



Designing City Theater with the Approach of the Representation of Dramatic and Native Arts in Tabriz

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Abstract: *Designing the city theater with an approach to the representation of the dramatic and native arts in Tabriz for attaining a space deserving these arts according to the Iranian roots and originality and in proportion to the today's progresses is the goal of the current research paper. Dramatic arts (Iranian drama, narrative art, local dances and so forth) date to a considerable back in Iran and they have always been present in the culture of this nation. Each steps of this article gives inspirations and patterns for the designing work that are proportionate to the intended culture, climate and community and matching with the Iranian spirits and constitute a context featuring the qualities of dramatic art attending which can simultaneously provoke cheerfulness, zeal and fancy in the spectators and assist them in spending the best of their time in all respects and reminding of the genuine and precious human themes.*

Keywords: *Theater, City, Dramatic Arts, Tabriz*

INTRODUCTION

Art is a concept stemming from the human nature and the dramatic arts have originated from the humans' psychological and affective needs. Dramatic arts, especially plays, feature distinct characteristics in contrast to the other arts. These attributes have instigated their use as subject and goal of the designing ideas. These arts are alive, people-oriented, symbolic, in interaction with culture and original human issues and rooted in literature, poetry, music and beliefs of every nation. In Iran, as well, dramatic arts are special types made specifically in this territory.

Explanation of the Subject and Necessity of Dealing with it:

Tabriz's theater, as a compound with functional, urban and regional scales, works as a prominent urban element. In other words, as a cultural and recreational space, City Theater juxtaposes the two terms "city" and "theater" and using scrutiny for any of these two terms, illustrates deep concepts before us. According to the fact that city sets the ground for the formation of theater and also that theater, in collocation with city, influences all the social, cultural and artistic meanings, it can be interpreted as a theater for the entire city in a more different approach to the issue.

As a cultural and artistic city in Iran, Tabriz, considering the preservation of its internal historical and cultural contexts as well as its high potential for creating art centers, is a proper ground for the formation of a complex interlaced with the civilization and, in the meantime, is formed in its today's form and within the format of the present community's imaginations.

Prominent Goals of the Study:

Practical Goals:

Designing a space that can provoke people by means of its appropriate architectural quality to become interested in art and dramatic and native theater

Applied Goals:

- Adding to the collective memories
- Increasing the social interactions
- Designing the cultural environment for developing and promoting the culture and social interactions

The abovementioned cases are amongst the applied goals of this subject.

Hypotheses:

It seems that the form of the building can influence the people's social performances.

The Importance of Theater Development in Tabriz:

The primary goal of theater is the human sublimation and any aspect of life that is coordinated with this goal is accessible via performing theatrical plays.

Since Tabriz features an old cultural and traditional background, it can be a place for modern theaters as well as a proper ground for revitalizing and promoting the native and national and traditional plays within the extent of the whole region.

Geographical Position, Limits and Breadth of Tabriz:

Tabriz is, more or less, situated in the middle of the historical land of Azerbaijan on the elevated plain of Tabriz. The plain is the most fertile in the whole region and it is about 3000 square kilometers in area and 1300m above the sea level.

The city is positioned at 38° 8' of northern latitude and 46° 15' of the eastern longitude from Greenwich line.

The city is about 14000ha in area and it covers nearly all natural breadth of the plain (Abdolmanafpour, 2008, 40).

Drama in Iran:

The inventor of Qanun¹ was hiding for the fear of being punished when, during the last centuries before Islam, music was prevalent in the royal courts. It was during these centuries that writing, recording and codifying some ancient works were supported for a while and the music-playing and musician and gypsy groups entered the country from India and garnished the ceremonies and privacies of the kings with their arts. Based on a narration, a group of them was sent to the people to amuse them (Baiza'ei, 2002, 20).

Drama before Islam:

The native Iranian tribes' civilization was essentially based on nomadic and tent life and wandering the deserts for preys and, later on, agriculture and settlement.

Ceremonies and celebrations were held with the presence of affluent and powerful persons who wore masks in the form of animals and ogres and plays and music were performed for products' fertilization and/or overcoming the strong and huge animals and hunting and/or even at the time of wars for reinforcing the soldiers' spirits. These songs and plays stemmed from the mythical and religious images of that time and, in some occasions, ceremonies were held for mourning and grieving for the lost ones or for the wrath of the nature. After the migration of the Indo-European tribes and intermixing of the migrants' culture with that of the native clans, the ceremonies and celebrations took a newer form because the migrants had certain myths and beliefs that had become blended with the beliefs and traditions of the native people and these can be given the name

¹ Qanun is a string instrument played either solo or as a part of an ensemble

“drama”; also, a sort of dancing round the fire during the past periods can be pointed out that it was per se considered as a kind of ritual, rite and play originated from the religion and myth (Mo’ein, 1957, 189).

Emergence of Modern Theater in Iran:

After the Second World War, a great change occurred in Iran’s theater. The writers and translators of scripts dealt with authoring in an unprecedented zeal and emotion. The people’s tastes were changed with the emergence of novel thoughts and they became inclined towards theater. Therefore, it can be stated that Iran’s modern theater came about in the middle of the Second World War (Nasr Ashrafi, 2005, 49).

Grounds of Iran’s Contemporary Theater:

The roots of Iran’s contemporary theater should be sought in “ridiculous dramas” (Farce) that started from the middle of Safavid Era. In this period of time, music groups that were involved in amusing people, were gradually transformed in imitating groups (Fraceur). In the beginning, they only imitated the accents and the properties of the rural and simple people.

Imitations became more complete and more sophisticated during Qajar Era, especially during Nasser Al-Din Shah’s era; Especially, a famous clown known as Karim Shirazi and his colleagues caused such imitations to find their way from the royal court to the houses of the aristocrats and take advantage of the aids of the affluent individuals and influential statesmen and, gradually, become pervasive in such credible cities as Tehran, Isfahan, Shiraz and Tabriz following which large central coffee shops were formed for their acts (Baiza’ei, 2002, 87).

The establishment of Iran’s national television became a great tool for promulgating this theater art amongst the people. This institute expanded its network to the majority of the country’s spots and performed theatrical plays and presented about ten million of Iran’s people with the gift of watching theater; in addition, the founding of a supreme school of cinema and television provided a considerable number of the interested and talented youths with the ability to educate in this art on a yearly basis. After 1962 that the national theater center was established in the world and its statute was approved by the international theater institution, Iran also joined it and founded the national center of Iran’s theater that was affiliated with the national UNESCO commission.

In the recent decades, theater has become defeated by television and other means of mass media more than before. Except Lalehzar theaters and one or two independent theaters in the counties that still have preserved their communication to some extent with the lower classes of the society and present plays deserving the zeal, taste and corresponding to the request of this class, the other of Iran’s theatric activities are administrated by cultural organizations like the ministry of culture and art, Iran’s national radio and television organization and cultural universities and associations.

In the one or two recent years, the activities of the independent academic and nonacademic groups have been increased and the opening of two new theater halls, one being the “city theater” that is associated with the radio and television organization and the other being Mawlavi theater hall that belongs to university, annunciate a highly active decade in the area of theater (Baiza’ei, 2002, 74).

Various Kinds of Dramatic Rituals:

Narrative Art:

The narrative art that includes reading or expressing the epical incidents or the love stories has been accompanied by music in Pre-Islam Iran (Nasr Ashrafi, 2005, 76).

Puppet Show:

Puppet show or Puppet Theater, as well, is another of Iran’s dramatic ceremonies which is similar to theater in a great deal and in fact, it is a theater the actors of which are cotton or fabric-made and wooden puppets. These are inanimate actors in the middle of scene that move about by the will of strings in the hands of a puppeteer standing behind the scene (Nasr Ashrafi, 2005, 78).

Scene:

The classic pattern of scene includes a special space behind a wooden framework in front of which there are a safety curtain, a main curtain, an advanced part and orchestra stance (Ya'aqoubi, 2012, 119).

Kinds of Scene:

Arched Scene:

It is arched in shape; also, it is called trilateral or open scene.

Field Scene:

This one entails the sitting of the spectators in a circle around the entire play scene. It might be circular, square and/or rectangular in shape but the play is acted in the center in all these cases (Ya'aqoubi, 2012, 120).

Wagon Scene:

These scenes are placed on one or both sides of the main scene with the exact specifications (Ash'ari, 2007, 86).

Scene Rotator:

In the majority of the theaters, scene rotator is utilized for the shortage of space for constructing the lateral scenes on the sides (Ash'ari, 2007, 77).

Scene rotator might have the ability of moving on the main axes of the scene besides enabling a rotating movement (Haidari, 2009, 66).

Theater Hall:

The hall's capacity is the first issue in designing the theater hall. Nowadays, the supplying of a high quality and good vision in the theater halls have become much more important. Amongst the factors influencing the determination of the theater halls' dimensions, the maximum optimal distance between the last row of the spectators and the scene can be pointed out in such a way that the last row of the spectators should be also provided with a good view of the scene (Ya'aqoubi, 2012, 118).

The Preliminary Principles of Sight line:

The staggered arrangement of the chairs causes the chairs of the consecutive rows not to fall exactly behind one another hence a good view of the scene is provided. In this state, the B-values for the chairs in the middle and the seats parallel to the central isle are equal to 40 inches and 36 inches, respectively. The chairs parallel to the isle or in a radial position to the isles should be arranged within a height of 36 inches from one another. Arranging the seats in any form other than estimating the height of all of them in respect to one another does not provide good conditions for viewing the scene in a staggered theater hall .

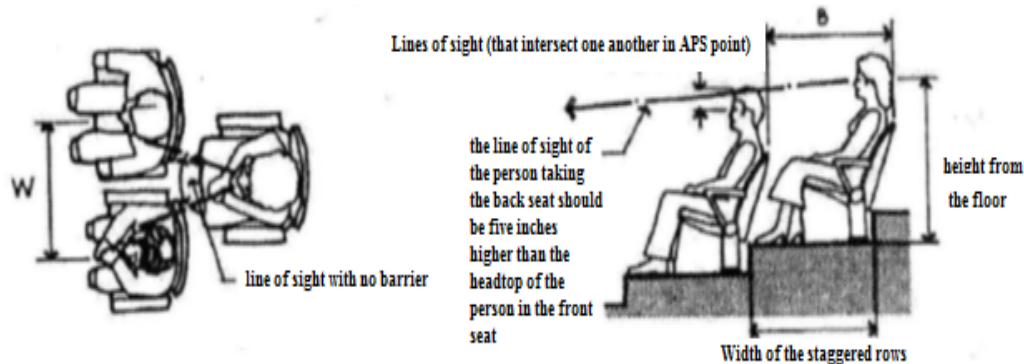


Figure 1: Principles of line of sight

Yaleli Dance (a Turkish Dancing Style)

Yaleli dance is the most popular style of native dancing in Azerbaijan region (in Iran as well as in Republic of Azerbaijan). The motifs on Qoubustan inscriptions date back to 10 to 20 thousand years ago (Fayyaz, Izadi, 2012, 9).



Figure 2: Stone inscriptions and petroglyphs of Qoubustan region, Baku



Figure 3: Yaleli dance petroglyphs, Sungon region, Azerbaijan-e-Sharghi

Yaleli, the structural and movement forms

The anthropological analysis of Yaleli dance is based on the formative system existent in this dance, to wit the movements, figures and the general structure of the dance. So, performing this dance will be investigated within the format of dance plans and figures. Table (1) exhibits the graphical illustration of the performing in three Yaleli dance tempos:

Table 1: graphical exhibition of Yaleli Dance's acts

| Number | Structures (plans) | Movements (figures) |
|----------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| The first beat | | |
| 1 | | |


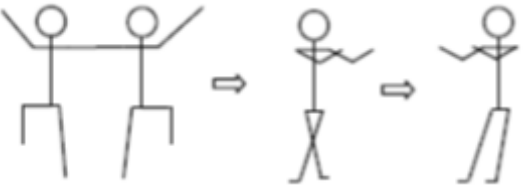
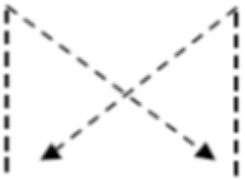
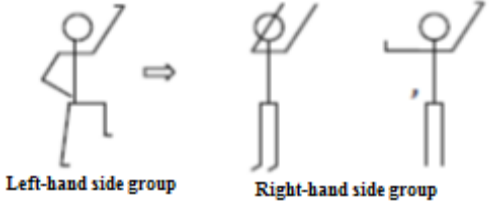



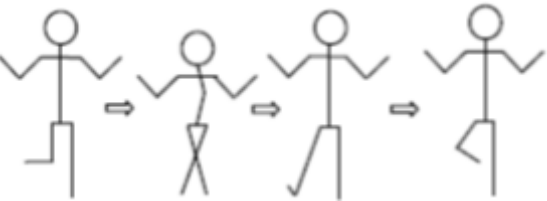
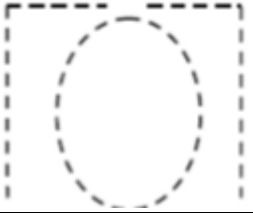
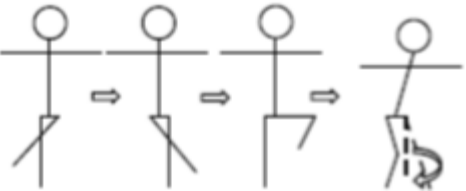

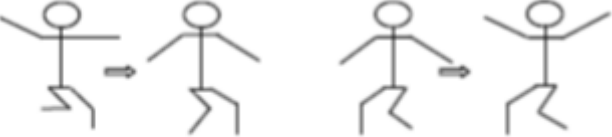
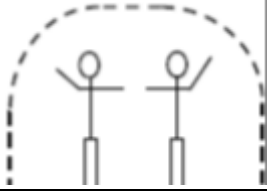


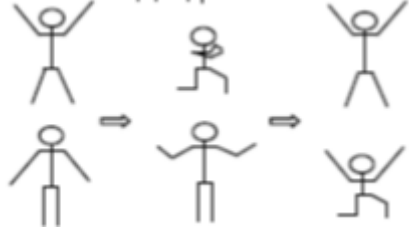
| | | |
|---|--|---|
| 2 |  |  |
| 3 |  |  |
| 4 |  |  |
| 5 |  |  |

Table 2: graphical illustration of Yaleli dance act

| Number | Structures (plans) | Movements (figures) |
|-----------------|---|--|
| The second beat | | |
| 6 |  |  |
| 7 |  |  The group in the external circle The group in the internal circle |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 8 |  |  |
| 9 |  |  |

Structural Form of Circle and Rotation:

Table (1) shows that Yaleli Dance is essentially a rotational or circular group movement; this movement repeatedly delineates the shape of a circle during the dance. The shape of the circle has been used in comparative semiotics with the meaning of “eternity, the world and everything” and also as the “symbol of the sun”. But, the shape of the circle in this dance is obtained via moving around in circle. “In many of the traditions, circle is a symbol of the sun”. In fact, “the sun is the center of the rotational circle”.



Figure 4: A group performing a ritual dance; Azerbaijan-e-Sharghi, Tabriz

It seems that Yaleli dance is one of the most important sun-inspired ritual dances in Azerbaijan. It is a dance represented in rotational and circular movements about the sun and it consecrates the sun via moving around a circle (Fayyaz, Izadi, 2012, 33).

The Idea for Designing City Theater:

The first point in designing this center is the application of curved lines, circular movements, combined rotational movements and circulation because the system of Azari dance is based on the combination of the circular and spiral movements and curved lines. The repetition and rotational circulation and circular movements are amongst the properties of the majority of the traditional arts. In other words, traditional arts feature a common language by means of which they express the fixed, unvarying and eternal concepts. It is this same repetition that solidifies the relationship

between the dancers and the audience with their past. Therefore, the central form is considered circular to be a metaphor of the dramatic movements of Azerbaijan dance. After the formation of the main nucleus of the design, rhythm and repetition have been taken into account as the integral parts of Azari dance.

Moreover, the existence of the empty spaces defined in the volume and site, as well, reminds the pausing movements of Azari dance based on this same idea.



Figure 5: initial volume

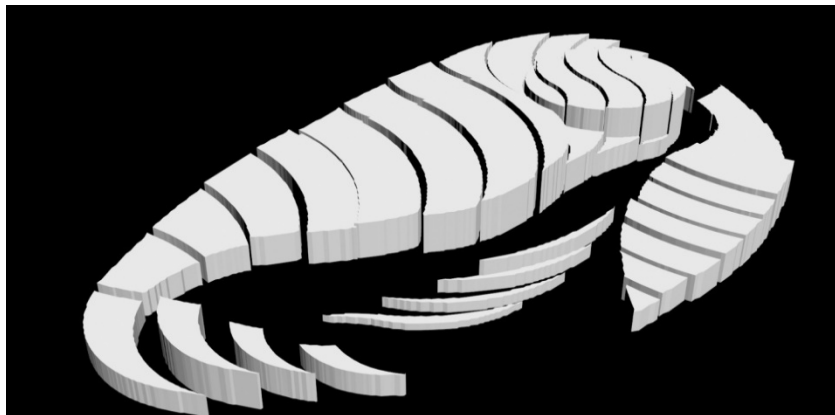


Figure 6: initial volume

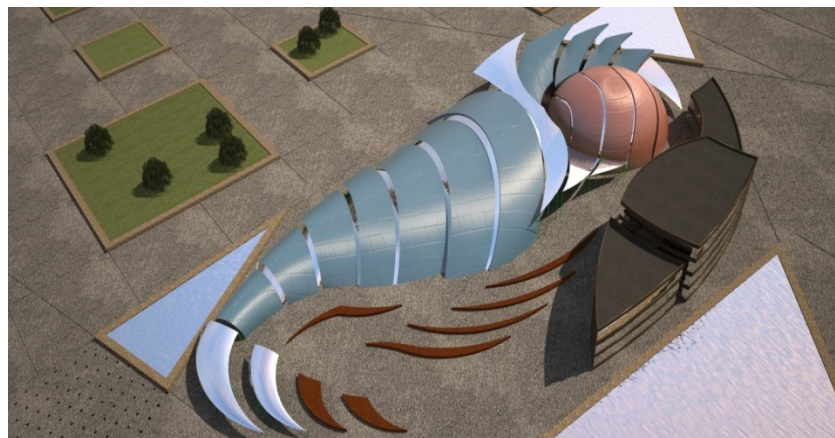


Figure 7:view the design



Figure 8:view the design

The movements of the Azari dancers' hands and legs have been the sources of site designing inspirations. These movements create forms and shapes of which the central idea of the site designing is derived.



Figure 9: Azari dance

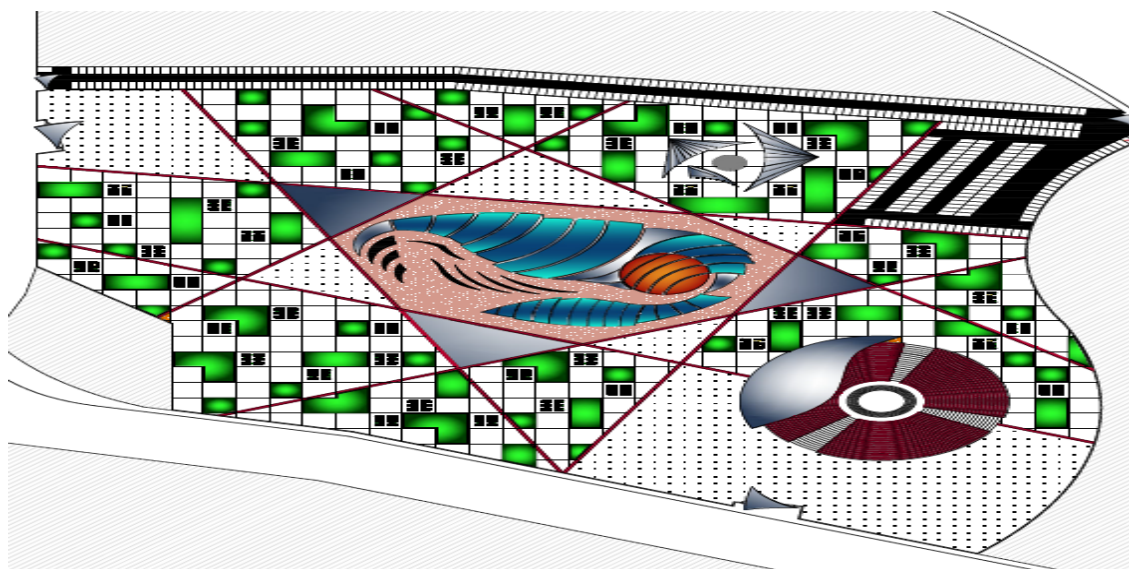


Figure 10: site plan designing

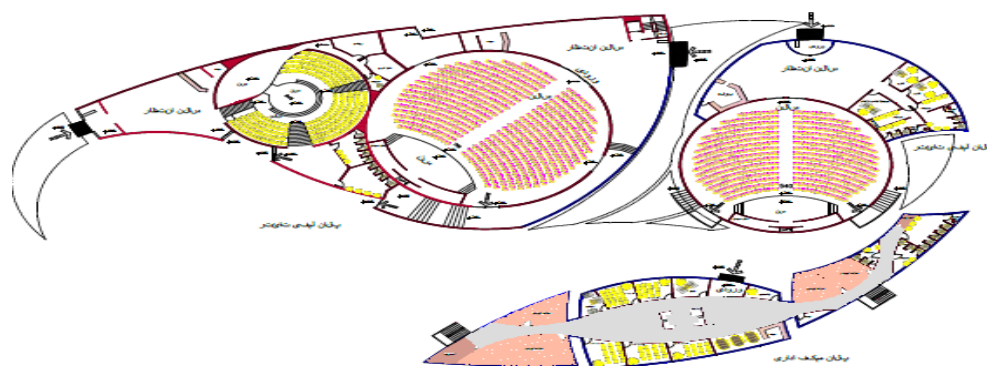


Figure 11: Plan designing

Designing Indoor Activities of the Complex:

To design the indoor activities of the complex according to the designing goals, the functional objectives were determined as follows:

Functional Objectives of City Theater:

Besides the subject, the performances must be originated from the cultural setting of the project. It should be fascinating to the people, especially the youngsters. To participate in the cultural and social art activities, the complex features multidimensional activities such as cultural, social, recreational, and educational and other activities. A simple form and legibility must be granted to the compound functions of those theatrical activities.

Conclusion

In every design, different amounts and volumes of space are portrayed in respect to the main idea forming the compound. The city theater in Tabriz has bestowed a unique context to each of the spaces in the compound in consideration of the designing concepts and ideas

The distinct features of dramatic arts, in comparison to the other arts, have caused them worthy of being taken into consideration as subjects and themes of the design work.

Therefore, the city theater needs a live and people-oriented space stemming from the traditions and so forth, for the people stepping in. It is a space of the same kind of these art types.

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