressed by nature and living beings, or by geometry, lines, and circles.	Hafez	Goodness, Nature
Aristotle	Aesthetics depends on objects as well as unity in plurality in the confirmation of size and proportion	Farabi	Perfection
Vitruvius	Aesthetics along with stability and efficiency is considered one of the important factors in architecture.	Ibn-Sina	Order, Composition, and Moderation

### 3. RESEARCH METHOD

This study is an applied research with a qualitative approach that focuses on a case study of the Ilchikhan Complex. This is an effort to answer the research questions by applying an interpretive-historical and survey strategy as well as using tools such as field studies, aerial images, and documentary research. This study entails several stages: In the first stage, the research focuses on the recognition of Dar-al-Shifa and Ilchikhan neighborhoods in their current and past conditions. In the second stage, the aesthetic value has been examined from the architectural and urban researchers' viewpoint to perceive this concept. In the third stage, evidence related to aesthetic values in the neighborhood as well as the complex has been identified. This research focuses on the remains and physical structure of works such as Ilchikhan House, all the physical and content features of which can be investigated in the frame of field study. In this survey, the area of Ilchikhan has been investigated, mapped, and photographed. In addition, there are oral sources including the scientific community and the neighborhood's residents and old owners. All the information forms the research findings and is classified in the form of physical and content systems. Accordingly, the role of aesthetic values in the formation of the Ilchikhan Complex is revealed by the division accomplished in the discussion and conclusion section.

### 4. DAR-AL-SHIFA NEIGHBORHOOD OF YAZD CITY AND ILCHIKHAN COMPLEX

Dar-al-Shifa neighborhood is one of the oldest historical neighborhoods of Yazd City, which is located in opposition to the Jame Mosque and the bazaar, and the Ilchikhan complex is considered an important historical area in the center of Dar-al-Shifa neighborhood. Introducing the influential elements of the neighborhood and surveying the location of the Ilchikhan complex is the main issue in the recognition of this complex, which is discussed below.

#### 4.1. Dar-al-Shifa Neighborhood and Important Influential Elements

This neighborhood is known as the Dar al-Shifa neighborhood due to the existence of the Dar al-Shifa endowment building. This building is one of the endowment works, established by Khwaja Shamsuddin Mohammad Taziko ordered by Khwaja Shamsuddin Sahib in the 7th century AH<sup>1</sup> (Khademzadeh 2009, 118).

By surveying the neighborhood in the aerial images taken in 1956 and 1973 (Fig. 1), it can be observed that the harmonious texture of the Dar-al-Shifa neighborhood has undergone limited changes during these years. The only thing observable in these images are the street constructions made in the Pahlavi period. These street constructions have had both positive and

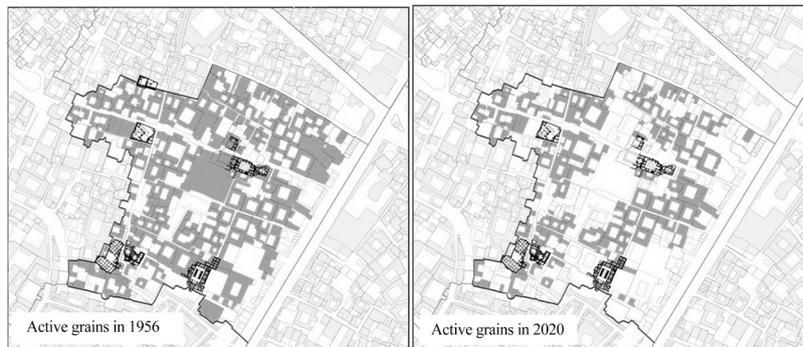
negative effects on the Dar-al-Shifa neighborhood.



**Fig. 1. Comparison of Neighborhood in Aerial Images 1956, 1973, 2016**  
(Yazd historical city cultural heritage base 2020)

Further, comparing the image taken in 2016 to previous years and field surveys reveal that there have been changes in the empties and fulls as well as the local access system, which can be caused by

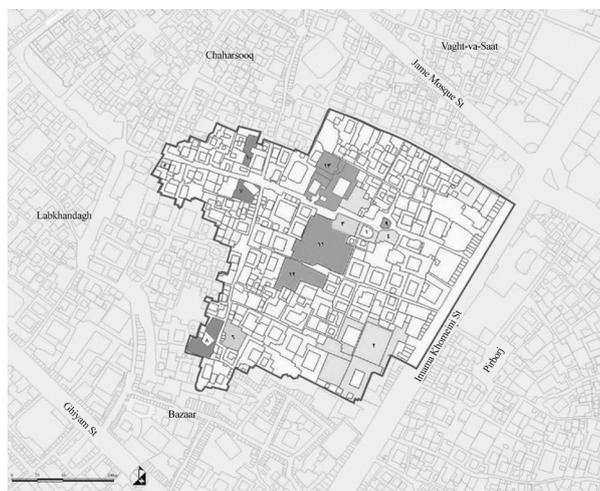
the abandonment of houses by residents (Fig. 2), and destruction and change of some buildings' use due to today's needs and widening pathways in the neighborhood.



**Fig. 2. Field Mapping and Comparison of the Neighborhood's Active Grains in 1956 and 2020**

Dar-al-Shifa neighborhood, which ends in Chaharsooq and Bazaar neighborhoods from the north and south, and Imam Khomeini Street and Labkhandagh neighborhood from the east and west, includes salient works. These buildings help in a deep understanding of the history of neighborhood identity and culture. The style and key features of each period can be completely identified by evaluating and analyzing the architecture and structure of each work,

and they can be inherited by the future generations of the country through principled and people-oriented preservation. The indicative elements of the Dar-al-Shifa neighborhood are the cause of its antiquity and historical background, and in this regard, we can be referred to the Fart Mosque, Tomb of Abu Darda, Bagh-e Behesht Historical Mosque, Fart Bathroom, Sadr-ul Ulama Houses Complex and Nawab Razavi Gate (Fig. 3).



1. MalekSabet, 2. Sadr-ul Ulama, 3. Ilchikhan, 4. Moshir Moghadam, 5. Arab Mazar, 6. Fart Bathroom, 7. Bagh-e Behesht, 8. Fart Mosque, 9. Hazrat-e Roghaye, 10. Abu Darda, 11. Godal Ali, 12. The area's hand-carved architecture

**Fig. 3. Layout of Indicative and Registered Architectural Elements of Dar-al-Shifa Neighborhood**

#### 4.2. Location of Ilchikhan Complex in Dar al-Shifa Neighborhood

In the central part of the Dar-al-Shifa neighborhood, on the southern border of Naqib al-Ashraf Passage, there is an area with a depth of approximately 9 meters from the passage's ground floor, which is now called Gud Ali (Fig. 4); The Ilchikhan complex is located in this cave, which has an area of more than 7000 square meters (Jabarnia 1994). The topographical status of this area is such that it is not observed in other areas of the city except in other historical caves. The biggest difference in alignment (about 10 meters)

is observed in the northern and southern margins, that is, the Naqib al-Ashraf and Shahid Khoramian passages. One of the important features of this area is the existence of some architectural units belonging to the Safavid period, and the density of these exquisite historical buildings is of utmost importance due to the few number of buildings constructed during this period in Yazd city (Alavi Rad 2004). Many different residential buildings have been constructed, which have been destroyed in recent years through a consolidation plan, and only a part of the Ilchikhan complex has remained (Fig. 5).

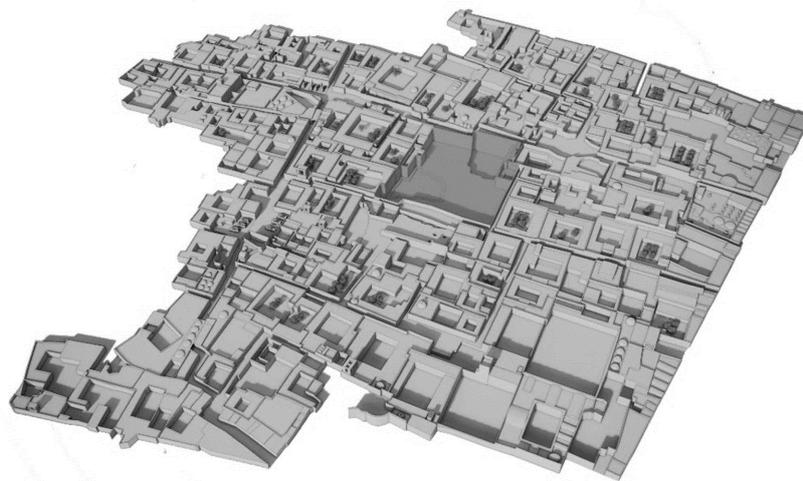
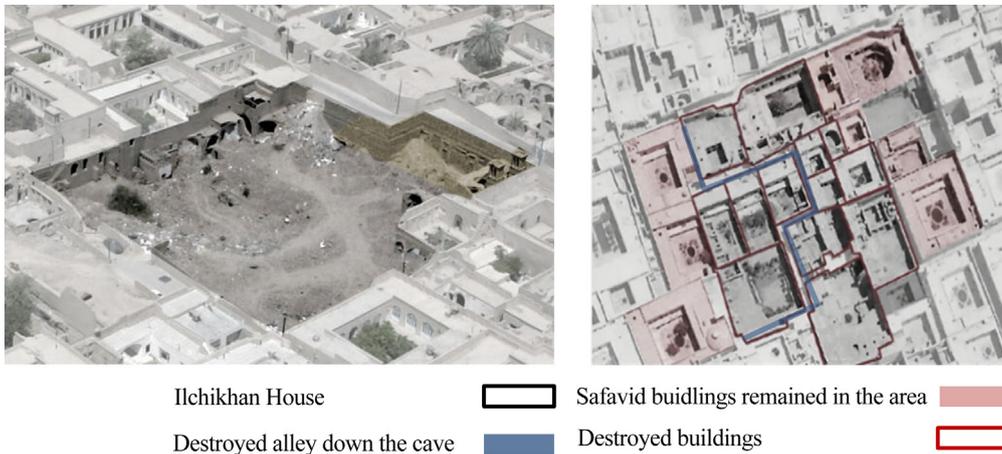


Fig. 4. 3D Mapping of the Studied Neighborhood and Central Area



Ilchikhan House      Safavid buildings remained in the area  
Destroyed alley down the cave      Destroyed buildings

Fig. 5. Aerial Image taken in 1956 and Bird's-Eye View of Current State of Godal and Ilchikhan Area (Kamali 2018)

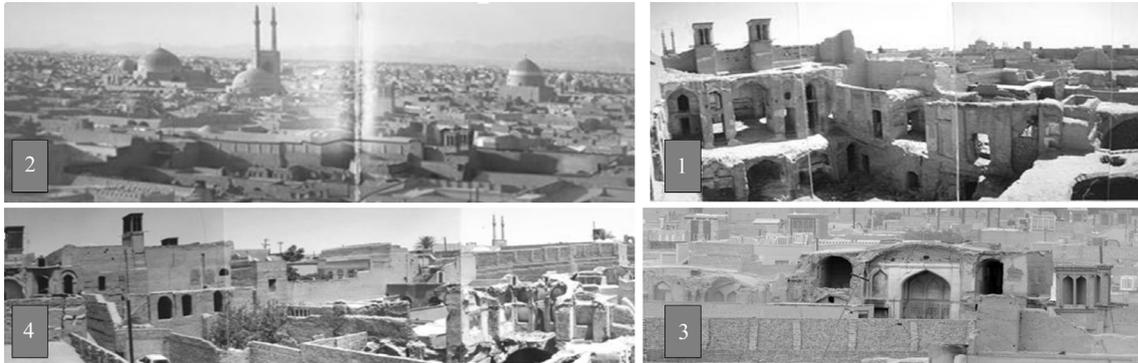
##### 4.2.1. Appellation and Historical Recognition of the Ilchikhan Neighborhood from the Historical Documents' Perspective

In his dictionary, Dehkhoda has defined Ilchigiri as a profession related to the Ilkhani period, which means sending a message, and Ilchikhaneh means the

residence of the ambassadors (Ilchian). Accordingly, it can be assumed that this neighborhood has been called as Ilchikhan neighborhood due to Ilchian's settlement in this area during the 8th and 9th centuries (Khademzadeh 2009, 336). According to the available documents, the age of Ilchikhan House traces back

to the Safavid period, but so far no scientific and accurate study has been done about the exact age of this house, and limited pictures of the complex's past

state are available (Fig. 6). Regarding the complex ownership, there have been speculations represented in Table 3.



**Fig. 6. Godal Area's Past Landscape**

1. view to the north from Ilchikhan House (Dastvan and Rahimian 1997), 2. Ilchikhan and Dar-al-Shifa neighborhoods' view (Dehbashi 2007), 3. northern part's view (Photographer: Raisi), 4. Godal's view from the south (picture from Kiani and Hasani 2000)

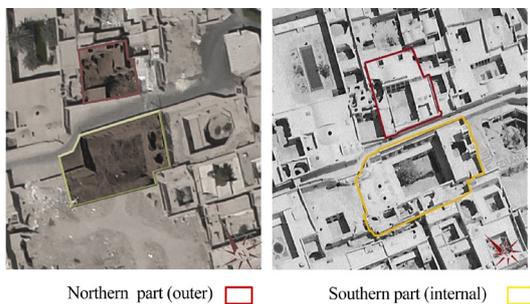
**Table 3. Viewpoints expressed in Terms of Ilchikhan Complex's Ownership**

Afshar	According to Karim Pirnia, based on the available documents and residents' information, there was a house on the southern side of Jame Mosque Street that belonged to Ghiyath Naqshband <sup>2</sup> but it has been destroyed and it should be preserved (Afshar 1975, 721).
Aiti	Khwaja Ghiyath Naqshband was of artisans. He embroidered silk fabrics, he was eulogized by Shah Abbas. He has built buildings, some of which remain in Dar-al-Shifa alley (Aiti 1938, 315).
Consulting Engineers of the Architecture Academy of Yazd	Many buildings were built in the city of Yazd and its outside by the order of Mohammadvali Mirza, Prince of Qajar. Among these buildings, we can refer to the Biz building <sup>3</sup> or the Godal, which the Ilchikhan complex is located in the area of Godal belonging to Prince Valimirza (Honarsaray Memari 2017, 18).

#### 4.2.2. Architecture of Ilchikhan complex

This building was made of two internal and external parts, located on the south and north sides of Naqib al-Ashraf Passage (Fig. 7). Both parts, in the form of

a sunken courtyard, while using the natural elements under the surface, direct the wind energy taken through relevant channels to the upper floors utilizing wind turbines (Fig. 8).



**Fig. 7. Northern and Southern Parts in Aerial Images taken in 1956 and 2016**

In the explanation of the interventions applied to the Ilchikhan Complex, it can be referred to the shutoff of the connection between the two parts of the building on the northern and southern sides of Naqib



**Fig. 8. Complex Wind Turbines Landscape**

Al-Ashraf Alley due to widening the alley and the crossing, destructing the eastern and southern sides of the House (Alley's northern sunken courtyard), and destructing the spaces and installations of the north-

western side as well as 60 percent of the spaces of the southern side of the alley's southern part (Alley's

southern sunken courtyard) (Fig. 9).

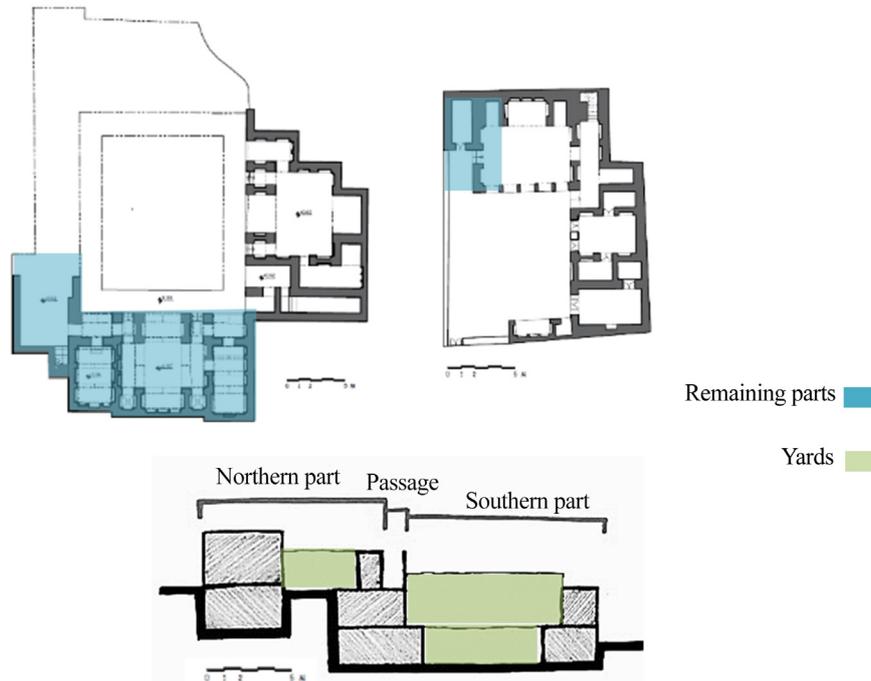


Fig. 9. Plan of Northern and Southern Parts of Complex and a Diagram of their Location in relation to the Passage

## 5. INVESTIGATING AESTHETIC VALUES IN ILCHIKHAN COMPLEX AND GODAL ALI AREA

In this section, the concept of aesthetics is studied from the architectural and urban researchers' perspectives. Then, these values are discussed in terms of the Dar-al-Shifa neighborhood and Ilchikhan Complex.

### 5.1. Concept of Aesthetics from the Architectural and Urban Researchers' Perspectives

The term "aesthetics" originates from the Greek words "aisthanesthai" and entails a wide range of meanings for humans that cannot be easily separated from the complex structure of their minds (Hospers and Scruton 2001, 82). Plato, first, has expressed aesthetics in terms of the beauty of natural landscapes and living beings, and then, the beauty of geometry and proportions (Kelly 2004). During the Aristotelian period, the term "aesthetics" was used for the first time

similar to its modern meaning, and it was generally related to the sense of connection between art and society and individuals' understanding of formal aspects (Collinson 2009). Aesthetics also holds a special place in Islam. It is a luminous sign of divine creation and watching the world's phenomena's beauty will attract people. The Verse «الَّذِي أَحْسَنَ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ خَلَقَهُ», which means, "Who made well whatever He created good" (Surah Sajdah. Verse 7) states that whatever He has made is to fulfill its purpose well, and the dimension of beauty is of special importance in the fulfillment of that purpose. Therefore, as Professor Motahari has said: "What is beauty is a question for which no definite answer has been provided yet, and what we perceive its existence in the world and consider that beautiful" (Motahari 2006, 88). Following these concepts, environmental aesthetics is expressed, which traces back to the beginning of the 20th century. The perspectives of researchers working in this field have been presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Researchers' Perspectives on Aesthetics

Row	Researcher	Perspective
1	Poorjafar	Environmental aesthetics refers to the expansion of human beings' experience of natural and artificial environments and easy understanding of the environment, and it has been introduced as a way to access an equitable environment (Poor Jafar et al. 2014, 88).

Row	Researcher	Perspective
2	Bell	In environmental aesthetics, the evaluation of the effects caused by the qualities of connectivity, complexity, and mystery of nature are combined to contribute to the development of visual components of the environment surrounding the human being (Bell 2007, 123-126).
3	Naghizadeh	Environmental aesthetics introduces the urban space as a beautiful space with aesthetic properties and criteria, and this means the urban design's alignment with the development of a beautiful urban space (Naghizadeh 2003).
4	Stewart	Unity is the highest aesthetic value of the form obtained through symmetry, rhythm, and proportions (Stewart 2012).

## 5.2. Aesthetic Values in the Dar-al-Shifa Neighborhood

Aesthetic values, along with the functions of recognizing, analyzing, and protecting urban and architectural heritage, are considered a set of physical and content values (Hosein Zadeh and Sharif Zadeh 2018). The purpose of recognizing, evaluating,

and applying these two value classifications in the historical neighborhood of Dar-al-Shifa is to create an integrated, legible, and unique complex. Examining the related literature on the aesthetic value of the urban environment, the present research has categorized aesthetic values into two categories including physical and content aesthetic values, which have been presented in Table 5.

**Table 5. Aesthetic Values Classification in the Historical Neighborhood of Dar-al-Shifa and Ilchikhan Complex**

Aesthetic Aspects	Concepts	Evidence in Ilchikhan Neighborhood and Complex of Yazd City
Physical Aspects	Quality of Land Landscape	Topography and the slope of the land in the neighborhood Materials and texture of the bed in the hand-carved area of the Khoramian passage
	Alignment with Background	Maintenance of historical continuity between the complex and the texture of the neighborhood Historical physical features
	Continuity	Continuity of the residential texture in the neighborhood Harmony of the materials used in the neighborhood texture Integrity and quality of neighborhood and complex's spatial organization
	Quality of Mass Landscape	Colors and materials available in the neighborhood and complex Functional flexibility in the neighborhood Variety of façades and walls Special elements in buildings and details Rhythm and pattern consistent with the previous situation physical texture's mesh and density
	Quality of Public Space	Skyline and roof view in the neighborhood Symbolic details Visual proportions and expressive elements in the neighborhood and complex
	Unity	Considering the human scale in the neighborhood and complex architecture Unifying elements
	Diversity and Complexity	Functional variety and diversity Variety of details and inputs

Aesthetic Aspects	Concepts	Evidence in Ilchikhan Neighborhood and Complex of Yazd City
Content Aspects	Identity	Indigenous knowledge of construction Indigenous knowledge of aqueduct usage Indigenous knowledge of climatic comfort considerations Historical-documentary authenticity of historical indicative buildings
	Legibility	Semantic signs and elements in neighborhood and complex Intact hierarchy
	Spatial Perception	Complexity in texture Spatial harmony
	Mental Perception	Residents' preferences and mental image of the neighborhood's past
	Richness of Activities	Past events and rituals remaining in the neighborhood Emotional and psychological security Dynamics and vitality in the complex

### 5.2.1. Physical Aesthetic Values

In aesthetics, the body and visual form refer to the constructive and integrative elements as well as the connections between these elements. The body is an element that is sometimes examined independently of other indicators such as meaning, concept, and mind. Among the formal-visual features in urban texture and architecture, it can be referred to symmetry, proportion, visual weight, rhythm and degree of enclosure, existence of axis, skyline, congruence, and similarity in the buildings creating the urban spaces (Mehdizadeh Saradj et al. 2018, 219). According to these features, the present research expresses the aesthetic values of physical aspects of the Dar-al-Shifa neighborhood and especially the Ilchikhan Complex as follows: harmony with background, continuity, quality of the mass landscape, quality of the land landscape, quality of public spaces, complexity, unity, and diversity. According to Table 5, each of these physical components includes subcomponents, the evidence of which is further discussed in the Ilchikhan complex and the Godal area.

### 5.2.2. Content Aesthetic Values

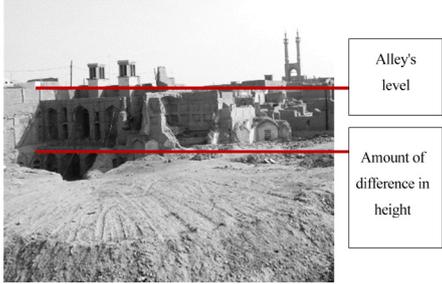
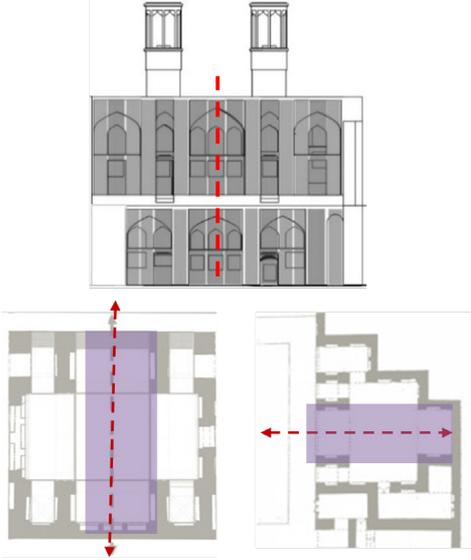
According to the related literature on environmental aesthetics, it can be said that the aesthetics discussion has changed its approach from the fields of purely physical and visual subjects to content and meaning-oriented subjects in which the presence of people has become dominated. Whereas no form can be imagined and protected without content, and even its contrast makes protection difficult, the form can express the constructor's mind, as well as the building's structure and growth through meaning (Grutter 2007). The content values mean the existential essence of a work in which it has been embedded during its construction and is felt by other societies throughout time. This

mentality has objectivity and is evaluated after it is perceived and experienced by human beings; then, people behave differently in this case (Pakzad 2007, 50-58). The values effective on the past and identity of the complex, such as indigenous knowledge of construction, climatic comfort, and authenticity, are also included in the content values category. This study has classified the content aesthetic dimensions in the historical neighborhood of Dar-al-Shifa as follows: legibility, spatial perception, identity, richness of activities, and mental image. According to Table 5, each of the content components includes subcomponents, the evidence of which in the Ilchikhan Complex and the Godal area have been discussed below.

### 5.3. Shreds of Evidence of Aesthetic Values in Ilchikhan Complex and Godal Area

The Ilchikhan Complex and the Godal area form a large part of the texture of the Dar-al-Shifa neighborhood. This is a complex with architecture close to the Safavid houses located in the heart of the historical texture and global registration area of Yazd city, which entails many values, including aesthetic values, through different transformations it has undergone since 1956. Examining these values would help protect and preserve this historical complex. Therefore, regarding the field surveys, historical studies conducted on the complex as well as physical and content aesthetic values of the Dar-al-Shifa historical neighborhood, which were represented in Table 5, the dimensions and evidence of aesthetics in the Ilchikhan Complex and Godal Ali area have been discussed along with related images in terms of both physical aesthetic values (Table 6) and content aesthetic values (Table 7).

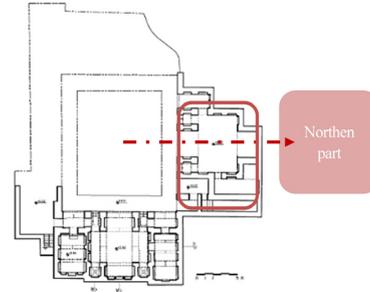
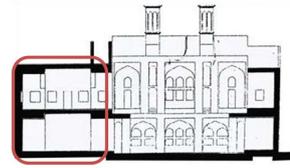
**Table 6. Introduction of Physical-Visual Aesthetic Values of Ilchikhan Complex and Area**

Physical-Visual Aesthetic Values	Pictures
<p><b>Topography And land Slope</b></p> <p>The special topographic status and noticeable difference in the level of different parts of this area is such that it is not observed in other areas of the city, except in other historical caves, and it has affected the easy access to the aqueduct. In addition, the downward slope of the area has caused some buildings with different height levels to be made on the site and not damage the neighborhood skyline.</p>	 <p>Northern Part of Neighborhood Central Area</p>
<p><b>Hand-Carved Architecture and Context Material</b></p> <p>On the south side of Ilchikhan, a trace of the ax is observed on the walls, which is indicative of hand-carved architecture as well as suitable soil and climatic design in the area. The presence of these hand-carved works is evidence for the existence of sunken courtyards and springhouses in the Ilchikhan Complex area.</p>	 <p>Hand-Varved Area of Godal</p>
<p>As is observed in the aerial image of 1956, the residential texture existing in the Godal Ali area shows the physical unity and integrity of the texture, which is indicative of residential elements' cohesion. The simple composition of physical grains together is representative of paying attention to their visual components and composition in the area texture.</p>	 <p>Aerial Image of Dar-al-Shifa Neiborhood taken in 1956 (Yazd historical city cultural heritage base 2020)</p>
<p><b>Unifying Details and Elements</b></p> <p>Linear symmetry of the spaces, including the central hall of the complex, with the axis of the courtyard in the façade and the rectangular geometry of the central halls on both sides to bold the courtyard axis and the rhythmic division of the walls.</p>	 <p>Evidence related to the Repaired Part of Ilchikhan Complex</p>

Physical-Visual Aesthetic Values

Pictures

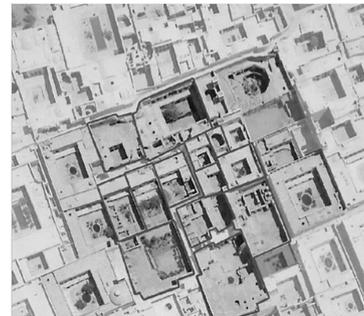
This building has two internal and external parts connecting in a north-south direction.



Evidene related to Ilchikhan Complex (Yazd historical city cultural heritage base 2020)

Historical Physical Features

The existence of several architectural units belonging to the Safavid period (based on the aerial image (1956)). The density of this exquisite residential historical building in this area is of special importance. Some of these Safavid houses have sunken courtyards, as one of the practical features of houses in hot and dry climates.



Safavid Buildings of Central Area of Neighborhood in Aerial Image of 1956 (Kamali 2018)

Special Elements in Buildings

Special elements in the buildings of the area, such as wind turbines, shelvings in the façade of the houses, and various types of vault arches and ribs are special elements observed in the complex.



Special Elements in Buildings

Diversity of Details and Decorations

Rereading the Qajar period manuscripts on the remaining walls of the Ilchikhaneh House. All these manuscripts are verses of poetry, and one of them has been signed by Aziz Mirza, and the date 1251 BC is given at the end of the other sample. The wind turbins decorations, clays, and plaster decorations used in the complex are considered of its exquisite aesthetic values.



Decorations in Buildings

Physical-Visual Aesthetic Values

Pictures

The steep slope of the passages adjacent to the Godal area has created a different manifestation in the neighborhood, and an unexampled skyline with a beautiful combination of wind towers, and a landscape of local salient buildings and house roofs is observable.

Skyline and Landscape



Skyline of Ilchikhan Complex in Dar-al-Shifa neighborhood

**Table 7. Introduction of Content Aesthetic Values of Ilchikhan Complex and Area**

Content Aesthetic Values

Pictures

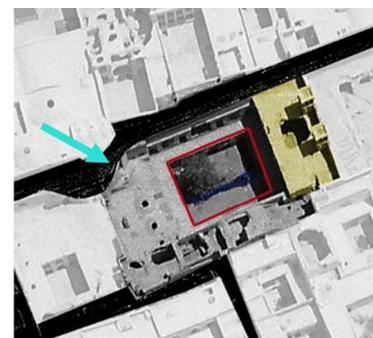
Indigenous Knowledge of Construction

In the courtyards of Safavid Houses, we observed a new pattern of courtyard architecture entitled "sunken courtyard", which appears to have emerged in different forms to access water and to enclose the garden courtyards remained from the Al-Muzaffar period, which were at a lower level (Kamali 2018, 60). In this complex, one of the indigenous knowledge was the use of excavated soil to create a sunken courtyard in the construction of indigenous clay.



Indigenous Knowledge of Using the Water and Qanat

In the past, qanat was used in different ways in the area of Ilchikhan neighborhood. Probably, due to being close to the level of qanat water, the houses around the Godal could easily access it (Kamali 2018, 86); For instance, in the past, the flow of qanat water passed through the sunken courtyard in the Ilchikhan House, and according to the aerial photo of 1956, this aqueduct was flowing in the central space of the underground (at the same level as the floor of the sunken courtyard).



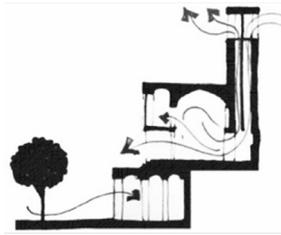
Qanat aqueduct ■ Sunken courtyard ■  
Entrance from Naqib-al-Ashraf ■ Remained side ■

Ilchikhan House in Aerial Image of 1956 (Kamali 2018)

Content Aesthetic Values

Pictures

The element of the sunken courtyard in some of the houses has made the qanat water accessible. Both parts of Ilchikhan House, in the form of a sunken courtyard, while using the natural elements under the surface, direct the wind energy taken through relevant channels to the upper floors employing wind turbines.

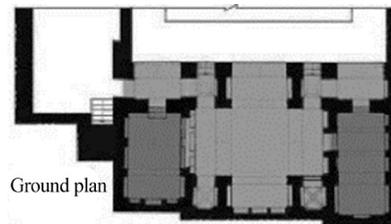


Function of Complex wind Turbin (Kamali 2018)

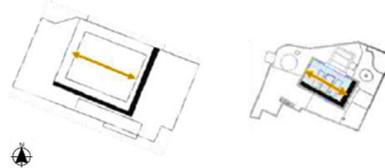


Old Picture of Complex wind Turbins (Yazd historical city cultural heritage base 2020)

The separation of open, semi-open, and closed spaces is one of the features of the complex. This feature indicates its application in the summer season; however, the eastern orientation of this side has a deviation of nearly 90 degrees from the popular orientation of the summer space in the houses of Yazd city, which is on the southern side. The solar orientation of the old houses in the area is synonymous with the adjustment of the yard diameters with the north and south axes, which in this case creates the greatest amount of shade in the summer and the greatest amount of sunlight penetration depth for the rooms in the winter (Qazalbash and Abulazia 1985).



Ground plan



Orientation in Ilchikhan House (Kamali 2018)

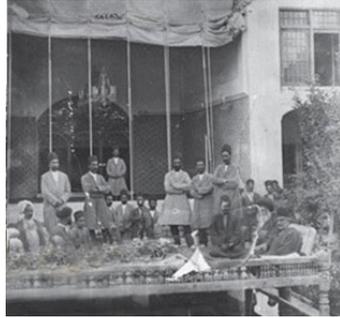
According to the historical texts and documents, Ghiyasuddin Naqshband lived in a complex of Ilchikhan Houses, and he also popularized textile trading in this complex. Mohammadvali Mirza's building, known as Biz mansion, is located in the Godal Ali area and in the approximate location of the remaining hand-carved works, which had a bathroom with 9 marble columns and gilded parts; after it was destroyed, four cases of the mentioned columns were transferred to the Sadr-ul-Ulama building (bank courtyard) (Honarsaray Memari 2017, 17-18).



Prince Valimirza, First Person from the Left Side (Afshar 1975) Mirza Alireza Sadr-ul-Ulama (Afshar 1975)



Courtyard of Bank in Sadr-Ul-Ulama Complex (Honarsaray Memari 2017)

Content Aesthetic Values	Pictures
<p>Past Events and Rituals Remaining in the Neighborhood</p> <p>In the past, annual ceremonies and celebrations or special rituals were held in aristocratic buildings of the Godal Ali area and Ilchikhan Complex.</p>	 <p>A Ceremony in Ilchikhan House (Afshar 1975)</p>

## 6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The Ilchikhan and Godal Ali Complex with Safavid architecture, as one of the authentic historical works in the Dar-al-Shifa neighborhood of Yazd city, has various intrinsic values. It has lost some values and

gained others over time along with various damages. The aesthetic values are among these values. Studies have revealed that the aesthetic values in the Ilchikhan complex and the Godal Ali area include various physical and content components, the criteria and evidence of which are presented in Table 8.

**Table 8. Explanation of the Physical and Content Components of Aesthetic Value in Ilchikhan Complex**

Physical Aesthetic Values		Content Aesthetic Values	
Criterion	Evidence	Criterion	Evidence
Topography and Land Slope	- The special topographic situation of the Godal Ali area and the difference in the height of the two alleys of Naqib-al-Ashraf and Shahid Khoramian was effective in the formation of the complex at different height levels.	Indigenous Knowledge of Construction	- Construction of several sunken courtyards suitable for the climate of Yazd city and use of excavated soil for the production of clay needed for the construction of buildings in the area.
Hand-Carved Architecture and Context Material	- Hand-carved structures and architecture remained from Safavid houses in Shahid Khoramian Passage	Indigenous Knowledge of Using the Water and Qanat	- Qanat aqueduct passing through the complex and using the qanat water in different ways, including the construction of a sunken courtyard to make water more accessible
Unifying Details and Elements	- Combination of exquisite physical grains in the area - Linear symmetry of spaces in Ilchikhan Complex		
Physical Historical Features	- Division of Ilchikhan Complex into two internal and external parts on both sides of Nagib Passage - Existence of some architectural units belonging to the Safavid period in the Godal Ali area - Safavid Houses with a sunken courtyard in the area including Ilchikhan and Malek Sabet	Indigenous Knowledge of Comfort	- Use of wind turbines and natural wind energy in the building architecture along with the summer- and winter-residential pattern in the complex - Solar orientation of the houses in the area with the greatest amount of shade in the summer and the most amount of sunlight penetration depth in winter
Special Elements in Buildings	Decorations such as wind turbines, shelvings in the façade of the complex as well as different types of vault arch	Residents' Mental Image and Perception of the Neighborhood	- Presence of Ghiyathuddin Naqshband and textile trading in the complex - Existence of Biz mansion and active residential grains in Godal Ali
Diversity in Details	- Qajar period manuscripts - Plaster decorations of the complex's northern part		
Skyline and Landscape	- Skyline with a beautiful composition of wind turbines, local landscape, and roofs of the houses	Past Events and Rituals Remaining in the Neighborhood	- Annual ceremonies and celebrations in Godal Ali area and Ilchikhan Complex

The noticeable point is the existence of interrelation and connection between content aesthetic values and physical aesthetic ones in the formation and preservation of this area and complex, in such a way that they are considered complementary elements in the construction of the complex, and stability of everyone relies on the other one. Meanwhile, the content values play a more significant role in the formation of the complex and they form the primary basis of the construction of the Ilchikhan Complex. The current state of the complex shows that one of

the causes of inconsistency in the complex is the diminution of physical and content aesthetic values, especially the later ones including past events, people's presence in the complex, ceremonies, and social system existing in the Godal Ali area. In the case of diminishing the physical criteria, it can be referred to the historical body, the past hierarchy of Ilchikhan Complex and Goldal Ali, special elements in buildings, and Ilchikhan Complex.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

## MORAL APPROVAL

The authors commit to observe all the ethical principles of the publication of the scientific work based on the ethical principles of COPE. In case of any violation of the ethical principles, even after the publication of the article, they give the journal the right to delete the article and follow up on the matter.

## PARTICIPATION PERCENTAGE

The authors state that they have directly participated in the stages of conducting research and writing the article.

## ENDNOTE

1. "He referred to Khwaja Shamsuddin Muhammad Taziko, the minister in Yazd city, to build a building entitled Dar-al-Shifa. Then, he built a building between the two gates of Dar-al-Shifa and the bazaar, based on the received decree. When he asked Khwaja Sahib Diwan's opinion about the plan, he said that you made it according to your desires not mine. Khwaja Shamsuddin Mohammad Taziko got impatient with this reprimand and decorated the Dar-al-Shifa mansion, school, mosque, drugstore, Mahbas-ul-Majanin (mental hospital), reservoir, and wind turbine on the plan with carved tiles. After designing the plan, he sent it to Sahib Diwan. Sahib said neither this overdo nor that underdo" ([Mostofi Bafghi 2006, 142](#)).
2. Khwaja Ghiyathuddin Naqshband lived during the reign of Shah Abbas I and was one of Maulana Kamal Khataf's descendants. He, who inherited the artistic taste from his ancestors, grew up in the textile environment of Yazd and reached a specific position in fabric design ([Tashakori Bafghi 2012, 309-310](#)).
3. The house in which the people used to swing ([Honarsaray Memari 2008](#)).

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