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Introducing the Masterpieces Adjacent to the Naghsh-e-Jahan Square of Isfahan, Iran

* Dr. Narmin Babazadeh Asbagh

Department of Architecture, Faculty of Architecture, Eastern Mediterranean University, Famagusta, Northern Cyprus

E-mail: n.babazadeh.nba@gmail.com, narmin.babazadeh@emu.edu.tr

Abstract

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Isfahan is called “Nesf-e-Jahan” in the Persian language, which means “half of the world” due to its magnificent constructions, especially during the Safavid period. Naghsh-e-Jahan Square is one of the glorious architectural masterpieces in Isfahan, containing the Imam/Shah Mosque, the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, the Gheysariye Entrance, and Aalighapu. This complex, with its masterpieces, is the symbol of Isfahan in Iran, undervalued internationally. This article aims to introduce these historic buildings worldwide for the preservation of this significant complex in Isfahan. After brief research about Isfahan, the Naghsh-e-Jahan Square, Imam/Shah Mosque, Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, Gheysariye Entrance, and Aalighapu are presented expansively. This historic research is based on a qualitative method and personal observations of the author. The results of this article can be useful for preservationists and conservationists in the field of cultural heritage, architects, interior designers, and urban planners for designing in the historical context of ancient cities.

Keywords: Naghsh-e-Jahan Square; Imam/Shah Mosque; Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque; Gheysariye Entrance; Aalighapu.

1. Introduction

The first part of this article is about Isfahan City, and the second part is about the Naghsh-e-Jahan Square of Isfahan. The third part is entitled Naghsh-e-Jahan Square from the perspective of foreign tourists, while the fourth part is about introducing the Imam/Shah Mosque, the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, Gheysariye Entrance, and Alighapu, and the fifth part is the conclusion.

1.1. The First Date of the Isfahan Building

Yaqut says: In the 7th century, the city of Isfahan in a position that is known today as the city of Ji, and Bakht Nasr built a neighbourhood for them next to the city of Ji, which was called Yehudiyeh, and years passed, Ji was destroyed and the city of Isfahan is Yehudiyeh. It is stated in the history that: Isfahan was the centre of the ruler of Iraq before Alexander, and after Alexander, it fell into the hands of the Al-Tawaif kings, and now the land of Iran was found, and Ardeshir belonged to them, and it was the centre of the Qashon commanders during the Sassanid period. 22nd year of Hijri (Abdullah Bin) Abdullah Bin Atban, who was brave and one of the elders of Ansar and Companions. By Umar's order, he opened it to war, and peace took it from Fad and Safan and had a partial settlement of property, and the same deal was done with Ahnaf and Judea. Darb-e Imam is the shrine of Seyyed Zain Al-Abidin B. Abi Al-Hassan Ali Bin Nizam Al-Din Ahmad Al-Abaj Bin Shams Al-Din Isa Al-Rumi Bin Jamal Al-Din Mohammad Bin Ali Al-Aridi Bin Jafar Bin Mohammad Al-Baqir and the ancestor of the Sadat Imami. Bideh fenced Kashan and separated it from Isfahan. During Harun's caliphate, Isfahan was assigned to Fazl Bin Yahya Barmaki for many years, until it fell into Mamun's share during the division of the world. At the beginning of Mamun, Yahya Harshi came, and then Hassan Bin Sahl went to the presidency.

They wrote: When Mansour recovered, the doctors said that he should go to the best places on earth. They sent doctors and searched, and they found two millijis and named them after Isfahan. During the caliphate of Mo'tasim, in the year 218, his people converted to the Khurmi religion. Mo'tasim sent him to suppress them, and for centuries after him, he brought Abu Dolf Ajli and his descendants under their command and made them the centre of Iraq and Balad Jabal. For one hundred and ninety years, the Abbasid caliphs commanded and forbade, removed, and installed vassals with full power. Omar's porch in the Jame Mosque is the building of Omar Bin Abdulaziz. Build a

rampart around the city, and it was twenty-one thousand steps around the rampart. From the works of that rampart until the year 1333, a part outside the Toghchi Gate up to the Jubareh Gate and below the gate remained some, and from this date, the path of destruction and non-existence was followed. Mir Square is also one of his buildings. Fakhr Al-Dawlah built the Tabarak section, and this name is due to Dayalma, whose race was from Tabaristan. Sahib Bin Ebad built high buildings in Isfahan after laying an underground road from the castle to Mirdar Square. Iwan Sahib Jame Atiq is one of Taleghani's works, and he also built a mosque called Jo Jo Mosque, which is said to have been in the Golbar neighbourhood. After the ruins of centuries and ages, Hakim Dawood Handi built a large mosque next to that mosque, and the foundation of that mosque was changed. And the Hakim Mosque has become famous.

Rukn Al-Dawlah, Muayd Al-Dawlah, Fakhr Al-Dawlah, and Majd Al-Dawlah reigned in Isfahan and Iraq, and sometimes they clashed with the Samanians in Ray and Gorgan, until Mahmoud Ghaznavi overthrew both families, and Masoud Khalqi defeated and plundered Isfahan. Kholanjan Castle, which is known as Kholanjan, was the stronghold of Diyalma, and in the areas of Isfahan, there are two separate villages: First, Ferozan Lanjan, on both sides of Zayandeh River; They say that Kiyomarth was built and had a different name, and in Islam, Atabik Firoz Shah repaired it and it was named after him, and the five blocks of Al-Nanjan, Lanjan and Ghiroma were considered to be part of it, and during the time of the Mongols, the taxes there were determined to be thirteen tomans and half a Mongolian. Gives legal rights. Second, Farfa of Roydasht, which has the name of the city and blocks of Rodashtin, Jarqwieh, and Qahpayeh, which are part of that expensive town; And on some of the mountains of Karun and Lanjan, Molahdeh built court castles and seduced the people, he made Aleb Arslan of Isfahan Dar Al-Sultaneh and made Malk Shah the crown prince, and they added the right of Selaj to the population of the city. Meydan Atiq is from Malak Shah, and there is an inner underground path from Flae Tabarak. Khwaja built a military school and buildings before the Safavid period were mostly from the Seljuk and were repaired by the Timurids. Among the artefacts of Malak Shah, there is a bridge to the Zayandeh River, and the remains of his tomb and Khwaja Nizam Al-Mulk in the Dar Al-Batikh neighbourhood are available in Masteshteh Madrasa. Mohammad Bin Malak Shah ordered that part of Isfahan's fence that was destroyed by Toghral be built, and Berkiarq fenced it, burned the interior of the Jame Mosque, and the people of Isfahan suffered a great calamity.

In the year 649, the Mongols took Isfahan. In the year six hundred ninety, Atabek Afrasiab attacked Isfahan, and the Tatars escaped them and went to Firuzan, and the Mongols took so many prisoners from Firuzan that they were unable to keep them. Adl Ghazan and Khudabandeh kept the people alive and provided for the ruins of their ancestors, and high foundations appeared in their government, whose remains are still in the Jama Mosque. Abdullah Siqlani, who is buried in the Janban Minar Tomb, was in charge of Khudabandeh, and this building of two minarets in Karladan village was built with such strangeness that the minds of the Farangians were also surprised by his order to build it after his death. For approximately seventy-five years, Isfahan was under the rule of the Timurids, then it was transferred to their Emir Jahan, Qaraqoyunlu, and after seventeen years of their rule, that property was also transferred to the Aq Quyunlu settlement, and after seventeen years of their rule, that property was also transferred to the Aq settlement. Quyunlu reached the long horoscope of Amir Hussein Bey for two years. He overthrew the two sultans of Khorasan and Azerbaijan, and Sultan Saeed Timuri and Amir Jahanshah were killed by him, and his descendants remained in the domain of the kingdom for thirty-five years. In nine hundred six, Shah Ismail Safavi opened Iraq and declared the Sunnis publicly Shia, and from that date, the Hanafi and Shafi'i differences were removed, but not long after, it turned into a Haidari dispute and a blessing that two lineages of Sufis: Haidari, attributed to Pirkebir, Seyyed Haidar Tuni, and Nematian to Shah Nematullah Wali Mahani.

During the reign of Shah Ismail, many buildings were built and paid for. The tiling on the door of the Harouniye school, especially the two peacocks above the door that were made for his government, gives a good representation of ancient industries. During the reign of Tahmasab I, Ismail II, and Sultan Mohammad, a charity building was built, and they came to Isfahan from time to time and built Qazvin as Darul Malik. Tahmasab took action to remove water from Karun, and there was no deadline. Shah Abbas, I moved the capital to Isfahan and appreciated the efforts of Abadi. It brought many merchants and artisans from around the world, it became the most important trade centre of the Middle East, from the most precious golden textiles to the humblest rope clothes, went to other Asian kingdoms, and the construction of gold and silver dishes, tapestries, fuel covers, books, pistols, and other weapons. And the glass and tile that connected Iran's great trade to the whole world, built many government buildings and emirates, mosques, schools, tekayas, beqaa, bridges, and bridges. Old Chaharbagh, Jolfai, Isfahan, Shah Mosque, Najaf Abad, Naghsh Jahan Square, and other important buildings were planned. He changed the style of the city, destroyed some bazaars and peasant shops, destroyed them and built them in a new design, and threw the square in the middle.

Armenians brought the Jolfas of Azerbaijan to Isfahan and settled them. At the end of his life, Qadri said at the head of the Karun spring, that they should do their best, but it was not possible to finish it, but it was not possible to finish it, but it was done in the time of Tahmasb and both remained incomplete, because he and Shah Safi were not able to complete the Ottoman war and Shah Abbas the Second to act on other foundations, and Shah Suleiman was sleeping. Rahat and Sultan Hussein's stupidity. During the Safavid era, the classes of people added to the development of Isfahan day by day, and whoever built the building decorated the lines of the doors with the name of the sultan of the era. Shah Abbas II built the Forty Columns and the Upper Tower of Aalighapu, Saadat Abad, and other government buildings. The Safavid government built Aalighapu and Saadat Abad, and other government buildings for two hundred and thirty years. The Safavid government lasted two hundred and thirty years. But for a hundred years, Isfahan had an endless ascending arc until the time of Sultan Hussein, when Farahabad was built, Zayandeh River passed through the city. Hazar Jarib, Jolfa, Saadat Abad, Sichan, Shahrez, and others were called

the upper areas of the city. Chaharbagh Alia and Mabar Takht Foulad were considered southern streets, which were connected by buildings and gardens around them. High palaces and gardens had rivers under them in the style of Janat Jijar, and Shah Abbas II built a river bridge to cross the harem and the secret road to enter the Haft Dast mansion.

Mahmoud attacked several Afghans while building the fence of Isfahan and blocked the supply route from the surrounding area. Then he built a rampart in the middle of the city from the government gate to the end of the city, where houses and houses fell, like the buildings of the Jabreh dynasty. Among the works of Sultan Hussein, Chaharbagh School, Sarai Sultani, and Bazarche Boland are still there. Isfahan was more ruined than the dervishes from the Afghan era and then by the invasion of the Sepahs. The difference between the rulers of Zand and the arrival of Agha Mohammad Khan's Kiwan procession and the successive wars in the areas of Isfahan, they dismantled the old carpet and threw in a new design, the doors of confusion are open, the Kasadi settlement is widespread, and seven houses need one pot. At the beginning of the reign of Naser Al-Din Shah, they wrote a thousand villages and fields that were destroyed, destroyed, and not planted, from arbabi, waqfi, and khalase in the Isfahan register. It can be said that with all the expensive wounds of seventy years, the rest of the memory today is from the life that Mirza Taqi Khan gave to Iran. As a result of his wise leadership and fair policy, the types of people in the field of agriculture and mansions started reviving the fertile lands, building canals and wells, and running rivers.

In the year one thousand two hundred ninety-one, Zal Sultan became the independent ruler, and Mushir Ansari and Rahim Khan were volunteers. After Muzaffaruddin Shah ascended the throne, there was no speechless Diwani Khalsa left in Isfahan, except for a few broken villages on which the majority of the people were Zafaf Abidi, and they were not fortunate enough to take water from it to the crops of the sultan and the nobles. They also bought those villages in the agricultural development and investigated their taxes. In Isfahan, as long as Mushirul Malik Ansari was the minister, there was no one except Zal Sultan to issue a decree on the Khalsa monarchy, especially to give the government to the ulama classes, who do not have any obligation to own property, and he said frankly: What right does Naseruddin Shah have to sell government property? This property is the credit of the government. Rather, the forty-year reign of Zell-Ol-Sultan had scared the seed of Isfahani (Isfahan District Comprehensive Plan and Development Report, 2009, pp. 1-4). For more information about the city of Isfahan and its historic houses, an article by the author entitled "Comparative Analysis of Qajar Historic Houses in Tabriz, Isfahan, Yazd, and Kashan, Regarding their Architectural Forms and Elements" can be studied (Babazadeh-Asbagh, 2022a).

1.2. Isfahan, The Capital of Iran

A - During the Parthian era, Isfahan was the capital of Iran and was considered one of the important "satraps" of that time.

B - During the Sasanian era, Isfahan was one of the important cities of the country, and even families from the seven great Iranian families that held high civil and military positions at that time were Isfahanis, and Isfahan served as the capital.

C - The Dialmeh era: When Hassan Rukn Al-Dawla Deylami destroyed the army of Shamgir and took possession of Isfahan. Since then, Isfahan has become the territory of the Buyid dynasty, and Rukn Al-Dawlah has worked to expand and develop it. On the day when the moon was in the arch, he ordered the construction of a rampart around the city to begin. The perimeter of this rampart was 21,000 paces, and until a few years ago, its remains were present at the Tuqchi Gate, the Juyibareh Gate, and below the gate. In 365 AH, Rukn Al-Dawla, who had reached the age of seventy, fell ill. At this time, he organized a grand banquet in Isfahan. Khosrow chose Azd Al-Dawla as his crown prince. He left Hamadan and Qazvin to Fakhr Al-Dawla and gave Isfahan to Muayyid Al-Dawla, and in 366 AH, he said goodbye to life. Ismail Ibn Abbad, known as Sahib Ibn Abbad, during the ministry of Muayyid Al-Dawla and Fakhr Al-Dawla, made great efforts in the settlement, grandeur, and development of the culture of this city. In addition to his ministry, Sahib Ibn Abbad was a virtuous and learned man, a man of literature, debate, and poetry, and was considered one of the scribes and eloquent speakers of the Arabic language. He was also generous and generous. His library was unparalleled in terms of the number of books. However, he loved the book of songs by Abul Faraj Isfahani. Sahib Bin Abbad died in Ray in the month of Safar in the year 385 AH, and a large group of Dialmehs and Turks, while they were crying and tearing their clothes, and Fakhr Al-Dawlah Daylami was also moving in front of them, brought his body to Isfahan and buried it in the hallway of his house in Toqchi. Now his tomb is a place of pilgrimage for scholars of Isfahan. Among the important works of Dialmeh in Isfahan are the important fortress of Tobark, the Grand Mosque of Jurjir, and the character of Sahib Bin Abbad.

D - Seljuk Period: In 438 AH, Toghrul, the founder of the Seljuk state, besieged the city to conquer Isfahan, but was unable to open it. He besieged Isfahan again in Muharram 442 AH and besieged the city for a year, causing great hardship to the people, until in Muharram 443 AH, he conquered Isfahan and overthrew the Dialme government. Although the people of Isfahan were not friendly with him and he had repeatedly witnessed acts of rebellion and rebellion from them, he was so fond of Isfahan that he made this city his residence for 12 years and spent about five hundred thousand dinars on buildings and renovations around and around the city, shrines, houses and monasteries. Toghrul died in Ray in 455 AH at the age of 70 after a reign of 26 years. During the reign of Alep Arslan and the ministry of Khwaja Nizam Al-Mulk, Isfahan was of interest to the king and his scholarly and political minister. And because he relied on the location of this city and the religion of its people, he chose this city for the residence of his crown prince. Malek Shah is one of the greatest Seljuk sultans, during whose reign the Seljuk state reached its greatest extent and grandeur, and Isfahan became one of the most important and prosperous cities in the world through his efforts and those of Khwaja Nizam Al-Mulk. One of the important works of Malek Shah in

Isfahan was the reform of the calendar and the establishment of the Zij in the year 467 AH, in which the great and famous poet and mathematician Hakim Omar Khayyam also participated, and this is the famous Jalali calendar.

Malekshah, who was in Isfahan during his time as crown prince and resided there, officially chose Isfahan as the capital after the assassination of his father, Alp-Arsalan. Many buildings were built in the corners of this city by his order, and gardens and beautiful places were established, including Karan Garden, Falasan Garden, Ahmad Siyah Garden, Bakr Garden, Shahr Castle and Dez Kouh, which was the royal treasury. Also, the Nizam-ol-Mulk Dome, the Taj-ol-Mulk Dome and the Khajeh Nizam-ol-Mulk School are valuable works of the Seljuk era of Malekshah. The Grand Mosque of Isfahan, which is considered one of the historical architectural masterpieces of the world, is one of the important works of this period. At this time, the wealth of the Seljuk states flowed into Isfahan, so much so that when Malekshah wanted to know about the wealth of the people and Khwaja Nizam Al-Mulk demanded an exorbitant amount from the people to meet the needs of the state; an old woman wrote a letter to the court and accepted the payment alone. It is said that the wealth of the people at this time was so great that they would sprinkle water on the doors of their houses with golden censers in the morning. After the death of Malekshah and the murder of Khwaja Nizam Al-Mulk, the Ismaili invasion of Isfahan, killing and looting increased, and Isfahan became one of the arenas of Ismaili struggles. Therefore, the most important event of the Seljuk period is the bloody Ismaili uprising. At this time, the devotees of Hassan Sabbah had terrified everyone, and when Abu Al-Ala, the commander of the cavalry, By order of Malekshah, was ordered to exterminate the Ismailis. He was killed at night in his house by a dagger from a dirty man who had introduced himself as a servant of God. Although the murderer was caught by the police, fear and terror arose in the hearts of the residents. Abu Al-Ala was a Rashidi man who lived in the Zargaran neighbourhood of Isfahan. The Garden of Eden is also one of the beautiful monuments of the Seljuks, which was in the Paradise Corridor of Isfahan, and six beautiful buildings were built in it for the royal harem.

E - Safavid Period: Isfahan was the capital of Iran in various periods and the favourite of the sultans who ruled there. However, Isfahan was not as important and famous in any of these periods as the Safavid period and the reign of Shah Abbas I and II. During this period, Isfahan had reached perfection and fame in every way and had attracted the nations of the world to itself, and thousands of archaeologists, orientalist, historians, artists, and scientists from all over the world lovingly entered Isfahan. Most of them, after a long stay, have written down their astonishing observations in valuable books and published them in the world, each of which is an undeniable document of the antiquity and greatness of the culture of Iran. In the year 1000 AH, Shah Abbas I moved the capital of the country from Qazvin to Isfahan, which had a very privileged military position. After that, it was not long before this city became one of the most beautiful cities and capitals in the world in terms of wealth, urban planning, magnificent palaces, historical buildings, such as large and magnificent mosques and schools, beautiful and spacious bazaars, and strong, technical and unique bridges. The German Walter Minch writes: "Shah Abbas moved the capital to Isfahan in the year 1598 AD. This good choice based on a correct idea. Because Isfahan is not only located in the heart of Iran but also has all the conditions necessary for a great capital." Madame Dieulafoy writes: "It was not long before Isfahan had a population of 600,000 people. That is, equivalent to the population of Paris during the time of Louis XIV" (Dieulafoy, 1884).

The Italian traveller Pietro Dellavalle considered Isfahan at that time to be more beautiful and important than any other place in the East, even Constantinople.

Isfahan became the capital during the reign of Shah Abbas I and remained the capital of the Safavid state for one hundred and fifty years until the disastrous reign of Shah Sultan Hussein. The most important achievements of the Safavid dynasty in Isfahan are as follows:

- 1- Establishing foreign relations with many nations of the world and bringing orientalist, historians, archaeologists and foreign religious missionaries to Isfahan.
- 2- The expansion of foreign trade and commerce.
- 3- The construction of roads, caravanserais, historical buildings, royal palaces, promenades, squares, mosques, schools, and unique bridges.
- 4- The establishment of seminaries, art centres, and the publication and promotion of the Shia religion and Shia books.
- 5- The relocation of Armenians and Georgians from Armenia and Georgia to Isfahan and their settlement in Jolfa and Fereydounshahr.
- 6- The establishment of harems, wine houses, coffee houses, opium dens, and so on.
- 7- The cultivation of torturers, executioners, cannibals, and crematoriums.

And many other remarkable and contradictory matters, each of which was remarkable and unique in its own way.

During the Pahlavi period and in recent years, many valuable works of Safavid architecture have been restored and have retained their beauty after centuries. Several historic buildings, monuments, and royal palaces of the Safavid dynasty were destroyed by the Qajar sultans and rulers, especially Zell-Ol-Sultan, to sell their materials and even cut down plane trees for this purpose.

H - Later and contemporary periods: During the time of the last Qajar king, Ahmad Shah, Isfahan was a candidate for the capital of Iran for a while. Ahmad Shah seriously intended to move the capital to Isfahan, but due to some political developments and opposition from some courtiers, this did not work. Also, in recent years, there have been several whispers that to decentralise from Tehran, the capital should be moved to another place, with Isfahan being one of the proposed and candidate cities for the capital. But this plan was also eventually rejected, and the whispers died down. However, Isfahan has been recognised and declared as the artistic capital of Iran by an official decree of the Council of Ministers (Isfahan District Comprehensive Plan and Development Report, 2009, pp. 5-6). For obtaining more information about the city of Isfahan and its historic

neighbourhoods, another published book chapter of the author titled “Tomb of Sultan Bokht Agha and Two Minarets of Dardasht Neighbourhood in Isfahan, Iran” can be read (Babazadeh-Asbagh, 2022b).

1.3. Geographical Characteristics of Isfahan

To examine the geographical features of the region, mainly from the information contained in the report of the development and construction plan of Isfahan district by Naghsh Jahan-Pars Consulting Engineers and the report of Dr. Mohammad Khosro Shahi, who has a master's degree in watershed engineering from the University of Tehran and a doctorate in climate-hydrology from the university Tarbiat Modares and also the information listed in the website of the Isfahan Science Center and the House of Nations have been used. Also, to conclude the climate studies of the region, and examine its role in the context of the books “Climate and Architecture” by Morteza Kasmai (Kasmai, 2013) and “Principles of Applied Hydrology” (Dr. Amin Alizadeh) and the comprehensive plan report of Isfahan Scientific Research Town by Paul Shir Consulting Engineers have been used. Isfahan, the city and centre of the province of the same name in the form of Iran, is located at 51 and 39 east longitudes and 32 and 38 north latitude, 414 kilometres south of Tehran, in the Jalga Sabz and Khorram Zayandeh River and the slopes of the Zagros Mountains with a moderate climate and about 030 /127/1 population. The most important ancient works of Isfahan are: Jame Mosque (Seljuq period) - Imam/Shah Mosque - Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque - Aalighapu - Forty Pillars - Imam Sadiq Mosque and School (Chaharbagh) - Thirty-three Bridges (Allah Vardi Khan Bridge) - Khajo Bridge - Shahrستان Bridge - Hakim Mosque - Minaret Janban - Hasht Behesht Mansion - Seyed Mosque - Sahib Ibn Ebad's Tomb - Imami School - Nader Shah School - Mala Abdullah School - Tombs of Sultan Sanjar, Malik Shah, appointed to Khwaja Nizam Al-Mulk, Baba Qasim, Allameh Majlisi - Jolfa churches that three Its important churches are: Bedham Church (Bethlehem) - Vank Church – and Hazrat Maryam Church (Isfahan District Comprehensive Plan and Development Report, 2009, p. 6).

1.3.1. Geographical Location

Isfahan province is in the geographical range of 31 degrees and 45 minutes to 34 degrees and 30 minutes north latitude and 45 degrees and nine minutes to 55 degrees and 15 minutes east longitude with an area of 105 thousand square kilometres (about 4.6% of the total area of the country). This province is from the north by the provinces of Semnan and Qom from the south to the Fars province, from the west to the provinces of Kahkiloyeh, Boyer Ahmad and Chahar Mahal Bakhtiari, and from the east to Khorasan and Yazd provinces are limited. Isfahan province is very diverse in terms of water and air, and generally from west to east and from south to north, air humidity decreases and its temperature increases. The amount of precipitation and air temperature strongly depend on the altitude of the place. Most of the rainfall falls in the cold seasons, and a small amount of it falls in the hot seasons. The area of Isfahan City is 15.852 square kilometres, and it has six districts, 13 cities, and 19 villages (Isfahan District Comprehensive Plan and Development Report, 2009, p. 7).

1.3.2. Natural Features of the Area

Isfahan province can be divided into three regions: mountain, plain, and desert. According to the development and construction (comprehensive) plan, Isfahan district includes eight cities of Isfahan, Barkhar, Khomeini Shahr, Najaf Abad, Flavarjan, Lanjan, Mobarakeh, and Shahreza, with a total area of nearly 35 thousand square kilometres, except for the plains of the province, which are in Ain. Now it also forms a large part of the Zayandeh River watershed. The area is about 41 thousand square kilometres. The Zagros mountain range, with northwest and southeast directions and the wide plains of the Zayandeh River catchment area form the general topography of the region. In addition, the Zayandeh Rood River, with its west and east flow, and the Gaukhoni swamp in the east are among the natural indicators of the area. The direction of the general and natural slope of the area is west-east, and its average value is up to 3.5 per thousand in mountainous areas and up to 2.5 per thousand in plains. The most important plains in the Abatand region are Lanjanat Plain (1714 square kilometres), Mimeh Plain (1037 square kilometres), Dehgh and Alavijah Plains (651 square kilometres), Morche Khort Plain (1225 square kilometres), Najaf Abad and Koron Plains (1549 square kilometres) (Isfahan District Comprehensive Plan and Development Report, 2009, p. 8).

1.3.3. Faults and Seismicity of the Region

In the Isfahan region and its surroundings, there are many faults, the most important of which are Rokh, Lambalagh, Kolah Ghazi, Zafra, etc., which have been the centre of relatively strong earthquakes throughout history. However, due to the remoteness of these earthquake-prone centres and centres, Isfahan City and the surrounding cities are far away from the damage and risk of earthquakes. According to the latest zoning maps of relative earthquake risk in Iran, the studied area has a low relative risk in terms of earthquakes. In general, it can be said that the southwestern mountainous areas of the Isfahan region are more powerful in terms of seismicity. However, other areas of the region, which almost coincide with the subsidence of Isfahan, are in the medium risk range in terms of earthquakes (Isfahan District Comprehensive Plan and Development Report, 2009, p. 9).

1.3.4. Climatic Features of the Region

Central Iran is in the mid-latitude high-pressure area. So, in the summers, it is affected by warm and dry northeast winds, and in winters, when the medium latitude high-pressure belt moves to the south, it is affected by western winds. The amount of rainfall that is received by the winds in this area is nearly 120 mm. In addition to the limitation of atmospheric precipitation, the location of the region in the east of the Zagros mountains and the west of the desert

has created more restrictions for atmospheric precipitation and a high rate of evaporation. The vegetation conditions of central Iran, according to the above factors, indicate this is characteristic. What distinguishes Isfahan from other parts of the desert region is the presence of the Zayandeh Rood River; otherwise, Isfahan could have had drier and more barren conditions like other areas on the edge of the desert. The Zagros mountain range causes western winds to lose most of their moisture in the west of the Zagros. The average annual rainfall in the Isfahan region is 120 mm, while the evaporation potential of the region reaches about 3200 mm per year. High temperature, lack of rainfall, uneven rainfall regime, and high evaporation potential, in total, cause soil salinity and desertification of the region.

Also, the share of rainfall in different seasons of the year for autumn, winter, and spring is 25, 50, and 25% respectively. Summers in the Isfahan region are hot and dry and mostly without rain. The rainiest month in the district is March, and the least rainy month is Shahrivar. Air temperature changes in the observed area increase from west to east. The absolute maximum temperature in Varzaneh is 42 and the absolute minimum temperature in Isfahan and Shahreza reaches -17 degrees Celsius. According to the annual average daily temperature in the meteorological station in the region in Celsius, it is as follows: Isfahan 1/16, Shahreza 3/14, Mimeh 8/11, Najaf Abad 5/14, Varzaneh 4/15. In general, the climate of the region on a macro scale is influenced by the general circulation of the atmosphere, wind currents, low-pressure and high-pressure centres, air masses, and western silicon. Basically, climate elements are influenced by factors such as altitude, latitude, geographical location, etc. So far, many climatic classifications have been done to separate the climate of the regions, and for the climatic classification of the province, various methods have been investigated, including the method proposed by Dr Karimi. The method proposed by Dr. Karimi is recommended to separate the climates of the central region of Iran. Calculation of humidity index (for dry conditions), heat index (for temperature conditions in summer), and cold index (to determine the severity of cold in winter). The four divisions of Iran's climate, which were proposed and accepted by Dr. Hassan Ganji with brief changes from the coupon division and considering the country's geographical complications, are as follows: Isfahan is in a hot and dry climate, which features harsh and cold winters and hot and dry summers. According to the distribution of geographical features in the central plateau, two distinct climate zones can be identified:

1. Semi-desert region
2. Desert region (Isfahan District Comprehensive Plan and Development Report, 2009, p. 10).

1.3.5. Rainfall

The location of the Zagros highlands in the region is such that it prevents the penetration of western silicon into the inner regions of Iran, so that these highlands act like a wall against the western silicon and absorb a significant amount of it before entering the inner regions of Iran. After passing the Zagros mountains, the amount of rainfall gradually decreases.

The twenty-year average annual rainfall in the region is 125 mm, the highest amount of which is reported in January (22.6 mm) and the lowest in September (zero). Also, winter rainfall in this region was 47%, autumn 29.4%, spring 23%, and summer 0.6% (Isfahan District Comprehensive Plan and Development Report, 2009, p. 11).

1.3.6. Humidity

The average annual relative humidity of the study area is reported to be 42%. Among the months of the year, January has the highest monthly relative humidity with 63.6% and July has the lowest monthly relative humidity with 25.4%. The maximum values of relative humidity were in the early hours of the morning and on winter days or when it rains (Isfahan District Comprehensive Plan and Development Report, 2009, p. 11).

1.3.7. Number of Frost Days

The average number of freezing days per year in this region is 72 days (Isfahan District Comprehensive Plan and Development Report, 2009, p. 11).

1.3.8. Temperature

The average annual temperature of the studied area is about 16.1 degrees Celsius. The highest average monthly temperature in July was 28.7 degrees Celsius, and the lowest average monthly temperature was 1.3 degrees Celsius in January (Isfahan District Comprehensive Plan and Development Report, 2009, p. 11).

1.3.9. Average Annual Minimum and Maximum Temperature

The average annual minimum temperature is 9.3 degrees Celsius, and the average annual maximum temperature is 22.8 degrees Celsius. Also, the absolute maximum temperature recorded in the study is 41 degrees, and the absolute minimum temperature has reached -13 degrees Celsius (Isfahan District Comprehensive Plan and Development Report, 2009, p. 12).

1.3.10. Wind

According to the data of the Isfahan synoptic station, in total:

1. The predominant annual wind in this region is the southwest wind, which is more frequent and faster.
2. The dominant wind is the western wind, and in terms of annual wind speed,
A- Southwest winds have the highest speed with 3.89 meters per second.

B- North winds have the lowest speed with 2.01 meters per second (Isfahan District Comprehensive Plan and Development Report, 2009, p. 12).

1.3.11. Local Winds

In addition to what was said about the wind and air movement in the region, other winds blow during the day and night in a smaller range. The cause of these winds is local elevations and lowlands, and for this reason, these winds are called local winds.

Local winds are winds whose expansion and blowing area are limited and usually on a small scale. These types of winds are usually named with local names.

The local winds in the Isfahan region are: "right wind" or "upwind wind", and "left wind" or "upwind wind" (Isfahan District Comprehensive Plan and Development Report, 2009, p. 12).

1.4. Determining the Right Direction for the Building

The effective factors in determining the right direction for the building are:

1. The side angle and height of the sun in the desired latitude, and the hot and cold seasons of the year, to use as much solar energy and sunlight in the cold season and take advantage of the shade in the hot season.
2. For favourable winds, use natural ventilation as much as possible.
3. The natural condition of the slope of the land and other natural factors in the place to favour natural conditions, avoid adverse natural conditions and adapt architecture and nature as much as possible.
4. The number of internal spaces required and the number of private spaces needed in the building.

It should be noted that studies have been conducted on the issue of determining the right direction for the building in the Isfahan region, and the summary of the results is as follows:

- In the book "Climate and Architecture" (Mortaza Kasmai), Iran's regions are divided into four climates: cold, moderate and humid, hot and dry, and hot and humid. The Isfahan region is in a hot and dry climate, and the most suitable direction for the building is suggested to be 25 degrees southeast. This "proper direction" can be rotated from 15 to 35 degrees east (Kasmai, 2013).

- In the book "Styles of Iranian Architecture" (Professor Mohammad Karim Pirnia), it is mentioned "Roun-e Esfahani" and its direction facing the southeast, which is a clear example of the orientation of Naghsh Jahan Square (Pirnia, 2013).

1.5. Determining the Qibla Direction

Using the coordinates of the studied site and the holy city of Mecca, the "Qiblah direction" is equal to 231 degrees and 20 minutes to the geographic north. In other words, the Qibla direction is about 51 degrees and two minutes from south to west (Isfahan District Comprehensive Plan and Development Report, 2009, p. 13).

1.6. Ancient Streets of Isfahan

The city of Isfahan, due to its long history, grandeur, and vastness, has numerous streets with old names, some of which have been recorded and registered in historical documents. However, over the centuries, due to changes in governments, some of these names have changed, causing problems for historians. Most of these streets were among the most beautiful and widest streets of their time, but they were not compatible with the increasing population and modern means of transportation and were not suitable for these means. Especially since some streets have not been accessible due to their location and historical importance. Some of them, after centuries, still show traces of their grandeur, with the difference that they were previously used for goods and carriages, and today they are used for buses. Many streets have been laid out desirably, and new wide and long streets have emerged in them that can bear the heavy burden of traffic of a densely populated and industrial city, but despite all this, there are still shortcomings. Isfahan is currently divided into ten large districts in terms of municipal zoning. There are a total of 192 new and old streets in these ten districts. Fortunately, most of them are decorated with the names of famous poets of Isfahan and Iran and other famous personalities. The number of streets in the ten different districts of Isfahan varies according to the population and size of each district, as follows: District one has 20 streets, District two has four streets, District three has 27 streets, District four has 15 streets, District five has 32 streets, District six has 35 streets, District seven has nine streets, District eight has 25 streets, District nine has six streets, District 10 has 19 streets.

1.7. The Range of Historic Context

The scope of the historic context of Isfahan city covers 1300 hectares. In this area, the ancient axis of Isfahan City includes the urban development of the Safavid era, Chaharbagh Abbasi, Chaharbagh Bala, and river sanctuaries. Due to the preservation of the fine architectural works and urban planning patterns existing in the historical context and to prevent intrusions, misplaced decisions, and incomplete implementation, in 1336, the Supreme Council of Urban Planning and Architecture of Iran deferred any changes, transformations and designs in this area. It was approved by the council.

2. Naghsh-e-Jahan Square of Isfahan

Squares are among the most important urban spaces that have different functions at different urban scales. The most important square is the one that opens onto the Grand Mosque, and in Isfahan, in addition to the Grand Mosque, it houses the government building and the main part of the bazaar. Before the Safavid era, the old square, which was located next to the Grand Mosque, had this function, and in addition to the Grand Mosque, there was also the royal

palace, the Naghqe Khane mansion, and the Qaisarieh mansion around it. However, with Isfahan becoming the capital, this role was taken over by Naghqe Jahan Square, and the New Grand Mosque, the government building (Aalighapu), the Qaisarieh gate, and the Naghqe Khane mansion were built around it. An examination of the buildings around the square shows that this square played the role of the government centre and was a place of connection and communication between the government and the people, through government announcements, parades, and the ruler's presence among the people during ceremonies and celebrations. In addition to its governmental function, where military exercises, ceremonies, parades, official ceremonies, and sometimes punishments of criminals took place, Naghsh-e Jahan Square also had commercial and social functions and played an important communication role in the urban road network. Since this square had a commercial function and urban activities were carried out around it, the body surrounding the square was allocated to rooms and shops, and some urban buildings next to them, such as four important buildings in terms of government, social, religious, and commercial aspects, ... the Abbasid Grand Mosque, Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, Gheysariye Gate, and Aalighapu Mansion, are located in a way that is combined with these rooms. Such a combination of bodies causes the inner space of the square to be in strong connection and solidarity with its surrounding context, and in other words, a positive urban space is formed that has clear boundaries and identity within the context. In addition, the square is a joint between the mosque and the palace, the mosque and the bazaar, and ... it is a joint between the other world and the material world, and in this connection is the manifestation of the cosmic and sacred order.

This square is pre-designed and has a rectangular geometric shape with dimensions of about five hundred and ten meters in length and one hundred and sixty meters in width, and proportions of about one to three. Since there is no feeling of confinement due to the low ratio of height to width of the square of about one to ten, and the space of the square is a wide and open space to suit its functions, but at the same time, due to the formation of the facade around the square that divides the surrounding body into small components, in addition to creating rhythm, it makes the space human-like and the scale of the square space is a human scale that does not create a feeling of being overwhelmed by the space in the viewer.

“The water sources of Naghsh-e Jahan Square were supplied by two Madi-e-Fedin and Madi or Joy Shah; Madi-e-Fedin entered the city from the southwest and branched in the centre of the city. One of them moved along the bazaar and in the central part, namely Sarlat Mohammad Hassan Bek, it branched into three branches, and one branch of it, after draining the bathhouse and the Khosrow Agha Mosque and Chehelstoun on the northern front of the bazaar, flowed into the pond located in front of Gheysariye Entrance and finally exited from the east of the city. The other branch went north and, after branching again, it passed through the north and northeastern outskirts and exited the city. Joy Shah or Madi Shah entered from the west and entered the Safavid royal gardens and palaces complex in its central part and entered the square in such a way that it entered the complex through Hasht Behesht Garden by passing by a Saqakhaneh and Haj Kazem Mosque, and by passing by Chehelstoun Garden and Goldasteh Garden and the palaces of the Safavid Haram House and by passing through the Khurshid Passage, it entered Naghsh-e Jahan Square and ended up in the pond located in front of it. It flowed from the Khan of the Abbasi Grand Mosque and after watering the pond in front of the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, which does not exist today, it flowed into the pond in front of the Gheysariye Gate, which also does not exist today, but its colour is defined and shown by a special green space, where it merged with the material water of the Fedin and then went to the northeast of the square and watered the Mulla Abdullah School at the northeastern end of the square” (Ahari, 2001, pp. 261-262). “Around the square in the past, there were channels made of black lime mortar, which is a mixture of ash, sand, slaked lime, and clay, in which water was constantly moving. The said mortar must be constantly in the vicinity of moisture to ensure both its resistance and impenetrability” (Abouei, 1997, p. 6).

“In the design of the new Safavid capital, the city centre is moved from the old square to a new square built on the site of the Seljuk gardens, and around it, newly founded neighbourhoods are spread out with a geometric and pre-thought-out design around the two north-south axes of Chaharbagh and east-west of Zayandeh Rood. But the old texture with its organic order still contains an important part of the urban foundation that has formed around the bazaar, leading to the old square. The connection between this old organic order and that new geometric order requires a very delicate and thoughtful design so as not to turn it into an incongruous and alien combination with the existing design. If Naghsh-e Jahan Square is the final link of this connection, the bazaar complex, which begins with a geometric order and is guided on its path with an organic order to connect to the old existing bazaar, is the intermediate link of this connection. In this plan, the projection, the order of water that manifests itself in a branch of the Maadiy-e-Fedin, plays a significant role. A study of the intermediate links that form the connection between the Naghsh-e-Jahan Square and the old part of the bazaar (especially the Mulla Abdullah School, the Saray-e-Mukhlis, and the Great Jeddah School) shows that their arrangement completely follows the Maadiy-e-Fedin path, which each time enters the building from one direction and exits in the opposite direction, and Along with the soil order, which is following the water order, it guides the path of the bazaar. The Shah Stream or Shah Stream, which waters the Safavid gardens and palaces, plays a role in the formation of the composition of this complex in a similar way to the Fedin Stream. This stream passes through the Safavid palaces and gardens, and the Safavid shrine and enters the Naghsh-e Jahan square. In this complex, various combinations of ponds, waterfalls, and even artificial lakes were created using the water of the stream, which is mentioned in travelogues, especially Chardin's travelogue (Chardin, 1686). In other words, here too, material water is consciously used as an important element in the design of this urban complex” (Ahari, 2001, p. 263).

2.1. A Review of the History of Naghsh-e-Jahan Square

The exact date of the construction of the square and the complexes around it is not clear and proven. The oldest date mentioned concerning the construction of Naghsh-e-Jahan Square is 999 AH, which is in the book *Naqwah Al-Athar fi Dhikr Al-Akhyar*, written by Mahmoud Ibn Hedayatullah Afushteh-i Natanzi. In this book, it is mentioned regarding Naghsh-e-Jahan Square: "... [The king] entered the city in the early part of Sha'ban Al-Mu'azzam, the year of the seventy-ninth and nineteenth (996 AH) ... and despite the Naghsh-e-Jahan Garden, which is not a garden or building like it in the palace of Isfahan, because Farhad Bey had destroyed it, the procession descended on the Hussainiyeh buildings. "It was a great honour." In another place, it is mentioned that "... [Farhad Beg] destroyed the Naghsh-e-Jahan garden, which was the envy of the garden of paradise, and cut down all the old trees in that garden to build its mansion." It is also mentioned in another place: "Shah Abbas I, under Al-Mulk Qaim Al-Adl and Al-Amara, ordered the construction of the Gheysariye mansion in the same way as it was in Tabriz, and he repaired all the old markets, and he designed many shops and four souks, which were completed in a short time." Then he talks about the levelling of the Naghsh-e Jahan square for polo and greyhound racing, and writes that they used river sand to level the square.

Regarding the location and location of the place, before the construction of Naghsh-e Jahan square during the Safavid era, based on studies conducted in historical books such as "Rahet-e Sadur and Ayeh-e Sadur" regarding the history of the Seljuk period, it seems that Naghsh-e Jahan square was called Kushk square, as it is mentioned in this book regarding the reign of Sultan Barkiarq, the son of Malekshah, that in Ramadan 487 AH, when this king was defeated in a fight with "Tetsh", he obeyed his brother Mahmoud, who entered Isfahan on this date, and two Seljuk generals who were supporters of Mahmoud immediately arrested Barkiarq in "Kushk square". During the Timurid era, there were gardens called Naghsh-e Jahan at the site of Naghsh-e Jahan Square, which were the residences of Timurid princes and emirs. One of the historical books that contains information about Naghsh-e Jahan square and important historical events up to the year 873 AH, that is, until the assassination of Sultan Abu Saeed Timuri, the book "Rawza Safa" by "Mohammad Bin Khwand Shah Balkhi, known as Mir Khwand" mentions in this regard that: Timur arrived in Isfahan on Thursday, the 10th of Rajab (795 AH) and stopped at Naghsh-e Jahan for five days and went from Isfahan to Golpayegan. In the book "Tarih Jadid Yazd" by Ahmad Bin Ali Bin Hussein Bin Kateb, it is also mentioned regarding the area of Naghsh-e Jahan the area of Naghsh-e Jahan was a garden for the Timurid emirs to live in. During the Safavid era, as mentioned earlier, during the reign of Sultan Mohammad Khodabandeh, the fourth Safavid king and grandfather of Shah Abbas the Great, Farhad Beg, the ruler of Isfahan at the time, began to destroy and level the gardens of Naghsh-e Jahan, preparing the ground for the construction of Naghsh-e Jahan Square by Shah Abbas the Great.

"Iskander Beiyg Monshi, the author of *Tarikh Alam Ara Abbasi*, talks about the events of 1011 AH and 1017 AH, about the celebration of Nowruz in the Naghsh-e-Jahan Garden. According to Iskander Monshi, Shah Abbas allocated a huge amount of money to beautify this square during 1020 and 1021 AH, and at this time, his second development program began. In this regard, Andre Godard says in his book *Atrak Iran: Up to this time*, Shah's Square remained the same as it was before Shah Abbas, with the slight difference that for the comfort of polo players, the surface of this old square had been covered with river sand and the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque had also been built. In 1020 AH, the Shah ordered the surrounding areas of the square to be filled with buildings of uniform architecture and a single shape, so that the square would be shaped and the main buildings would be more prominent. It was at this time that he ordered the construction of the large gate of the Shah's Mosque on one of the small sides of the square and the bazaar and the Naqareh Khaneh on the other small side of the square. Gad. Gheysariye, the royal bazaar, was built later, according to the writings of Eskandar Monshi, in 1029. The large and magnificent gate, which was built in the same way as the gate of the Shah Mosque, was initially nothing more than the entrance to the commercial district. On the other hand, there was not much beyond the magnificent entrance of the Shah Mosque in 1026. Delawalah says that they had only laid the foundation of the mosque and were working with all their might. The construction of this mosque was completed after the death of Shah Abbas. Therefore, except for Gheysariye, the Shah Mosque, and the palace known as the Ladies' Gate, the beautification of the square and its surroundings had progressed greatly in 1026" (Godard, 1962, pp. 283-286).

At the time of the construction of the bazaar around the square, there were only commercial chambers on one side of the bazaar, and the front facing the open space of the square was in the form of a portico and open space, like Ganjali Khan Square in Kerman. In the second stage, which, according to Andre Godard's words, was around 1026 AH, the second part of the square, namely the rooms facing the square, as well as the second floor of the square, were added in the form of balconies on the facade and rooms behind them, which, in addition to creating rhythm, increased the visual value and made the facades of the four main buildings of the square more visible. Regarding the use of the rooms on the second floor of the square, it is mentioned in old texts, including Chardin's travelogue, that the rooms on the second floor were rented to people to watch the ceremonies held in the square, including polo games and other ceremonies. Regarding the condition of Naghsh-e Jahan Square during the Qajar period, what can be gleaned from historical texts of this period, especially travelogues, is that Zell-Ol-Sultan, the son of Nasser Al-Din Shah, while ruling Isfahan, showed some lack of love for historical monuments and buildings, especially the square. During Zell-Ol-Sultan's power, most of the rooms in the square were like barracks. During the Pahlavi period, many measures were taken to protect and restore the buildings of the square and its chambers, including the reconstruction of a part of the western bazaar of the square, which was later continued after the victory of the revolution.

"Due to the penetration of moisture into the foundations of the chambers around the square, a rotation was created in the foundation, and the additional sections of the second floor were ahead of the lower sections, and the buildings

were on the verge of collapse. The late Ma'arefi, following the plan to organise the square, carved out this protruding part from top to bottom to a depth of 30 to 50 centimetres and created a new facade around the damaged parts. Due to the deep damage in the past, although the foundations of the buildings were not in contact with water and moisture, the settlement of the foundations and the protrusion of the damaged buildings continued until the mid-1940s, under the supervision of the technical office of the National Organisation for the Preservation of Antiquities in Isfahan, the plan to restore the square was seriously prioritized in the restoration programs (Chardin, 1686). By doing several soundings in front of the foundations, the foundation is reached, and its dimensions are discovered. Then, using metal profiles, the problem of stitching and doweling the foundations is solved, and the beams are so-called "wooden" to take the load of the arch, so that they can strengthen the foundation. Most of the reinforcement is from the front, and the present paving was done after the reinforcement stage of these chambers" (Abouei, 1997, pp. 6-7).

The addition of support or a pier to support the second floor of the square and the construction of the arch of the Mesgarha Bazaar and the covering of its entrance to the square, which was previously on the verge of destruction, as well as many protective measures taken by the architect Ma'arfi in the Shah Mosque and Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque. After the victory of the Islamic Revolution, the conservation and restoration of the buildings of the square was still considered and has continued, but the most important operation carried out in the field of conservation of the square is the restoration and revitalization of the chambers of the second floor of the square, which began in 1376. This operation includes light cleaning measures by removing the attached piers from the Pahlavi period and other subsequent additions, removing the earth from the chambers' piers, lightening the structures, and strengthening the piers after the earth was removed and the debris was removed. Reaching the top of the original pillars is done by several rows of brickwork and reinforcement with concrete slabs, placing metal coils in both longitudinal and transverse directions, reconstructing the vaults of the chambers in their original style and geometry and reviving the chambers with museum use (Abouei, 2009).

Shah Abbas I, to develop the city of Isfahan and create a new centre within the current area of Naghsh-e Jahan Square, undertook to construct the square and its surrounding elements. This centre allowed Shah Abbas to carefully monitor the elements of religion and economy alongside the powerful elements of his government, and in three separate but adjacent bases. On the one hand, he built the new Grand Mosque, or the former Shah Mosque opposite the Gheysariye Bazaar, and on the other hand, he built the Aalighapu Palace, opposite the school and the mosque that was built in the name of the Shiite scholar and jurist of that time, Sheikh Lotfollah Meisi Ameli. In this way, the square is formed, but its western side is connected to the government palaces and the royal harem, so gates are formed on this front to prevent the movement of ordinary people. The gate of the Sun Palace, the Aalighapu gate, and a gate to the Chahar Hoz square, all of which led to government buildings and the government court. However, the eastern side is still closely connected to the market and its adjacent historical context, and thus the connection between the government and the people remains (Honarfard, 1971, p. 401).

3. Naghsh-e Jahan Square from the Perspective of Foreign Tourists

One of the oldest travelogues about Isfahan is by Venetian travellers, and the most important one is Giovanni Maria Angioiello's. Giosafat Barbaro is another Venetian traveller who started travelling to the East in 1436 and visited Iran, and described Isfahan briefly. Giovanni Maria Angioiello was chosen as the Venetian ambassador to visit Iran in 1471, explaining the games or sports in the Naghsh-e-Jahan Square of Isfahan, adapted originally from one of the squares in Tabriz (Abouei, 2023, pp. 125-127; Amiri, 1970) (See **Table 1**).

3.1. Chardin

Between the dyers' market is a four-souq that has a dome on it and a large window that illuminates the market. In general, all markets receive light from the openings in the roof. This four-souq leads from the right to a square that is as large as the Shah Square in Paris and not as beautiful. This square is called the New Square or the Naghsh-e Jahan Square, which means (square of coloured glasses) because to build it, they demolished a large palace that was called (the Palace of coloured glasses). And in another place, he says: This square is one of the most beautiful squares in the world, which is in the shape of a square, 440 feet long and 160 feet wide. He said that around the square, there is a stream of brick and black lime, which is harder than stone. This stream is six feet wide and its plinths are of black stone, and its pavement is one foot higher, and the width of these stones is such that four people can easily walk on it side by side. There is a space of 20 feet between this stream and the rooms around the square (Chardin, 1686) (See **Table 1**).

3.2. Adam Olearius

The large square of the city, where transactions are carried out and is also considered a place of recreation for the people, is quite large and spacious, and we have not seen anything like it anywhere in the world in terms of size. This square is about 700 paces long and 250 paces wide. On the west side of this square, where the royal palace and the Shah's court are located, there is a row of regular two-story buildings with wide verandas built in front of them. In the rooms of these buildings, dyers and goldsmiths are busy working and selling their goods. In front of these buildings, a regular and neat row of boxwoods has been planted, which gives them a special beauty. In front of these boxwoods, there are also stone basins filled with water, and people use their water for drinking, cleaning, and washing. On the east side of the square, facing the royal palace, there is a wide covered corridor where the shops of Isfahan guilds and artisans are located. Iranian craftsmen are not accustomed to working in their homes and creating their artefacts, but rather they make them in their shops and in front of passers-by, and when passing through the

streets and alleys, their work can be clearly observed. On this covered corridor, right in front of the royal palace, they have built rooms called the Naqar Khaneh, and Iranian musicians play the Naqar Khaneh at sunset and when the king leaves or enters the city. The Naqar Khaneh consists of several long and short trumpets called “Serena”, “Karna”, “Qara nei” and “Tabol”, which together produce an ear-splitting sound (Olearius, 2000, pp. 602-607).

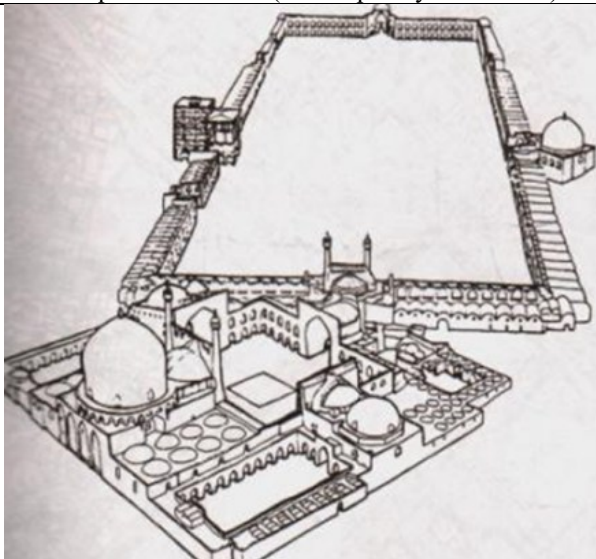
3.3. Engelbert Kaempfer

The Great Square was built by Shah Abbas the Great at the same time as the adjacent royal palace and the village of Abbas Abad. This square is far superior to the Old Square in grandeur and splendour, and since it is also the atrium of the palace, we will describe it in detail below. The shape of the square is rectangular, 660 paces long from north to south and 212 paces wide. Two-story vaulted shelves are built all around it. The upper space is divided into small rooms, and the lower floor is a pedestrian passage, but it is also used mostly as large and spacious rooms for retailers and craftsmen who make and sell all kinds of goods. The uniformity and uniformity of the buildings around the square is better broken by a few luxurious buildings. On the western side, Aalighapu has its prominence, and a short distance from it is worth mentioning the vestibule leading to the harem. On the eastern side, opposite it, the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque attracts attention with its magnificent and brilliant tiles. Next to the wall of this mosque are those who, upon receiving a few Shahis, immediately set to work and depict scenes of war. The facade of the Shah Mosque occupies the middle of the southern width of the square; it is a lofty and truly luxurious building whose arches are inimitable. On the north side, the entrance to the great Gheysariye Entrance Bazaar, which is no less beautiful than the Shah Mosque, faces it. Inside the square, on the north and south sides, two poles are used as targets and destinations in polo or horse racing. In the middle of the square, a very high mast is also installed, on top of which, whenever the king wishes, a golden cup worth one hundred tomans is placed, and this prize is for the one who can pull it down with a spear while standing on all fours (Kaempfer, 1684, pp. 185-194) (See **Table 1**).

3.4. Eugene Flandin

In the southern part of the city, all the major buildings have been erected. In this part, there is a large place called Shah Square or Royal Square, on one side of which the dome and minarets of the Great Mosque add to the splendour of this square. This place is one of the most magnificent places in the world. Its space is rectangular, and inside it is another rectangle surrounded by a water stream (Abouei, 1997, pp. 14-15) (See **Table 1**).

Table 1. The Historic Maps, Old Plans, Ancient Sketches and Current Pictures (all taken by the author) of Naghsh-e Jahan Square of Isfahan (Developed by the Author).



Perspective of Naghsh-e Jahan Square (Memarian, 2003, p. 290).



The Plan of Naghsh-e Jahan Square in Thomas Herbert's Travelogue (Abouei, 1995, p. 747).



Plan of Naghsh-e Jahan Square (Abouei, 1995, p. 748).



View of Naghsh-e Jahan Square from Imam/Shah Mosque (Abouei, 1995, p. 749).



The plan of Naghsh-e-Jahan Square in Kaempfer's Travelogue (Kaempfer, 1684).



The Design of Naghsh-e-Jahan Square in the Travelogue of Dieulafoy (Dieulafoy, 1884).



The design of Naghsh-e-Jahan Square in Chardin's Travelogue (Chardin, 1686).



Isfahan's Public Bazaar, which Connects the Old Square and the New Square (Abouei, 1995, p. 294).



Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque.



Imam/Shah Mosque.



Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque (Left), Imam/Shah Mosque (Middle), and Aalighapu (Right).



Interior Decorations of the Bazaar in Naghsh-e-Jahan Square.



Aalighapu (Right) and Imam/Shah Mosque (Left) from the Gheysariye Entrance Gate.



Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque (Left) and Imam/Shah Mosque (Right) from the entrance of Gheysariye.



Aalighapu (Right) and Imam/Shah Mosque (Left) from the Gheysariye Entrance Gate.



Aalighapu (Right), Imam/Shah Mosque (Middle), and Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque (Left).



Aalighapu (Right), Imam/Shah Mosque (Middle), and Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque (Left).



Aalighapu (Right), Imam/Shah Mosque (Middle), and Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque (Left).



Aalighapu (Right), Imam/Shah Mosque (Middle), and Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque (Left).



Aalighapu, Imam/Shah Mosque and Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque from the Gheysariye Entrance Gate.



Gheysariye Entrance Gate.



Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque.



Aalighapu.



Aalighapu.



The Imam/Shah Mosque from the square.



Imam/Shah Mosque from the Aalighapu's porch.



The green space of Naghsh-e Jahan Square.



The green space of Naghsh-e Jahan Square.



Gheysariye Gate and the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque from the second floor of the square.



Gheysariye Entrance and Aalighapu from the second floor of the square.



The Gheysariye Entrance gate (Left) and the decorations of the entrance to the Imam/Shah Mosque from the second floor of the square.



Aalighapu (Left) and the decorations of the entrance to the Imam/Shah Mosque from the second floor of the square.

4.1. Imam/Shah Mosque

The most important mosque of the Safavid period in Isfahan in terms of architectural grandeur and abundance of decorations is the Shah Abbas Kabir Mosque, which was built on the southern side of Shah Square in 1020 AH by order of Shah Abbas I, and in 1025 the construction of the main entrance and its tiled decorations were completed to complete the arrangement around the square. The construction and decoration of other parts of the mosque continued until the last year of Shah Abbas I's life and continued during the time of his successors, Shah Safi and Shah Abbas II. The last historical years that can be seen in the Shah Mosque from the Safavid era are 1077 AH in the inscription on the altar of the western side of the mosque and 1078 AH in the inscription on the door of the southwest school.

Eskandar Beg Turkman, the author of the history of the Abbasid world, wrote about the beginning of the construction of the Shah Mosque in 1020 AH: "Early in this auspicious year, the beginning of the auspicious beginning of the Shahryar Zafar, the one who was the winner of the victory, the one who was the winner of the victory, the intention of good security, the intention of the astrolabe, the thought was focused on and turned to that, that in the vicinity of the Naghsh-e Jahan Mosque, Isfahan, they should build a great mosque, the like of which cannot be seen in the country of Iran or the whole world, and since the Dar-e-Saltaneeh of Isfahan has been made of great buildings and beautiful houses, and gardens of amber that are soul-enhancing, and rivers and groves that are examples of immortality, although the Great Mosque and the school had been arranged on the eastern and northern sides of the Naghsh-e Jahan Square. But they seemed low in comparison with the great effort of his

Majesty, and he was hidden in the consciousness of the Enlightened One, that just as that city of Paradise is an example of great buildings and gardens and palaces and khanates and markets that are the envy of the country and it is true that "the essence of the essence of the essence has not created its like in the country". The mosque, His Eminence's high status, schools, and holy places also show the highest mosques and holy places in Iran, and in their beauty and purity, they show the Bayt Al-Ma'mur and the Al-Aqsa Mosque. After examining the surroundings of the Naghsh-e-Jahan square, they chose the

southern side of the square where a large khan had been arranged, and they dug up the khan's building and dug it up at the hour of Sa'd, which astrologers extracted from the horoscope of the monkey Humayun.

The skilled architects and meticulous engineers, who, like the centre of a compass, breathed uniqueness and uniqueness in the geometric works and the details of their work, each one like the centre of a compass, designed the mosque and the courtyard. The rare masters began their work with auspiciousness and luck. They began their work by the strange circumstances and coincidence of the discovery of a marble quarry near Safahan, which had never been seen by anyone at any time. The same stones mentioned in that place were deposited by the hand of the eternal power, which was hidden from the eyes of the people until the end for the beauty and adornment of this noble temple and appeared in this era through the high fortune and honourable intention of this Khosrow Firuzmand. From this meaning, it can be argued that the appearance of this is a clear sign and a clear sign of the truthfulness of the intention and good faith of the builder and the dignity and status of this building in the court of the creator of the world. Such long and wide, unified stones, engraved with colours, cannot be found anywhere else in the world. The arrangement of this second Bait Al-Ma'mur was made: "The history of this blessed building, I asked from my heart for the desire of the Kaaba, he said, the second Kaaba has been built" (Turkman, 2011, p. 831).

Sheikh Jaber Ansari, author of the History of Isfahan and Ray, has said the following about the construction of the Shah Mosque: "As for the Shah Mosque, the foundation of a large mosque in that area during the reign of Sultan Mohammad Bin Tahmasp, whose eyesight was weak and who was the crown prince of Sultan Hamza, who had vowed to establish it in gratitude for his salvation from assassination during the reign of Ismail II, Mirza Salman Jaber, the author's grandfather, and Mirza Salman Jaber, the Isfahani, the confidant of the Al-Dawla and the chief minister, was in charge of the affairs of his government, and his daughter, the wife of Sultan Hamza, was able to conquer Gilan and Georgia and collect taxes for two years. In 980 AH, Mirza Salman was the grandson of Khwaja Mirza Masoud Jaber, who had the ministry of the Tahmasp court in 930 AH, and his houses were around the Gulshan Palace to Hajj Alley. Abbas still has some of the Jaberid dynasties, and his writings are with his servants. After the martyrdom of Mirza Salman outside the Herat castle at the hands of traitorous emirs in 991 AH, and then the martyrdom of Hamza Mirza in 994 AH, the revolution of the situation, and the arrival of Shah Abbas the Great in Isfahan in 998 AH, he decided to fulfil his father's vow and expand the mosque. He was also saved from the risk of assassination by being in Herat on Friday night. The wars with the Uzbeks and Ottomans, and the revolution in Khorasan and Azerbaijan, delayed the royal resolve for two years until the beginning of 1000, when he built the Naghsh-e Jahan square. Year after year, he completed the buildings. By the end of 1019 AH, efforts were made to complete the mosque.

In the half-world definition of Isfahan, it is said about this mosque:

Among the great and prestigious mosques is the Abbasid Jame Mosque, known as the Shah Mosque, located on the south side of Naghsh-e-Jahan Square. Shah Abbas the Great began building it seventeen years before his death and the end of his reign, and the date of its completion has not been specified, but it was completed by him or by one of his successors. It is mentioned in the rumours of famous engineers and architects that they completed the area of the mosque and brought it to the water, and from there they built it with stone and mortar to the ground and built walls and ceilings for this great mosque, and they built three domes and four high porches, and the porch facing the Qiblah is higher and its dome is wider and higher. Among the more impressive buildings, they built two beautiful minarets on both sides of this porch, that is, on top of it, from which the call to prayer can also be heard. The height of this porch is thirty-two cubits, and the height of its dome is fifty cubits of the Shah. In this dome, next to the altar, they have built and installed a pulpit made of solid marble, which is very visible and perfect in its definition. On both sides of this dome and the forty-storied column, they have designed and built two large courtyards with surrounding courtyards, each of which is the size of a conventional mosque. Shah Suleiman built them, and on the other sides of the mosque, on the upper floor, they have built halls and rooms for students of knowledge. The courtyard of this mosque is vast, and its width is equal to its length, and it has become a place of learning for engineers. Why did they do this, and no one has yet knows the reason for it.

The entire mosque is tiled inside and out, and its plinths are marble. Its courtyard has been paved with traditional Persian stone. At this time, the king completely renovated it and built two moonlit courtyards. The large pool in the middle of the mosque, which was old and shoddy, was replaced with a larger pool made of standing stones in the style of the time. The mosque has a magnificent entrance, topped with marble and heavy tile moqarnas, which is no better than this. Finally, they built a pavilion facing the square. There is a door with a silver plate on it and an inscription around it, which they say is in the calligraphy of Rashida, which they carved and placed on it. Two other gates were built in the two courtyards of Shah Suleimani towards the place and opened them. Two nightstands, one of which is large and definable and the other smaller, were built and arranged in the east and west. The length of this mosque is one hundred and forty-six cubits, and its width is eighty-four cubits. The spire of this mosque, which is the place for the call to prayer, was built on top of the western porch, which is very large and beautiful, and there is no better one to imagine. In general, the strength, integrity, and beauty of this mosque are not found in Iran, but in other countries of the world" (Godard, 1962, pp. 659-664).

“According to the authors, the construction of the mosque began at the beginning of the 11th century, and there is no exact information about its completion date. The author of the book *History of Historical Buildings of Isfahan* suggests that the date 1038 AH was the year the decorations of the building were completed on the porch. The paving of the mosque courtyard was completed during the reign of Shah Suleiman Safavid, and two moonlit courtyards were added to the courtyard. The large pond in the middle of the mosque was also changed to a larger and more beautiful pond. At this time, the main door of the building, which is covered with silver and gold, was added to the building. The schools located in the two southwest and southeast corners of the building are known as the Sulaymaniyah and Nasser Al-Din schools, because renovations were carried out in them during the reigns of Shah Suleiman Safavid and Nasser Al-Din Shah Qajar, respectively. The book “*The Treasure of Historical Monuments of Isfahan*” states that the Nasser School dates to the late reign of Shah Abbas I or the reign of Shah Safi.

The author of the book *National Monuments of Isfahan* believes that the first building of this school dates to the time of Shah Abbas I and was built during the reign of Shah Suleiman, but what is certain is that according to the historical inscriptions that have remained, the tile decorations and inscriptions belong to the reign of Shah Abbas II. The inscription on the exterior of the southern porch of the mosque indicates repairs that took place during the reign of Mohammad Shah Qajar with the assistance of Manouchehr Khan Motamed Al-Dawla, the ruler of Isfahan. This porch was repaired and covered in 1316 AH by the efforts of Master Hussein Memar Ma’arfi and under the supervision of Andre Godard, and the deviation of the minarets on its sides was corrected. According to the existing inscription, the tiling of the entrance to the mosque was repaired from 1317 AH to 1320 AH by Nasrollah Tarah and Ghaffar Kashi Tarash. In 1328 AH, the external inscriptions of the dome were repaired. This inscription, many parts of which had collapsed and disappeared over time, was prepared and installed by Master Jalal Homaei using the remaining pieces, completed and combined with the calligraphy of Mr. Bahadori and Masmiparast by Ilyaei tiler and Mohammad Ali tile cutter. Other repairs to the eastern minaret, the tiles under the dome, and the side chapels have been carried out since 1332 AH and have continued throughout the building. The entrance to the mosque has inscriptions dated 1030 AH, 1021 AH, 1317 AH, and 1320 AH, and the northern porch of the building is dated 1035. Inside the eastern dome, the date 1030 AH and inside the western dome, the dates 1035 and 1039 AH can be seen. The large dome has dates of 1036 and 1038 AH inside, and around its exterior, the dates 1037 AH and 1328 AH. The large porch of the mosque on its southern side has the dates 1036 AH and 1038 AH, and 1261 AH. In different parts of the building, including the altar of the southern porch, the southeast nave of the building, its eastern altar and the altar of the eastern dome, there are numerous inscriptions dated to the year 1038 AH. The inscription on the western porch of the mosque has the date 1040 AH and is dated 1046 AH.

Several inscriptions in different parts, including the northwestern shrine of the building, the southern porch of the Nasser school, and the altar of this porch, all date to 1077 AH. Inside the altar, there is another inscription dated 1095 AH. The inscription at the entrance of the Sulaymaniyah school dates to 1078 AH. On the altar of the southwestern shrine, there is a memorial dated 1127 AH. An inscription on the eastern porch of the mosque dates to the repairs of 1329 AH. In addition to the above inscriptions, other tablets include: three decrees from Shah Abbas Safavi dated 1021 AH, 1035 AH, and 1038 AH in the western corridor of the northern porch and on the sides of the southern porch, decrees from Fath Ali Shah dated 1240 and from Nasser Al-Din Shah dated 1268 can be seen in the Sulaymaniyah school.

According to the entrance inscription, Shah Abbas I Safavid, built this mosque and dedicated its reward to the spirit of his ancestor Shah Tahmasp I. Below this inscription, Master Ali Akbar Isfahani, the master architect of this building, and Mohib Ali Bekollah, the foreman of the building, are mentioned. The inscriptions inside the building are in the handwriting of Abdul Baqi Tabrizi, Mohammad Saleh Isfahani, Mohammad Reza Emami, Mohammad Hassan Emami, and Mohammad Baqir Sharif Shirazi. The poems on the silver door of the mosque are in the handwriting of Mir Emad's students and possibly in the handwriting of Rashida, the calligrapher. The names of the master tile workers Shoja Bin Master Qasim Bana Isfahani, Abal Razzaq, the Kermani tile maker, and Master Qavam Al-Din tile maker can be seen throughout the inscriptions and tile designs of the mosque. It is known that the architect who built the dome of this mosque was Ustad Fereydoun Nayini" (Zarrini et al, 2004, pp. 20-23).

The Abbasid Grand Mosque, or the New Grand Mosque, was built, according to historical texts, on the orders of Shah Abbas I, on the southern front of Naghsh-e Jahan Square. The space in front of the mosque, with its water feature, the elevation of the entrance, the breaking of the skyline, the uniform rhythm of the terraces of the square's rooms, as well as the extraordinary decorations of the mosaic tiles and its inscriptions, and the enclosed and exclusive nature of the entrance space of the mosque, have made it different from other prominent buildings in Naghsh-e Jahan Square in a special way.

The direction of Naghsh-e-Jahan Square is based on the Isfahani rune, and consequently, the Abbasid Grand Mosque is also located in the same direction, but only the front and the entrance to the mosque are seen from inside Naghsh-e-Jahan Square. Upon entering the vestibule, the viewer sees a pentagonal-shaped porch in front of him that leads to the courtyard, but it is not possible to pass through it, then he sees the bright space of the courtyard, the front, and even the space inside the dome of the house and the altar, which, with its transparency, only provides visual connection and a kind of harmony for entering the courtyard. It is in this place and at this moment that the architect has set the direction of the mosque in the direction of the Qibla with the pentagonal-shaped porch and an imperceptible 45-degree rotation. However, access to the courtyard is through dimly lit corridors on both sides of the porch, and after entering the astonishing space full of patterns and designs, the viewer finds his courtyard in a state of seclusion, enclosed in an azure-coloured space with a sky ceiling. This mosque is a type of four-porch mosque that has a very old history in Iranian architecture from pre-Islam to the present day. It includes three dome

houses, a winter night hall with beautiful seven-colour tile decorations with Khattai and plant motifs, two night halls on the sides of the main dome house, and two madrasas on the sides of the main dome house, named Sulaymaniyeh and Naseriyeh. One of the most valuable and noteworthy points about the Abbasid Grand Mosque is the dome covering its main house, which is in the form of a two-shelled nar dome. In addition, the special method of corner construction in the three domes of this mosque is simple but very complex and more elegant than in previous periods. This is one of the basic features of Isfahan style architecture, as well as the proportions, geometry, and valuable decorations used in this building, and the simplicity of the work in all dimensions, whether it is the construction technique, the design, decorations, and even the space creation, are among the notable features of this building (Pirmia, 2013) (See **Table 2**).

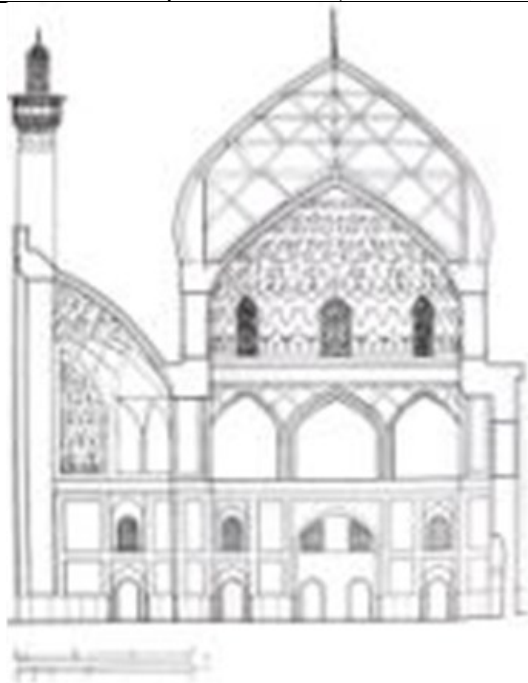
Table 2. The Historic Maps, Old Plans, Ancient Sketches and Current Pictures (all taken by the author) of Imam/Shah Mosque, Adjacent to the Naghsh-e Jahan Square of Isfahan (Developed by the Author).



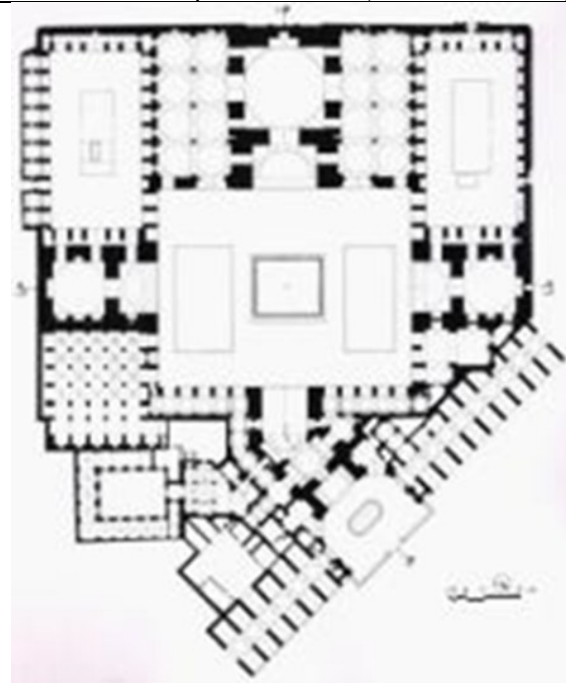
Imam/Shah Mosque Areal View (Zarrini et al, 2004).



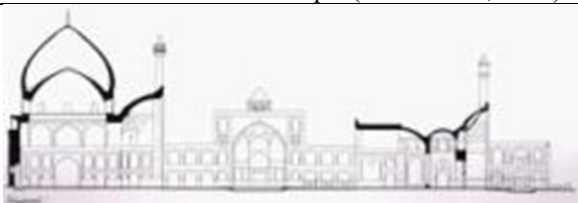
Imam/Shah Mosque Areal View (Zarrini et al, 2004).



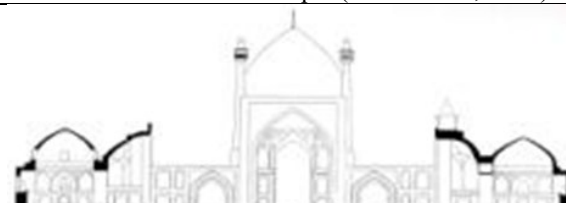
Section of Imam/Shah Mosque (Zarrini et al, 2004).



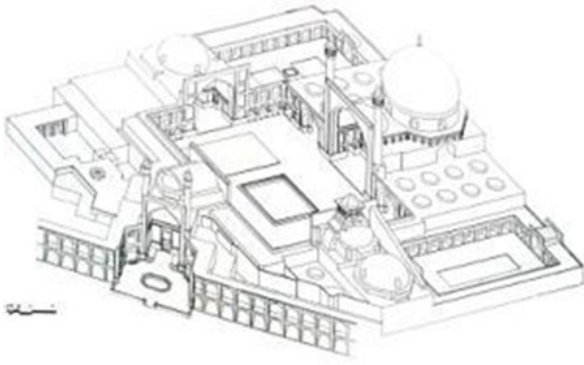
Plan of Imam/Shah Mosque (Zarrini et al, 2004).



Section of Imam/Shah Mosque (Zarrini et al, 2004).



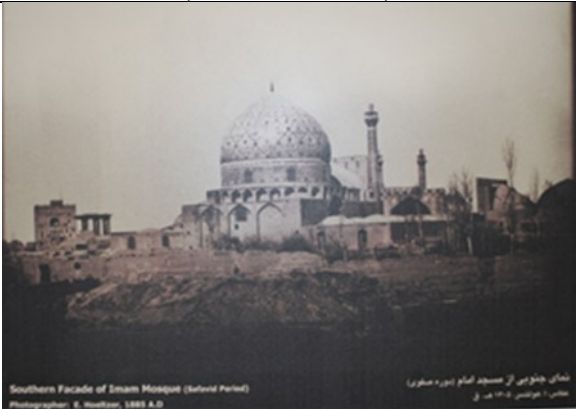
Section of Imam/Shah Mosque (Zarrini et al, 2004).



Three-Dimensional Model of Imam/Shah Mosque (Zarrini et al, 2004).



Aerial photo of Naghsh-e-Jahan Square and Imam/Shah Mosque (Left).



South view of Imam/Shah Mosque.



Imam/Shah Mosque from the Gheysariye Entrance.



The dome of Imam/Shah Mosque from the back alley.



Imam/Shah Mosque dome.



Imam/Shah Mosque minarets.



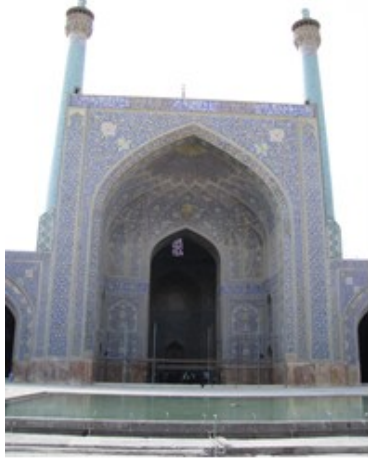
The eastern courtyard of the Imam/Shah Mosque.



Imam/Shah Mosque dome.



Dome (Kane push) of Imam/Shah Mosque.



The pool and minarets of the Imam/Shah Mosque.



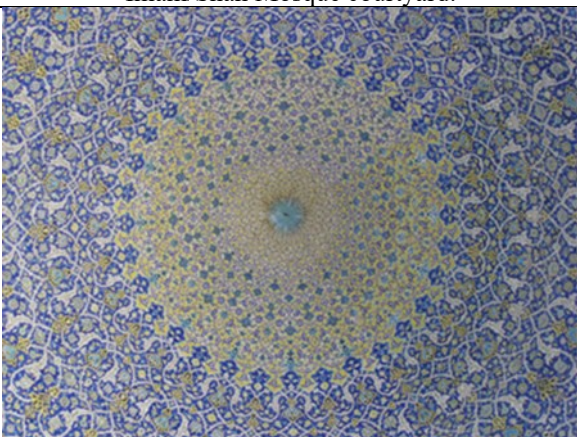
Entrance (Mogharnas) to the Imam/Shah Mosque.



Imam/Shah Mosque courtyard.



Imam/Shah Mosque courtyard.



Interior decorations of the dome of Imam/Shah Mosque.



Exterior decorations of the dome of Imam/Shah Mosque.



The entrance and minarets of the Imam/Shah Mosque.



Domes and minarets of the Imam/Shah Mosque from the porch of Aalighapu.



Domes and minarets of the Imam/Shah Mosque.



Domes and minarets of the Imam/Shah Mosque.

4.2. Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque

A mosque in Isfahan, among the thousands of azure mosques in this city, sits facing the sun and watches the passing of history, which, according to foreign archaeologists, can hardly be considered a product of human hands. On the eastern side of Isfahan's Naghsh-e Jahan Square, opposite the Aalighapu building, is a mosque that was built in the 11th century AH by order of Shah Abbas I over 18 years. He built this building in honour of his father-in-law, Sheikh Lotfollah, on the ruins that remained from the remains of an old mosque, to be used for his teaching and prayer. Since then, this masterpiece of Iranian Islamic architecture has become known as the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque. The seven-colour and mosaic tiles and the play of light in the architecture of this mosque are among the unique features. Around the dome, there are openings in the diameter of the dome at regular intervals, which are blocked from the inside and outside by stucco windows. The totality of the light that shines through these windows has given double beauty to the overall decoration of the building. The architecture of this mosque is such that at sunrise, light falls on Surah Al-Shams written on the dome of this mosque, and at sunset, light falls on the western part where Surah Al-Layl is engraved, and the verses of Surah Al-Layl are illuminated. On both sides of the mosque are large, majestic marble platforms, and in front of it, there was a beautiful pool that was always full of water. This pool was destroyed at the end of the Qajar period. Archaeologists discovered an underground passage that ran from the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque to the Aalighapu building, but the reason for its construction has not yet been determined. The walls of the mosque are made thick to withstand the pressure of the dome, reaching one meter and seventy centimetres, and in the main parts more than two meters. The inner surface of the dome is decorated with very large and abundant stars in golden yellow, with a design of intertwined ivy. This mosque has some differences from other mosques. This building is not a public place and is mostly used for private purposes.

Therefore, it does not have a courtyard or a minaret, while these two characteristics are observed in all Iranian mosques. Its dome, unlike other domes that are made of turquoise tiles, is designed with a cream-coloured background with blue streaks of garlic, which makes it look distinctive. One of the strangest arts used in this mosque, which shows the taste and style of Iranian architects, is the solution to the problem of the qibla. Professor Arthur Upham Pope, a contemporary and famous American Iranologist, has written in this regard: "Since the mosque is located on the eastern side of the square and, like it or not, the entrance to the mosque will be to the east of the square, if the mosque were built in the same direction, the work of finding the direction in terms of the qibla would be disrupted. Here, by creating a corridor that turns from the beginning of the entrance to the mosque to the left and then to the right, they have overcome this problem; That is, although the mosque building is in the east and from its external view it appears that its front wall is in the north-south direction, it is built on the same wall of the mihrab that is towards the qibla. When we realize the value of this architectural art, we see that there is no trace of skewness or angle on the outside of the mosque, but upon entering, we are forced to accept that the courtyard is curved relative to the external view, while the short dome of the mosque does not show the opposite direction due to its circularity. The architect of the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque was Professor Mohammad Reza Isfahani, who was proficient in the

science of geometry and patterns. A look at the overall design of the building reveals the extent of his proficiency in the science of geometry and architecture. The very beautiful inscriptions in the Thuluth script, some of which were written by the capable hand of Alireza Tabrizi Abbasi, have increased the beauty of the mosque a hundredfold. One of the unique architectural masterpieces can be seen in the mihrab of the mosque. On this altar, there are very delicate mosaic tiles and muqarnas, and there are also two tablets inside the altar, on which the phrase "The deed of the poor, humble, and needy, for the mercy of God, Mohammad Reza Ibn Ustad Husayn, the founder of Isfahan," is engraved. Other inscriptions in the calligraphy of Ali Reza Abbasi can be seen around the altar, on which a narration of the Holy Prophet and the sixth Imam is narrated.

In addition to these narratives, there are also poetic inscriptions written by Sheikh Baha'i, a scholar and poet of the Safavid period. The architecture used in the buildings of Isfahan has been of great importance for various reasons, including its being the capital during the Seljuk and Safavid periods, and because the mosque is the spiritual identity of Muslims, architects paid special attention to the design of mosques and used all their taste and flair to leave an eternal mark. Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque is no exception to this important matter, as Professor Pope wrote about this mosque: "There is not the slightest weakness in this building, the dimensions are very appropriate, the plan is very strong and beautiful, and in short, it is a compromise between a world of excitement and excitement and a magnificent silence and peace that represents a rich aesthetic taste and can have no source other than religious faith and heavenly inspiration." Also, due to the architectural and historical grandeur of this religious building in Iran, a joint stamp with the image of this building and a historical monument from China has been issued. The dome of the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque is one of the few single-cover domes of the Safavid era, which, with its low height, is considered a suitable cover for its small courtyard. On the other hand, its height is high enough to show itself off next to the large square and dominate that space. The curvature of the dome suddenly turns inward from the large protrusion point and forms the top of the dome, and this great pressure is borne by the thick walls of the mosque. The diameter of the walls, measured from the windows of the wall, is about 1.70 centimetres. The inner walls start from an octagon. Each of these octagons is enclosed by turquoise rope-like tiles, and very beautiful lines that are from the works of Alireza and like a frame, surround each of the octagonal sides; These lines are made of dazzling white tiles set among dark blue tiles, and the angles that emerge from these eight sides form the base of the great curve, but the gradual curvature of the dome hides the starting point of the curve and the great circle of the dome from view.

The dome's curvature is connected to the octagonal sides by angular kite-shaped walls. The next section tends towards a large, uniform curvature. Throughout this curvature, it is of a uniform, uniform size that is rarely felt or seen. The tiling of the interior of the dome was almost the same size from beginning to end and formed the decoration of the dome. The side walls of the mosque's courtyard are decorated with flowers and bushes connected in blue to a cream-coloured background. The upper angles of the side walls are covered with flowers and bushes whose design is completely different from the rest of the parts, giving a special variety to the overall decoration of the courtyard and attracting the viewer's attention at first glance. The beauty of the tiling of this mosque, including the mosaic tiles, is a pleasant variety. Mosaic tiles are the most delicate type of tile and belong to the 17th century. Mosaic tile is a delicate type of seven-colour tile of the 15th and 16th centuries. The decorations on the interior surface of the dome consist of very large, repeated stars in golden yellow, covered with a pattern of intertwined ivy. The design and layout of this mosque and the design of the Ardabil carpets share a common source of inspiration. Also, it bears a close resemblance to the decorations of the Shah Mosque. The tiling of the rest of the dome consists of Roman arches, each of which contains beautiful flowers and bushes. These flowers and bushes were used in woven fabrics, and there are still examples of them. The lighting inside this mosque is also remarkable. Around the dome, holes are made at regular intervals in the diameter of the dome, which are blocked by stucco windows from the inside and outside. These stuccos consist of regular designs with equal proportions of empty space between them. The totality of the lights that shine through these windows gives a heavenly and imaginative beauty to the overall decorations of the courtyard. There is not the slightest weakness in this building. The dimensions are very appropriate; the plan is very strong and beautiful. In short, it is a compromise between a world of passion and excitement and a silence and tranquillity with splendour that is the product of a rich aesthetic taste and can have no source other than religious faith and heavenly inspiration.

The beautiful inscriptions that Ali Reza wrote on the inside and outside of this mosque are the most beautiful calligraphy of its time. The genius who gave this mosque all this splendour, beauty and art is the one who signed the left and right sides of the mihrab and introduced himself as the poor, humble, in need of God's mercy, Mohammad Reza Bin Ostad Hussein, the builder of Isfahan, and after his name is the date 1028 AH (1618 AD). Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque has several fundamental differences from other mosques in Isfahan. This mosque does not have a courtyard and does not have a minaret, while other ancient mosques usually have a large courtyard and a minaret or minarets. The dome of the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque is different from the domes of other mosques and is two-layered. Unlike other mosques, this mosque is not very large and is a small prayer room.

Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque is considered one of the most beautiful historical monuments in Isfahan. This mosque has a dome covered inside and out with beautiful tiles. This dome rests on several high, conjoined arches and is decorated with Quranic verses. At its top is a circle with openings decorated with metal ornaments and used for lighting and ventilation. This dome is decorated with very delicate Islamic motifs, which on the outer layer ends with an octagonal star made of colourful mosaic tiles. Its top also ends with a cap decorated with regular spheres. The mihrab consists of a dental arch on which delicate Islamic motifs are carved. This congeries arch has shell-shaped muqarnas on the inside, which are decorated with beautiful plant motifs at the end. This mosque is considered a unique gift in terms of the beauty of the motifs and Islamic motifs used in it (Honarfar, 1971, p. 401).

Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque is one of the most beautiful and amazing historical buildings located in Naghsh-e Jahan Square in Isfahan. This extraordinary work is one of the most beautiful historical works related to the Safavid era that amazes every viewer and makes the artists of this building admire it. This building is located on the eastern side of Naghsh-e Jahan Square in front of the Aalighapu Mansion and has unparalleled beauty and elegance due to the mosaic tiles inside and outside the dome and the excellent inscriptions, some of which are in the calligraphy of Ali Reza Tabrizi Abbasi. This mosque is one of the masterpieces of Iranian architecture and tile work in the first half of the 11th century AH, and its construction began at the order of Shah Abbas I Safavid. Its beautiful entrance was completed in 1012 AH. The year of completion of the building and its tile decorations, according to an inscription written in Thuluth script with white mosaic tiles on a blue background, is 1028 AH.

Another gem of Safavid architectural art, built by order of Shah Abbas I and named after Sheikh Lotfollah, the great Shiite scholar. A beautiful, huge and magnificent dome, when you look at it from the outside, you see it hidden behind a part of the entrance. A beautiful dome that is pink at dawn, takes on a cream colour at noon and a brick colour at sunset. Yes, it is like the sun that, in its daily course of radiation, gives every colour of life to its winding and curving arches that rise towards the sky. Its entrance is designed slightly behind the pavilions on both sides of the square and, like its two side walls, is covered with tiles decorated with flower and shrub decorations and in turquoise blue. However, the main feature of the mosque can be seen after passing through the entrance door. Unlike other Iranian mosques, the mosque does not have a four-bay courtyard, and it is also deprived of having a minaret. The inscription on the door indicates the year 1012 AH, which is the year the door was completed. Above it, above the lattice window, is the sentence "Mayah Mohtashami Khedmat Awlad Ali", which indicates the rise of Shiism in the Safavid era. The kings of this state also considered themselves descendants of Imam Musa (peace be upon him). Upon entering the mosque and right at the door, the viewer finds himself facing a semi-dark corridor. With a little patience, the eyes get used to this darkness so that the viewer can appreciate the beauty and elegance of the blue tile patterns. At the end of the corridor, a turn to the right leads to a second corridor, and then the viewer turns right again, facing the dome of the mosque. Upon entering the doorway, the viewer can see that he has passed an angle of 45 degrees because the axis of the mosque's mihrab is different from the axis of the square. When you look at the dome, you see the dome like a peacock with its wings spread wide open. This feeling comes from the round and diamond-shaped motifs on the surface of the dome, which are very similar to the motifs on the peacock's tail. In addition, the design of the dome itself is like a shining sun, and the circular and diamond-shaped motifs that rise at the bottom of the dome become smaller and smaller, and finally, in the middle or centre of the dome, they become a part of the whole, or a small point in a large complex. The diameter of the dome of the mosque is measured as 18.8 meters, and it is surrounded by a wall 160 centimetres thick. The great architect of the building built a single-shell dome with an external diameter of 22 meters and a height of 32 meters. Under the dome space, using ivory panels, the corners of the square space gradually turn into octagons and then into circles, and the dome is placed on top of it. This division is so skillfully done that the viewer, looking at the corners, perceives that he is in an octagonal space.

All around the dome, in the grove area, the dome is surrounded by 16 double-layered lattice windows with a stucco structure, on each of which, tile decorations can be seen that guide a very soft light into the dome. The tile inscriptions of this mosque were made by the famous calligrapher of the Safavid period, Ali Reza Abbasi, of course, a very exquisite tile inscription by Baqir Bana also decorates the mosque. Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque is a magnificent structure of architectural art, built by the talented architect Mohammad Reza Isfahani. Arthur Upham Pope says about it that "it can hardly be considered a product of human hands." A mosque that is considered the top of the Safavid period buildings, not only from the architectural point of view but also from the point of view of tile art. The mosque's altar, decorated with mosaic tiles, is considered one of the most exquisite altars of this period. On both sides of it, two tiles introduce its creator as follows: "The act of a poor, humble person in need of God's mercy - Mohammad Reza Bin Ostad Hussein Bana Isfahani (Qasemi, 2006, pp. 64-65).

This mosque is another masterpiece of architecture and tilework from the 11th century AH. It was built by order of Shah Abbas I over eighteen years ago, and the architect and builder of the mosque was Ostad Mohammad Reza Isfahani. Its tilework decorations inside, from the plinths up, are all covered with mosaic tiles. Foreign archaeologists have said about the grandeur of the architecture of this mosque: It is difficult to consider this building a product of human hands. Sheikh Lotfollah was one of the great Shiite scholars in modern-day Lebanon who settled in Isfahan at the invitation of Shah Abbas I. This mosque was built to honour his position and for his teaching and prayer.

Then he sought refuge in Qazvin from his enemies and began teaching there. Shah Abbas brought him from Qazvin to Isfahan, and in 1011 AH, he founded a school and a mosque, which is still known by his name, next to Naghsh-e-Jahan Square, as a place for his teaching, residence and imamship. This work took until 1028 AH. It was during the completion of this building that Shah Abbas laid the blueprint for the most important building of the kingdom, the Shah Mosque, in the southern part of Naghsh-e-Jahan Square, which is now called Shah Shohra Square. After the school and the mosque of Sheikh Lotfollah were prepared for his teaching and prayer, this venerable man settled in that school, which does not exist today, and in the mosque, which fortunately remains intact and sound for the introduction of Iranian artistic works and is hoped to remain intact for centuries to come, he began to lead the imamship and teach. Shah Abbas had a specific and prescribed task for his livelihood. The author of the book *Mujmal Al-Tawarikh* writes that Sheikh Lotfollah died in 1032, the same year that Baghdad was captured by Shah Abbas. Also, in the Abbasid world of thought, the author of this book gives the date of his death as 1032 and explicitly states that Sheikh Lotfollah Maysi Jabal Ameli fell ill in Isfahan early in this year, before travelling to Dar Al-Salam Baghdad, when he was still a source of glory in the Firuzkooh countryside and passed away. One of

the great artistic figures of Iran, whose name is immortalised in the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, is Alireza Tabrizi, one of the great calligraphers of the time of Shah Abbas the Great, whose inscription on the entrance to the mosque and two large belt inscriptions inside the dome are in his beautiful calligraphy. When Alireza entered the service of Shah Abbas, he called himself Alireza Abbasi. The first master calligrapher in Tabriz was a student of Mulla Mohammad Hussein Tabrizi and Ala Al-Din Mohammad Bin Mohammad Tabrizi, known as Ala Bey, and he wrote Thuluth and Naskh calligraphy well.

After the Ottoman Turks captured the city during the reign of Shah Mohammad Khodabandeh, the father of Shah Abbas, Alireza left there and went to Qazvin, the capital of the Safavid state, and settled in the city's Grand Mosque. He began his writing career and completed some of the inscriptions in that mosque, along with some Qurans there. Alireza entered the service of Shah Abbas on Thursday, the first of Shawwal, 1001 AH, and became one of his special servants. The king entrusted him with a group of calligraphers, such as Mohammad Reza Emami, Mohammad Saleh Isfahani, and Abdul Baqi Tabrizi, to learn the Thuluth script under his command. Alireza Abbasi remained among the king's close friends and special servants until the end of his life. He was assigned to the royal court and was honoured with endless royal visits, gifts, and caresses, and was given the title of Shahnawaz. Shah Abbas's love and affection for this artistic man were so strong that he would sometimes sit next to him and hold a candle so that Ali Reza could write by its light.

Professor Arthur Upham Pope, a contemporary and famous American Iranologist whose outstanding book entitled *A Study of Iranian Art* is compiled in six thick volumes and is world-famous, wrote the following about the greatness of the architectural and tiling industry of Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque: The mosque, which is located on the east side of Shah Square and opposite the Aalighapu building, is one of the unparalleled masterpieces of architecture that stands out throughout Asia. This beautiful mosque, which shines like a brilliant jewel in the history of Iranian architecture, is called the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque.

The great Shah Abbas built this mosque in honour of his father-in-law, Sheikh Lotfollah, who was one of the great leaders of that time, on the ruins that remained of the old mosque of Bihar. The large square, with the magnificent Aalighapu Palace on one side, needed such a precious gem in front of it, and perhaps this was what prompted Shah Abbas to perfect the beauty of the square by building this building, which can hardly be considered a product of human hands.

In the construction of this mosque, the mastery and skill of Iranian artists have once again solved a difficult problem, meaning that since the mosque is located on the eastern side of the square, and whether you like it or not, the entrance to the mosque will be towards the east of the square. If the mosque had been built in this direction, the orientation in terms of the Qibla would have been different. Here, they have overcome this problem by creating a corridor that turns from the beginning of the entrance to the mosque to the left and then to the right. This means that although the mosque building is in the east and from its exterior it appears that its front wall is in the north-south direction, in this very mihrab, the wall is built towards the Qibla. When we realize the greatness of this idea, there is no trace of skewness or angle visible outside the mosque, but upon entering, we are forced to accept that the courtyard has a twist concerning the exterior, while the short dome of this mosque, due to its circularity, does not show an opposite direction or angle. This dome is one of the most beautiful domes in Isfahan, which attracts the attention of every viewer on the one hand because of its grandeur and on the other hand because of the decorations made of a cream background with blue-coloured patterns. The dome of the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque is one of the few single-cover domes of the Safavid period, which, with its low height, is considered a suitable cover for its small courtyard. On the other hand, its height is high enough to show off next to the large square and dominate that space. The curvature of the dome from the large protrusion point suddenly turns inward and forms the apex of the dome, and this great pressure is borne by the thick walls of the mosque. The diameter of the walls, measured from the windows of the wall, is about 70.1 centimetres. The inner walls start from an octagon. Each of these octagons is enclosed by rope-like turquoise tiles and beautiful lines, and a work of Alireza frames each of the octagonal sides. These lines are made of dazzling white tiles set among dark blue tiles, and the angles that emerge from these octagonal sides form the base of the great curve, but the gradual curvature of the dome hides the starting point of the curve and the great circle of the dome from view.

The dome's curvature is connected to the octagonal kite-shaped walls. The next section tends to have a large, uniform curvature. Throughout this curvature, it is of a uniform and uniform size that is rarely felt or seen. The tiling of the interior of the dome was almost the same size from beginning to end and formed the decoration of the dome. The side walls of the mosque's courtyard are decorated with flowers and bushes connected in blue, cream-coloured text. The upper angles of the side walls are covered with flowers and bushes whose design is completely different from the rest of the parts, giving a special variety to the overall decoration of the courtyard and attracting the viewer's attention at first glance. The beauty of the tiling of this mosque, including the mosaic tiles, is a pleasant variety. The mosaic tile is the most delicate type of tile and belongs to the 17th century. The mosaic tile is a delicate type of seven-colour tile of the 15th and 16th centuries. The decorations on the interior surface of the dome consist of very large, repeated stars in golden yellow, covered with a tangled design of intertwined ivy. The design and layout of this mosque and the design of Ardabil carpets share a common source of inspiration. In addition, it is very similar to the decorations of the Shah Mosque; the tiling of the rest of the dome consists of Roman arches, each of which contains beautiful flowers and bushes. These flowers and bushes were also used in woven fabrics, and examples of them still exist today. The lighting inside this mosque is also remarkable.

Around the dome, the lighting inside this mosque is also remarkable. Around the dome, holes are made at regular intervals in the diameter of the dome, which are blocked by stucco windows from the inside and outside. These stuccoes are expressions of regular designs with equal proportions of empty space between them. The totality of the

lights that shine through these windows gives a heavenly beauty and fantasy to the overall decorations of the courtyard.

There is not the slightest weakness in this building. The dimensions are very appropriate. The plan is very strong and beautiful. In short, it is a compromise between a world of excitement and excitement and a magnificent silence and peace that represents a rich aesthetic taste and can have no source other than religious faith and heavenly inspiration. The beautiful inscriptions that Ali Reza wrote on the inside and outside of this mosque are the most beautiful lines of its time. The genius who gave all this splendour and glory of beauty and art to this mosque is the one who signed the left and right sides of the altar and introduced the Isfahani building himself, the humble companion in need of God's mercy, Mohammad Reza Bin Ostad Hussein, and after his name, the date 1028 AH (1618 AD) can be seen.

On the eastern side of Isfahan's Naghsh-e Jahan Square, opposite the Aalighapu Palace, there is a mosque that is one of the most beautiful and impressive historical monuments of Isfahan. This building, known as the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, was built during the Safavid dynasty for the worship and teaching of Sheikh Lotfollah.

Sheikh Lotfollah was a Shiite scholar of the Lebanese sect and the son of Sheikh Abdul Karim. During the Safavid era, when Shiism was recognised as the religion of the Iranians, he migrated to Iran along with many others, including Sheikh Baha'i. This spiritual man was respected upon his arrival and initially went to the holy city of Mashhad and settled there to preach Shiite. Sheikh Lotfollah moved to this city at the same time as Shah Abbas decided to make Isfahan the capital. Shah Abbas Safavid ordered that a mosque and a school be built for this scholar to teach, preach, and lead the congregation. Therefore, the construction of this mosque and school began in 1011 AH and lasted until 1028. After the construction of the mosque and school was completed, Sheikh Lotfollah engaged in religious activities. The school mentioned does not exist today, but its mosque remains in its full beauty. According to the contents of the books *Alam Ara'i Abbasi* and *Mujamil Al-Tawarik*, Sheikh Lotfollah passed away in 1032 AH.

Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque has several fundamental differences from other mosques in Isfahan. This mosque does not have a courtyard and does not have a minaret, while other ancient mosques usually have a large courtyard and a minaret or minarets. The dome of the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque is different from the domes of other mosques and is connected by two layers. Unlike other mosques, this mosque is not very large and is a small prayer room.

One of the strangest arts used in this mosque, which is the product of the taste and talent of Iranian architectural artists, is the solution to the problem of the qibla in this mosque, which is in the east of the square. Pope wrote in this regard: Since the mosque is located on the eastern side of the square and, whether the entrance to the mosque will be to the east of the square, if the mosque were to be built in the same direction, the work of orientation in terms of the qibla would be disrupted. Here, by creating a corridor that turns from the beginning of the entrance to the mosque to the left and then to the right, this problem has been overcome; That is, although the mosque building is in the east and from its exterior it appears that its front wall is in the north-south direction, but it is built on the same wall of the mihrab that is towards the qibla. When we realize the greatness of this idea that there is no trace of skewness or angle visible on the outside of the mosque, but upon entering, we are forced to accept that it is not a courtyard, but rather a twist on the exterior, while the short dome of the mosque, due to its circularity, does not indicate a direction with an opposite angle. Of course, it should be noted that since the entrance vestibule of the mosque is built at a right angle, few people will notice the deviation of the mosque from the square side upon entering. The mosque is built on a quadrilateral that becomes an octagon in the upper part of the building and finally joins the stem of the dome in a circular manner.

The walls of the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque are made thick to withstand the weight and pressure of the dome, and it is measured from the windows to one meter and seventy centimetres, and in the main parts it reaches two meters. The floor of the mosque is higher than the level of the square. In the construction and decoration of the torpedoes of the entrance and the front door, as well as the platforms on the sides of the entrance, very good marbles were used, and the front door and the front door is decorated with colourful mosaic brick tiles. These decorations include geometric patterns, flowers and bushes, peacocks, and inscriptions written in Khosh Naskh and Nastaliq scripts. The surroundings of the arch are decorated with turquoise spiral tiles. There is a unique muqarnas of mosaic tiles under the arch, under which a lattice window made of tiles has been made in the middle of the entrance. The entrance is decorated with various patterns and colours that dazzle the eye. Above the window at the entrance of the mosque, there are two inscriptions in Nastaliq script, one of which contains the following phrase: (Mayah Mohtashami is for the service of the descendants of Ali) The large and main inscription located at the entrance of the mosque is in the script of Ali Reza Abbasi, written in Thuluth script on mosaic tiles. The two large inscriptions that are in the form of a belt inside the dome are also in the script of this master. Ali Reza Abbasi is one of the great artists of the Safavid era. He was from Tabriz and learned Thuluth and Naskh scripts under masters such as Mulla Mohammad Hussein and Alauddin Mohammad Bin Mohammad Tabrizi. He came to Qazvin when Tabriz was captured by the Ottomans, and when the capital was moved from Qazvin to Isfahan, he also came to Isfahan like Sheikh Lotfollah. He taught many calligraphers of that time. Ali Reza Abbasi's script can be seen in many inscriptions found in historical monuments in cities such as Mashhad, Qazvin, and Isfahan. There is no exact information about the date of death of this artist. The patterns and colours used in the elaborate tiling of the mosque dome are among the most beautiful in Iranian architecture. The light inside the mosque is provided by lattice windows built on different sides of the dome stem.

The light that shines through these windows into the mosque, in addition to providing sufficient light, is itself a reflection of the building's interior space. The stem of the dome is decorated with blue tiles with flower and shrub motifs and an inscription of mosaic tiles containing several short surahs from the Quran. The space between the

windows is also decorated with inscriptions of God's tiles that are displayed in the style of calligraphy. The altar of the beautiful Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque is one of the unique masterpieces of architectural art and one of the most beautiful altars that can be seen in other mosques in Isfahan. This altar is decorated with mosaic tiles and very pleasant muqarnas. Inside the altar, there are two tablets on which the phrase "The poor deed needs God's mercy, Mohammad Reza Bin Ostad Hussein, the builder of Isfahan" can be seen. Around the altar, other inscriptions can be seen in the handwriting of Ali Reza Abbasi and another calligrapher named Baqir. These inscriptions contain narrations from the Prophet Mohammad and the sixth Shiite Imam, Imam Jafar Al-Sadiq. Poems are also found on the inscriptions on the eastern and western sides, which were probably composed by Sheikh Baha'i, a great mystic, scholar, and poet of the Safavid period. As mentioned, the entrance to the mosque opens into a vestibule at a right angle, which leads to two other doors, from which one can enter the mosque. One of these doors is located towards the mihrab and the other towards the northwest of the mosque. From this vestibule, one can also enter the winter nightstand and the roof. Pope wrote about this mosque: "There is not the slightest weakness in this building, the dimensions are very appropriate, the plan is very strong and beautiful, and in short, it is a compromise between a world of excitement and excitement and a magnificent silence and peace, which represents a rich aesthetic taste and can have no source other than religious faith and heavenly inspiration" (Pirnia, 2013, p. 270) (See **Table 3**).

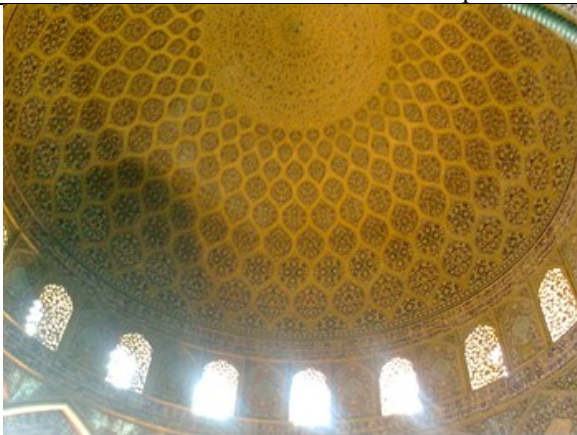
Table 3. Current Pictures (all taken by the author) of the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, Adjacent to the Naghsh-e Jahan Square of Isfahan (Developed by the Author).



Dome of the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque.



The Altar's Muqarnas of the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque.



Interior decorations of the mosque dome.



The door of the retreat place of the mosque.



The dome of the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque from the Gheysariye Entrance.



The dome of the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque from the second floor of Naghsh-e Jahan Square.



The dome of the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque from the second floor of Naghsh-e Jahan Square.



The dome of the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque from the second floor of Naghsh-e Jahan Square.



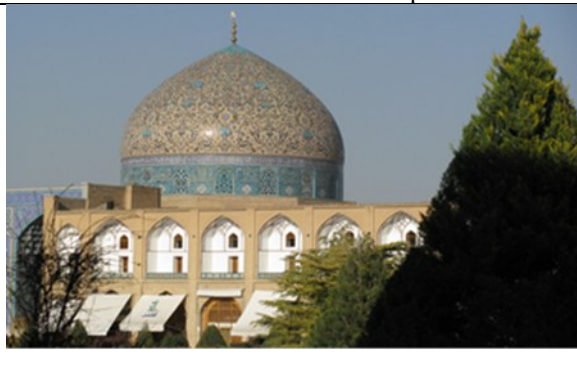
Interior decorations of the mosque dome.



Interior decorations of the mosque dome.



The dome of the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque from the second floor of Naghsh-e Jahan Square.



The dome of the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque from the second floor of Naghsh-e Jahan Square.



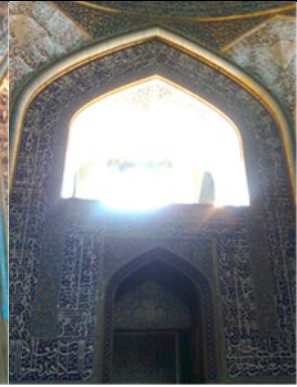
The main altar and altar wall decorations.



Poems of the altar wall decorations of the mosque.



Decorations of the interior dome of the mosque.



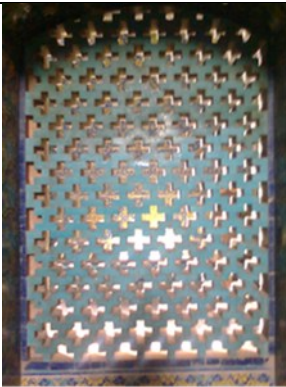
View from inside the mosque to the side corridor.



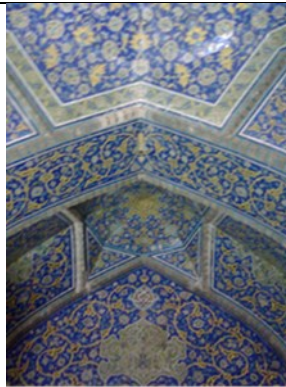
Interior decorations of the mosque.



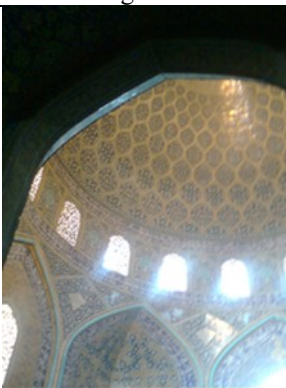
The interior of the dome house.



View from inside the dome house to the side corridor through the lattice skylight and vice versa.



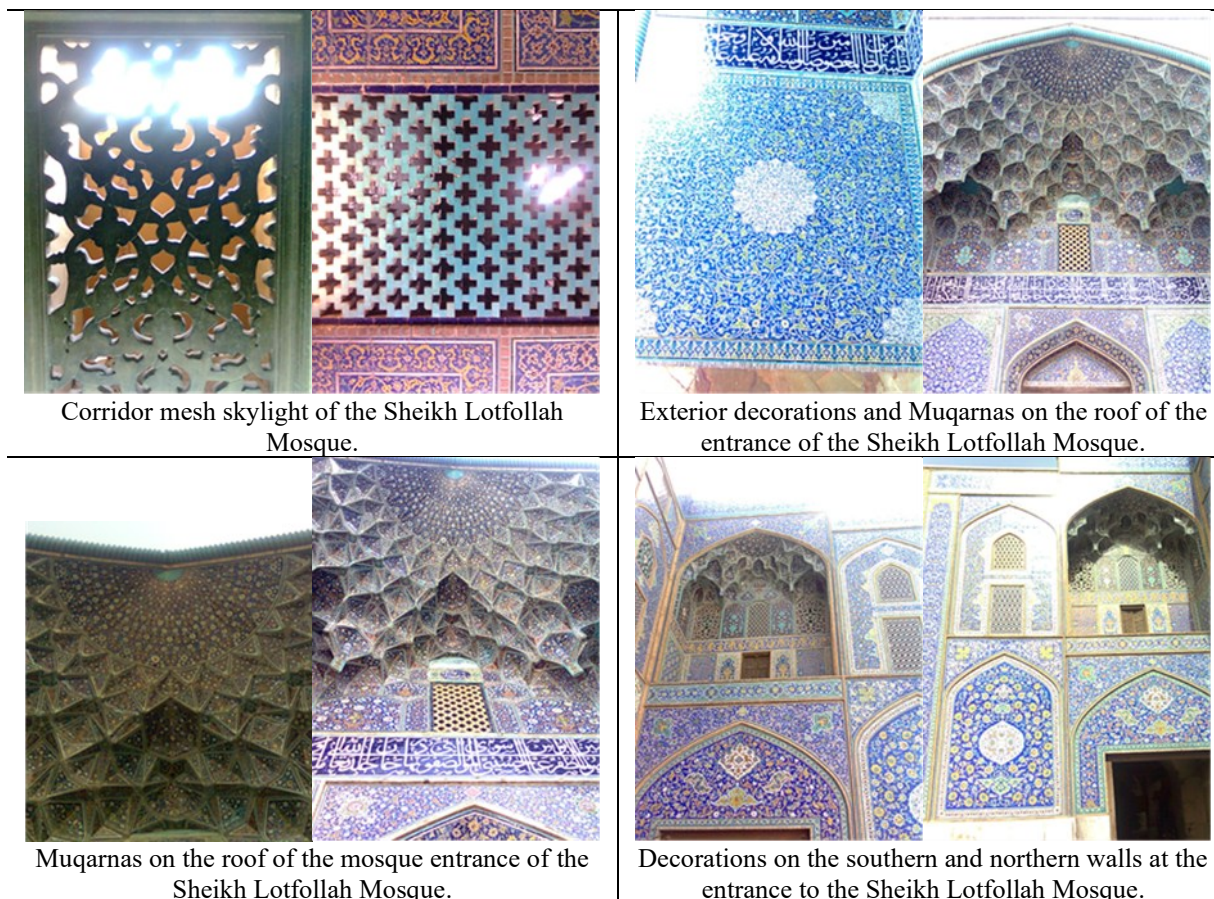
Interior decoration of the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque.



Interior view of the dome upon entering the dome house.

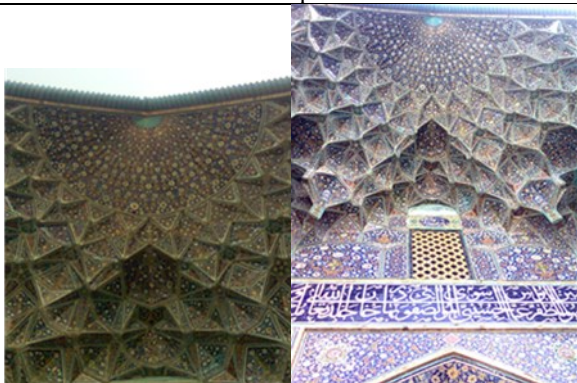


The side corridor of the dome house of the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque.

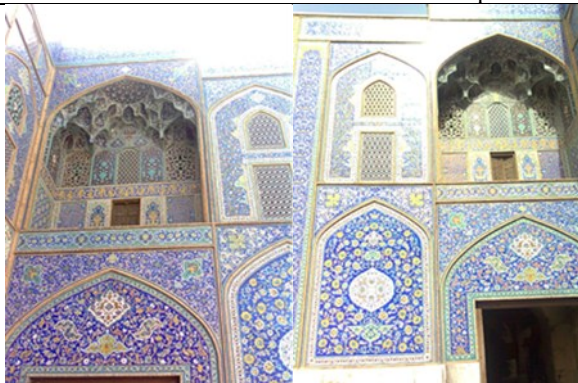


Corridor mesh skylight of the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque.

Exterior decorations and Muqarnas on the roof of the entrance of the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque.



Muqarnas on the roof of the mosque entrance of the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque.



Decorations on the southern and northern walls at the entrance to the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque.

4.3. Gheysariye Entrance

In front of the Shah Mosque, to the north of the Shah Square of Isfahan, there is a crescent-shaped gate with luxurious and magnificent tiles, from which one enters the Gheysariye Bazaar. This gate was built by the order of Shah Abbas the Great in 1011 AH. Since ancient times, the public, especially the sultans and kings, paid attention to the positions of the stars; they also built buildings during the hours of the Monkey and the conjunctions of Saad. It is said that when the buildings were started, this building was in the zodiac sign of Sagittarius. Therefore, the Sagittarius tower, which is made up of stars that represent the figure of a bow, is drawn above the gate, and the other half of the human body is painted as a predatory animal holding a bow and arrow, and in the middle of this gate, the role of the sun can be seen interestingly and excellently. Inside this gate, there are very beautiful paintings that have been ruined and destroyed due to the passage of time, and that image is one of the wars of Shah Abbas the Great with the Uzbeks. At the top and bottom right are images of European men and women in a state of pleasure, and on the left is a hunting lodge. At the top, opposite, is a hatch that used to be the place of a large clock, which rang bells during the day, and its pendulum caused various movements and games in carved figures such as birds and animals painted on wood. It is said that above that, there was a clock that the Shah brought from the Hormuz Monastery. On both sides of the Gheysariye door, there are wide platforms made of jade and sumac. In the past, jewellers and goldsmiths spread their stalls on them and sold their wares. On the left side of the door, there is a scene of a mass hunt by Shah Abbas, as well as a picture of a young man. On either side of the door of the Naqareh House, there was a drum that was played on the verandas at sunset and sunrise, as was customary until recently. The author remembers that this practice was carried out in the years up to 1307. In the rooms and verandas of the Naqareh House, there were exquisite paintings and stucco decorations, such as the decorations on the sixth floor of the Aalighapu, which were destroyed in 1307 Shamsi, and new decorations were made.

When passers-by enter the gate, they enter the Gheysariye Entrance Bazaar. This is one of the buildings of Shah Abbas the Great, who used to sell the most expensive gold-woven fabrics there in ancient times. Representatives of foreign merchants also had rooms in this bazaar. This bazaar, also known as the Shahi Bazaar, starts from the Gheysariye Entrance Gate and ends at the Chit-Sazha Bazaar and from there at the Dar-e-Shifa Bazaar. Today, it is the place to sell the best pens and handicrafts of Isfahan. There is a place in this bazaar called the famous Shahi Mint, and the famous Shah's Palace is also located in this bazaar.

The four sides of the Mint, which are not the same in Isfahan or Iran, are in this bazaar, next to the Dar-e-Shifa. The Jhangiz and Shelleh Timchehs are also in this bazaar. The current samovar market, which was formerly known as the Mesghali-e-Frukhs Bazaar, has a unique square called the Chahar Karbas-e-Frukhs, which has a Safavid-style pond in the middle and is connected to the Chit-e-Frukhs by a small bazaar. The reason this market is called the Mesghali-e-Frukhs is that expensive and exquisite fabrics were sold in the Mesghali-e-Frukhs Bazaar. One of the markets connected to the Gheysariye Bazaar is the Zargarh Bazaar, which was built by the order of Shah Abbas and by Muhab Ali Lallah Beg. This market ends at the Kafka-e-Tashki Bazaar from the Chahar Karbas-e-Frukhs Bazaar. In the middle of that square is a beautiful square, and its branch is the market that ends at Dar Al-Shifa. Dar Al-

Shifa is the historical name of a large royal hospital that existed during the Safavid era, and now part of its ruined land has been built as a small mosque called Dar Al-Shifa Mosque, which is famous. Another bazaar is the Gunsmiths' Bazaar, which dates to the reign of Shah Abbas the Great. The bazaar ends at the Samovar Makers' Bazaar from the Holy Gate, and the bazaar branching off from it is called Flintstones' Bazaar. These two bazaars were once called the Swordmakers' Bazaar. The exact date of the construction of the gate is unknown. What is certain is that it was in 1014 that Shah Abbas dedicated the Gheysariye Bazaar and all the bazaars around Naghsh-e-Jahan Square, the caravanserai, and the bathhouse near the square to the Prophet of Islam, and the deed of dedication is recorded in the book *Qassas Al-Khanani*. The Gheysariye Gate was also built.

However, this point does not correspond to what is stated in Iranian works, that the date of completion of the Gheysariye Gate is 1026 AH, unless it is said that its decorations and paintings were done in 1026 AH. To the north of Imam Square and opposite the Imam/Shah Mosque, is the Gheysariye Bazaar Gate. Its building was completed during the reign of Shah Abbas I, and its architect was Master Ali Akbar Isfahani. The features of this bazaar include the magnificent entrance with Chinese brick decorations, the paintings on the door including the image of Shah Abbas in the war with the Uzbeks, images of European women and men, two tiled arches that are correct and intact and show the image of an archer with a human head and the body of a tiger or lion and the tail of a dragon and can always be called a special sign to identify this legendary city of the world. The entrance of the great building of Gheysariye was the most important and magnificent entrance gate of the Safavid city of Isfahan, which connected the new part of Isfahan to the Seljuk city (the old square of that time) through the large Gheysariye bazaar. Several paintings can be seen on this entrance, some of which show the Europeans residing in the Isfahan court at that time. Another painting is of the royal hunting ground. Unfortunately, these paintings, which are the work of Reza Abbasi, have been greatly damaged due to the proximity to the open air and the cold and heat of the weather. At the highest part of this entrance, two half-length portraits of male archers in the typical clothes of that era are seen, with their bodies as lions or tigers and their tails as dragons. These two images, which are on a mosaic tile, represent the constellation of Isfahan or Sagittarius. The explanation is that in ancient times, it was common among the civilised nations of the world to give a horoscope for their famous and renowned cities, and after choosing Isfahan as the capital, they chose Sagittarius as their horoscope. Most tourists described the Gheysariye Bazaar and other markets in Isfahan. Chardin, who lived in Isfahan for many years, described the Gheysariye Bazaar in detail and believes that it was named Gheysariye because the entrance to this market was built like one of the buildings of Gheysariye or Caesarea in Asia Minor (today's Turkey).

On both sides of this gate are two wide platforms covered with jade and sumac, and in those days, goldsmiths and jewellers spread their stalls on them and offered all kinds of rare jewellery and coins to buyers. A large clock was installed above the gate, which Iran had won in the war with the Portuguese. The Naqar Khaneh building was also built above the gate of Gheysariye. The playing of drums and the beating of drums had been common in Iran since ancient times, and they announced sunrise and sunset with drums. Of course, the playing of drums and the beating of drums was not only to announce sunrise and sunset, because playing the drums on battlefields was used to prepare soldiers and encourage them to fight, and in times of peace and tranquillity, it was also common in various rituals and on various occasions. On the right side of the Gheysariye building was a mint, and on the other side was the royal caravanserai. From the entrance of the Gheysariye Bazaar, we enter the most luxurious and largest bazaar in Isfahan. This bazaar, also known as the Gheysariye and Shahi Bazaar, was a centre for selling precious fabrics during the Safavid era, and representatives of foreign companies had rooms in it. In front of the entrance, there was a very large water basin, of which there is no trace today. During the Qajar period and when Masoud Mirza Zil-e-Sultan was the ruler of Isfahan, changes were made to the facades of the Gheysariye entrance, and a tiled border was added along three sides of the entrance. In general, the Gheysariye complex, which includes the entrance and the building of the music house, the mint, and the royal caravanserai, is one of the famous attractions of Isfahan that almost all tourists, world travellers, and foreign officials have talked about in detail in their memoirs and travelogues. Although there are no traces of its beautiful paintings today, the lofty entrance of Gheysariye and its upper hall are a reminder of the splendour and grandeur that Isfahan had during the Safavid era and recall the memory of the flourishing economy and art of our country (Chardin, 1686) (See **Table 4**).

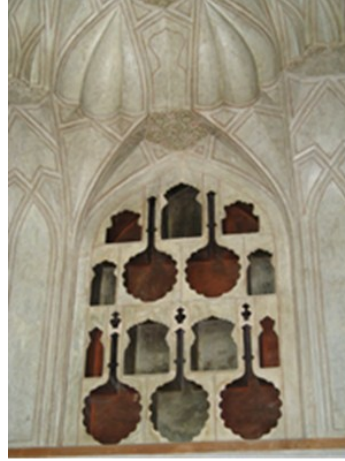
Table 4. Current Pictures (all taken by the author) of Gheysariye Entrance, Adjacent to the Naghsh-e Jahan Square of Isfahan (Developed by the Author).



Gheysariye Entrance from the square.



Mural painting on the wall of Gheysariye Entrance.



Mural painting on the wall of Gheysariye Entrance.



Interior ceiling decorations of Gheysariye Entrance.



Interior ceiling decorations of Gheysariye Entrance.



Interior ceiling decorations of Gheysariye Entrance.



Interior ceiling decorations of Gheysariye Entrance.

Interior ceiling decorations of Gheysariye Entrance.



Interior ceiling decorations of Gheysariye Entrance.



Interior decorations of the ceiling of the entrance of the Gheysariye Entrance.



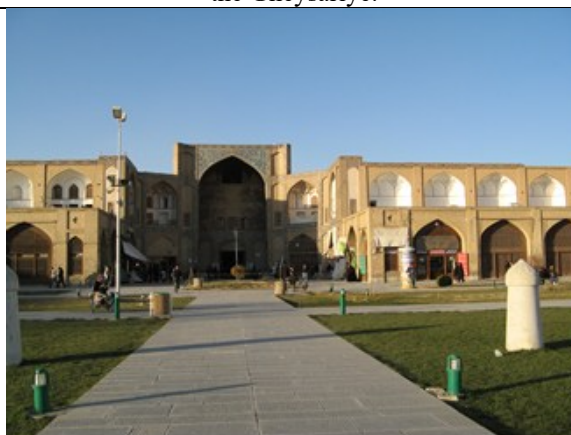
Decorations and paintings on the façade of the Gheysariye Entrance.



Interior decorations of the ceiling of the entrance of the Gheysariye.



View of the Gheysariye Entrance Gate from Naghsh-e Jahan Square.



View of the Gheysariye Entrance Gate from Naghsh-e Jahan Square.

4.4. Aalighapu

Aalighapu Palace: Known as: Dolatkhaneh Mubarakah Naghsh-e Jahan, Dolatkhaneh Palace

Location: West side of Imam Square

Year of foundation: 11 AH (period of Shah Abbas I)

Miniaturist and painter: Reza Abbasi

Building features: During the time of Shah Abbas I's successors, the Hozkhaneh building and the Pearl Hall were added to this building. The building has five floors. On the third floor is a large porch that rests on 18 tall and slender columns. In the middle of this porch is a beautiful marble and copper pool, the mirror of which is reflected in the decorations under the ceiling. The stucco mouldings of the last floor, whose hall is known as the music room or sound room, allow the reflection of the musicians' songs to be captured and the sounds to be heard naturally and without sound reflection.

Aalighapu Palace was the central gate and entrance to all the palaces within the Imam Square area.

To the west of Imam Square and opposite the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, there is a towering building that is world-renowned as one of the most important architectural masterpieces of the early 11th century AH. Considering the available sources and references about the Safavid dynasty, and considering the studies conducted on this beautiful and noble building, it is inferred that Aalighapu Palace is the central gate and entrance to all the palaces that were built in the Safavid era within the Imam Square. This building, as a large and magnificent entrance, connected Yadan Imam to the complex of government buildings such as Rakib Khana, Jabba Khana, Timuri Hall, Tavileh Hall, Covered Hall, Chehel Sotoun Palace and other buildings.

Palace Building: The original building was built during the reign of Shah Abbas I, and during the reign of his successors, additions and repairs were made to it. The building has five floors, each floor with its own decorations. Although this palace suffered a lot of damage in the post-Safavid era, it still boasts masterpieces of decorations and paintings from the Safavid era, which make visitors admire it. On the ground floor, two halls were dedicated to administrative and court affairs at that time and were called Sadrkhaneh or Keshikkhaneh. On the third floor, there is a large porch that is supported by 18 tall and slender columns. At that time, these columns were covered with mirrors, and a ceiling with large panels decorated with paintings and wooden instruments was placed above it. In the middle of this porch, there is a beautiful basin made of marble and copper, the mirror of which is reflected in the decorations under the ceiling. This hall is one of the palace annexes built during the reign of Shah Abbas I's successors. Behind this porch is a large hall with many rooms and arches, with beautiful paintings on its walls. From the small porch behind this hall, the beautiful and simple dome of the house of monotheism is visible. During the Safavid era, on Friday nights, the dome was a gathering place for Sufis and dervishes. The hall on which this dome

rests and the rooms around it are currently dedicated to the classrooms of Isfahan Art University. Most foreign tourists and visitors, as well as representatives of different countries, have considered this hall as a place from which they watched various competitions and common games of that era, such as polo, etc. The next floors each include a large hall in the middle and several small rooms around it.

A special feature of the palace: What has placed Aalighapu among the magnificent and very precious works, in addition to the miniatures of the famous Safavid era artist Reza Abbasi, is the stucco work on the last floor, whose hall is also known as the "Music Room" or "Sound Room". In this part of the palace, the shapes of various cups and vases are embedded in the walls. The creation and treatment of these shapes, apart from displaying the beauty, creativity and ingenuity of the stucco artists, was to capture the reflections from the melodies of the musicians and music masters through these hollow shapes and to hear the sounds naturally and without reflection. Fred Richards, a famous painter himself who came to Iran in the late Qajar era, writes about the stucco decorations of this room: "... these recesses are placed next to each other in a certain proportion, like different pieces of a puzzle..." In addition to the passage of time, which unfortunately has caused a lot of damage to Aalighapu, other destructive factors such as the attack and conquest of the Afghans, various wars, the transfer of the capital from Isfahan, and the neglect of the rulers after the Safavids have caused irreparable damage to the building. During the Qajar era, Aalighapu was the residence and workplace of Zell-Ol-Sultan for several years, and he made changes to its inscriptions. The inscriptions on the eastern facade of the building and the calligraphy tablets at the entrance, which refer to the renovations of 374 in poems, are evidence of this. In the last forty years, due to the danger of destruction of the Aalighapu Palace and due to the attention of the people and government agencies to cultural heritage, restorations have been carried out by domestic and foreign expert teams. In general, the Aalighapu building, as a well-built and beautiful ceremonial building, is another achievement of the architectural art of the Safavid era, from the top of which the view of the ancient city of Isfahan and its 1000-year change and evolution is visible. Initially, it had a simple form and was originally a building from the Timurid period. Over time, during the reign of Shah Abbas, floors were added to it, and during the reign of Shah Abbas II, a columned porch was added. This building is located on the western side of Naghsh-e-Jahan Square and opposite the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque (Munshi, 1629; Sivori, 1984).

During the reign of Shah Abbas II, parts were added to the original building. This palace, which was also called "Dolat-e-Khawaneh-e-Mubarakeh-e-Naghsh-e-Jahan", "Dolat-e-Khawaneh-e-Qasr" and "Ali-e-Makan Hall", is a unique example of Safavid palace architecture. The artistic miniatures of Reza Abbasi - a famous artist of the era of Shah Abbas - paintings of flowers and bushes, branches and leaves, shapes of animals and birds and its beautiful stucco in the form of various cups and vases are embedded in the arches and walls, and all those who wanted to enter Aalighapu had to bend down, kiss the threshold and enter so that even Shah Abbas dismounted from his horse when entering this building. Apart from this, Aalighapu was a place of confinement for criminals and sinners, and no one could take any sinner who entered the door of Aalighapu out of there except by order of the Safavid Shah. Some who have written it Aalighapu; It is believed that when Shah Abbas the Great took the silver door to the shrine of Imam Ali (AS) in Najaf and installed it, he brought the door that had been installed there before to Isfahan for blessing and installed it in Aalighapu, and this door is attributed to the shrine of Imam Ali (AS). Therefore, it was respected by the king and the people.

The foundation of the Aalighapu mansion probably dates to the Seljuk dynasty, which was rebuilt during the Safavid era, and all its beauty and splendour were applied to it, and great efforts were made to enhance its grandeur and beauty. It is 48 meters high and has a large porch at 28 meters with 18 columns (in six rows of three), each column made of a plane tree trunk; in the centre of the porch is a copper basin measuring four by 5.6 meters, and this basin has a floor covering 79 pieces of copper. It had three stone fountains, which unfortunately have now been destroyed; a hatch in one of the corners of the basin was used to drain water. With the creation of a columned porch and especially a copper basin in the centre of the porch, the need arose to supply water to the copper basin and operate its fountain; For this purpose, a very interesting and technical water supply system started from the second floor on the north side of the building and then is completed by a communication network using copper and clay pipes to the third floor and then on the fourth floor by creating stone basins to increase the water pressure of the fountains of the pool.

The way water is transferred to the copper basin is as follows: water is drawn up from a well to be transferred to a large source located on the second floor of the tower. At this height, high pressure is used, and the water flows, and then from here the water is sent to the highest part of the water source on the fourth floor and from there it is poured into the large porch basin by a copper pipe. The difference in level between the highest point of the water source and the fountain pipe is about six meters, and this height is sufficient for the water to jump from the fountains of the pool. There was another copper pipe that was originally used to direct the water from the pool, which was later replaced by a (clay) water channel. Abbas the Great spent most of his time in this palace and also held official receptions here, and from the top of the hall, he watched the military parade, the ambassadors' offerings, polo games, or the performances of the warriors. The Frenchman Chardin, who travelled to Isfahan three times and saw the government buildings and palaces, said that Aalighapu is the largest palace that could exist in the capital. So, it can be said that this palace was considered one of the best palaces in the world during the Safavid era. The construction of the building began in 1006 AH during the reign of Shah Abbas I. The plasterwork of the "sound chamber" was designed and executed for acoustic purposes so that the melodies and sounds could be heard naturally without sound reflection and distortion. The hall with its splendour was added to the main building in 1054 AH during the reign of Shah Abbas II (Chardin, 1686) (See **Table 5**).

Table 5. Current Pictures (all taken by the author) of Aalighapu, Adjacent to the Naghsh-e Jahan Square of Isfahan (Developed by the Author).



Aalighapu from the Naghsh-e Jahan Square.



Part of the corner decorations of the Aalighapu roof.



Part of the corner decorations of the Aalighapu roof.



An example of the capitals of the columned porch of Aalighapu.



Scaffolding for roof repair and covering the workshop area of Aalighapu.



Scaffolding for roof repair and covering the workshop area of Aalighapu.



Part of the Aalighapu ceiling decorations of Aalighapu.



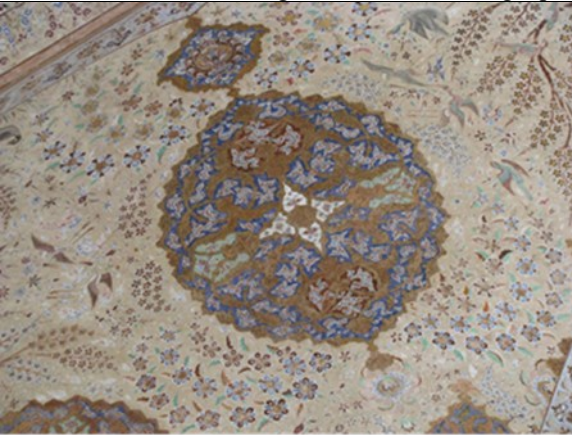
Part of the wall and ceiling decorations of Aalighapu.



Part of the wall and ceiling decorations of Aalighapu.



Corner construction for arch construction.



Part of the Aalighapu ceiling decorations.



Part of the half-domed ceiling decorations.



Part of the Aalighapu murals.



View of Aalighapu from Tohid Khane.



View of Aalighapu from the roof of Tohid Khane.



View of Aalighapu from the roof of Tohid Khane.



Installing iron beams on the floor and the column itself, and using wooden crossbars on the iron beams and at the base of the column in Aalighapu.



Wrapping with iron beams on the porch floor.



Installing the column timbers using special wood adhesives on both sides of the columns to hold the two pieces of column timber together.



Using an iron jack to support the weight of the roof in the absence of a main column.



Installing scaffolding for roof and column repairs.



Using beams to support the weight of the roof in the absence of column load-bearing capacity.



Using wooden crossbars under column bases.



Details of connecting the column to the porch floor.



Scaffolding and wooden floors to stand on.



Scaffolding and Floor wrapping.



Another view of the scaffolding, columns, and beams.



(Left) Cutting the column timbers in half to fit the iron beams inside them. (Right) Wood is placed on both sides of the column to hold the two parts of the column together.

5. Conclusions

The author attempts to briefly introduce the masterpieces around the Naghsh-e-Jahan Square of Isfahan internationally by translating the Persian and Arabic texts into English in this article. Although the Naghsh-e-Jahan Square is the symbol of Isfahan City and is famous worldwide, the masterworks adjacent to it, including the Imam/Shah Mosque, the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, the Gheysariye Entrance, and Aalighapu, are undervalued and unknown to most of the tourists and even the Iranian people, unfortunately. Therefore, the author tried to give basic information about these art pieces worldwide, emphasising their architects' mastery in the combination of wisdom and aesthetics according to the climate conditions and social needs.

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Conflict of Interests

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

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