

# Negotiating Boundaries

## The Veil: The Appearance of the Invisible

by

Parisa Nikkhoo

A thesis  
presented to the University of Waterloo  
in fulfilment of the  
thesis requirement for the degree of  
Master of Architecture

Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, 2011

© Parisa Nikkhoo 2011



# Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.



# Abstract

The chador is more than a matter of taste in clothing or a religious regulation; it is the incarnation of a belief, a culture, and a tradition. Intermingled with it are the profound emotions of the women who have been either voluntarily or forcibly practicing the wearing of the veil.

The intention of this thesis is to allow one to see the chador as an extended threshold that both invites and rejects. By concealing the body of the woman, the veil establishes a complex relationship, repelling the external world while simultaneously drawing attention to itself. In passing through this threshold, one will begin to see the invasion of colors, - blue as sacredness, white as peace, and red as rebellion gradually dispersing into the air and onto its monotonous black surface. In this in-between space, brightness battles with darkness, as it tries to trickle in through the minimal openings. One may begin to wonder if a woman is protected as if in her house, or bounded as if in a cage. One will thus find herself with a sense of uncertainty - whether to stay or to leave.

This thesis aims to explore the chador and the space between it and the body of the woman. The chador has been constantly questioned from both cultural and religious perspectives. It creates a specific space that, from an architect's point of view, requires an investigation as an externally imposed zone. As a physical manifestation of the chador, this thesis proposes a theatre in which the journey from the entrance, vestibules, and galleries, through the stage, and into the house will allow one to experience and assimilate the senses buried within the veil and the body of the woman.



# Acknowledgements

Supervisor: Rick Andrighetti

Committee Members: Donald McKay & Tracy Winton

External Reader: Delnaz Yekrangian

I would like to give my sincere thanks to my supervisor Rick Andrighetti for his invaluable insights, guidance and support. I would certainly like to thank Donald McKay and Tracey Winton, for their valuable inputs and wonderful contribution to my thesis.

I would also like to thank my external reader, Delnaz Yekrangina for her time, interest and insight.

My gratitudes are immusurable for my dear frineds, Lida Arbabi and Pouneh Rousta for their incredible support.

And Finally, I want to express my unending gratitude and love for my dear parents, and my husband, Mohamad, for their encouragement, and generosity. Thank you for everything you have done for me.





to my parents and Mohamad



# Table of Contents

iii	Author's Declaration
v	Abstract
vii	Acknowledgements
ix	Dedication
xi	Table of Contents
xii	List of Illustrations
p1	Introduction
p9	Chapter 1
	The history of Women and the veil
p32	Chapter 2
	Glorify or Despise?
p79	Chapter 3
	Architectural manifestation of the veil
p103	Chapter 4
	The visualization of buried senses
p131	Conclusions
p132	References

# List of Illustrations

Fig.001	p2	Mohsen Makhmalbaf	The Day I Became A Woman: Film Still
Fig.002	p4	Howard Schatz	'Sacred' ( <a href="http://www.howardschatz.com">www.howardschatz.com</a> )
Fig.003	p12	François Perrier	'The Sacrifice of Iphigenia' ( <a href="http://a1reproductions.com">http://a1reproductions.com</a> )
Fig.004	p13	Unknown Artist	'Immurement of a nun' (Moriz Hermann 1868, 272)
Fig.005	p14	Unknown Artist	'A relief of male Soldiers in Achaemenian Empire' (Vorbehalten, Alle Rechte 1980)
Fig.006	p17	Ornella Sessa	'A moment in life' ( <a href="http://www.design-dautore.com">www.design-dautore.com</a> )
Fig.007	p17	Unknown Photographer	'Iranian Women wearing chador in early Qajar Era' ( <a href="http://www.parstimes.com">http://www.parstimes.com</a> )
Fig.008	p19	Unknown Artist	'Tahminah Comes to Rustam's Chamber' (Sindona, Enio, 1961)
Fig.009	p20	Shirin Neshat	'Women of Allah' ( <a href="http://www.mutualart.com">http://www.mutualart.com</a> )
Fig.010	p23	Georgina Choueiri	'Veils Mural' ( <a href="http://www.imow.org">http://www.imow.org</a> )
Fig.011	p24	Shirin Neshat	'Fervour: Film Still' (Shirin Neshat 2002)
Fig.012	p25	Unknown Photographer	'Kabaa' ( <a href="http://www.quranforkids.com">http://www.quranforkids.com</a> )
Fig.013	p26	Adilnor Collection	'A Persian miniature of the Kaaba' ( <a href="http://www.adilnor.com">http://www.adilnor.com</a> )
Fig.014	p27	Unknown photographer	'A group of veiled women in a public ceremony' ( <a href="http://www.muslimherald.com">http://www.muslimherald.com</a> )
Fig.015	p27	Unknown photographer	'Sky view of Birjand' (Booth-Clibborn 2001, 87)

Fig.016	p34	Shirin Neshat	(Shirin Neshat 2002)
Fig.017	p36	Shirin Neshat	'Fervour: Film Still' (Shirin Neshat, 2000, Fervour: Film Still)
Fig.018	p38	Mohsen Makhmalbaf	'Kandahar: film still' ( <a href="http://www.iranchamber.com">http://www.iranchamber.com</a> )
Fig.019	p40	DeAngel	'Protegida con rojo (Sheltered with veil)' ( <a href="http://www.deangel.net">http://www.deangel.net</a> )
Fig.020	p42	by Author	'freedom with the veil'
Fig.021	p44	John Hilliard	(Contacts Vol.3- Conceptual Photography DVD)
Fig.022	p46	Shirin Neshat	'Rapture' (Shirin Neshat 2002, 116-117)
Fig.023	p49	Shirin Neshat	( <a href="http://www.baomoi.com">http://www.baomoi.com</a> )
Fig.024	p51	Rene Magritte	'The Suppression of vision, the lovers' (Juhani Pallasmaa 2005, 28)
Fig.025	p51	Herbert Bayer	'The fusion of vision and tactility' (Juhani Pallasmaa 2005, 28)
Fig.026	p52	by Author	'Only having vision to connect to the outer world'
Fig.027	p53	Jananne AL-ANI	'Veil' ( <a href="http://www.luxonline.org.uk">http://www.luxonline.org.uk</a> )
Fig.028	p54	by Author	'The veil as the initial architecture surrounding the body'
Fig.029	p55	by Author	'Body and its surrounding boundaries'
Fig.030	p56	by Author	'The space between the body of the woman and the veil '
Fig.031	p57	by Author	'Anti-veiling perspective, the veil and the body'
Fig.032	p59	by Author	'Collage, A veiled society'
Fig.033	p60	Tokujiin Yoshioka	'Confinement' ( <a href="http://synapticstimuli.com">http://synapticstimuli.com</a> )
Fig.034	p62	by Author	'The senses between the body and the veil'
Fig.035-041	p63-p69	by Author	'six images of a girl in struggle to unbind herself'
Fig.042	p71	by Author	'Persian Calligraphy on Forough Farrokhzad image'

Fig.043	p73	Marzieh Makhmalbaf	'The day I became a woman: Film Still'
Fig.044	p74	Unknown photographer	'Iranian revolt against forcing women to veil'
Fig.045	p75	Unknown photographer	'Toronto Slut-Walk' ( <a href="http://www.altmedia.net.au">http://www.altmedia.net.au</a> )
Fig.046	p77,78	by Author	'Visualizing the severity of unbinding/unveiling'
Fig.047	p83	Unknown Artist	'Tabatabaee House plan' ( <a href="http://www.persian-area.com">http://www.persian-area.com</a> )
Fig.048	p84	Unknown photographer	'Tabatabaee House entrance' ( <a href="http://www.anobanini.net">http://www.anobanini.net</a> )
Fig.049	p85	Naghshe Morad	'Tabatabaee House main courtyard' ( <a href="http://www.albert-videt.eu">http://www.albert-videt.eu</a> )
Fig.050	p85	Unknown photographer	'Tabestan neshin, Terrace facing north' ( <a href="http://photo.kharchangzadeh.com">http://photo.kharchangzadeh.com</a> )
Fig.051	p86	Ali Mirghaderi	'Tabatabaee House, openings of the roof' ( <a href="http://www.flickr.com">http://www.flickr.com</a> )
Fig.052	p86	Unknown photographer	'Tabatabaee House, openings to the courtyard' ( <a href="http://www.iran-forum.ir">http://www.iran-forum.ir</a> )
Fig.053	p87	Unknown photographer	'Abbasid House, courtyards' ( <a href="http://didiran.com">http://didiran.com</a> )
Fig.054	p87	Ashkan Rahbarian	'Abbasid House, courtyards' ( <a href="http://rahbarian.blogfa.com">http://rahbarian.blogfa.com</a> )
Fig.055	p88	Unknown photographer	'Abbasid House, Roof of the women's courtyards' ( <a href="http://www.iran-forum.ir">http://www.iran-forum.ir</a> )
Fig.056	p90	Unknown photographer	'Naqsh e Jahan Square, Isfahan, Iran' Antony Hunt 1978, 45
Fig.057	p91	Unknown photographer	'Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, Isfahan, Iran'
Fig.058	p92	Unknown photographer	'Entrance of the mosque' ( <a href="http://www.molon.de">http://www.molon.de</a> )
Fig.059	p93	Unknown photographer	'Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, Entrance vestibule' ( <a href="http://www.molon.de">http://www.molon.de</a> )
Fig.060	p94	Unknown photographer	'Entrance to the main place for prayer' ( <a href="http://vefagh.co.ir">http://vefagh.co.ir</a> )
Fig.061	p95	Negar Tabibian	'View from the vestibule to the "mihrab"'

Fig.062	p95	Negar Tabibian	'View from the interior of the mosque to the vestibule'
Fig.063	p95	Negar Tabibian	'Opening from the interior of the mosque to the outside'
Fig.064	p95	Unknown photographer	Vasari Corridor ( <a href="http://www.paradoxplace.com">http://www.paradoxplace.com</a> )
Fig.065-070	p97	Unknown photographer	View to Vasari Corridor
Fig.071	p98	Unknown Artist	'Section and Plan of the Moller house' Beatriz Colomina 1992, 79
Fig.072	p99	Unknown photographer	'Moller house' Beatriz Colomina 1992, 78
Fig.073	p99	Unknown photographer	'Moller house' Beatriz Colomina 1992, 77
Fig.074	p100	Unknown photographer	'Moller house' Beatriz Colomina 1992, 87
Fig.075	p100	Giuseppe Terragni	The Danteum, Second floor plan Thomas L Schumacher 1993, 57
Fig.076	p101	Giuseppe Terragni	The Danteum, Main floor plan Thomas L Schumacher 1993, 57
Fig.077	p101	Unknown Artist	Physical model of the Danteum Thomas L Schumacher 1993, 42
Fig.078	p101	Giuseppe Terragni	Danteum, Paradise Thomas L Schumacher 1993, 60
Fig.079	p102	Giuseppe Terragni	Danteum, Purgatory Thomas L Schumacher 1993, 58
Fig.080	p102	Giuseppe Terragni	Danteum, Inferno Thomas L Schumacher 1993, 59
Fig.081	p102	by Author	Initial sketch of the design concept
Fig.082	p110		Map of Tehran, Iran, 2010, Sc. 1:125,000 <a href="http://www.google.com/maps">www.google.com/maps</a>
Fig.083	p110		Map of Tehran, Iran, 2010, Sc. 1:12,500 <a href="http://www.google.com/maps">www.google.com/maps</a>
Fig.084	p111	by Author	Land Use Map
Fig.085	p112	by Author	Placement of the theatre in the site

Fig.086	p113	by Author	Plan Level -1
Fig.087	p114	by Author	Plan Level -2
Fig.088	p115	by Author	Diagram 1,2,3
Fig.089	p116	by Author	Diagram 4
Fig.090	p117	by Author	Diagram 5
Fig.091	p118	by Author	Section A-A
Fig.092	p119	by Author	Section B-B
Fig.093	p120	by Author	Perspective of the site (bird view)
Fig.094	p121	by Author	Perspective one
Fig.095-096	p122	by Author	Perspective Two and Three
Fig.097	p123	by Author	Perspective Four
Fig.098	p124	by Author	View One
Fig.099	p125	by Author	View Two
Fig.100	p126	by Author	View Three
Fig.101	p127	by Author	View Four
Fig.102	p128	by Author	View Five
Fig.103	p129	by Author	View Six
Fig.104	p130	by Author	View Seven





# Introduction

*Once upon a time there was a child. A little girl who enjoyed playing, running, laughing aloud... her hair tossing in the air...No worries of the future...those days went by so fast, she grew up and found herself in the school class. One day at school looking at a small mirror, she realized that she would never see herself running under the rain anymore, no biking, no laughing aloud; she could hardly see her hair and she could hardly imagine her body dancing with the wind again. She didn't feel the warmth of the sun touching her skin anymore. She was covered and too little to know what had happened and why...*

*She started to play piano at home but never could play at the school concert... her mother a lady with an ethereal voice could never sing in public...Now that she is a mature woman and knows that whether visible or invisible, it was a veil, a kind of a cover which surrounded her body and soul for so long and which motivated her to explore that veil from the viewpoint of an architect.*

Fig. 001

Mohsen Makhmalbaf, The day I became a woman: Film Still  
A girl with Chador



The woman's body has embodied dreams and nightmares, fears and fantasies, nurturance and destruction for so long. Mysterious and mystified, it has been handled with unrestrained imagination.

Women and men are different on both biological and psychological levels. Throughout history, regardless to their personality, women were believed to have weaker senses and to be intrinsically more emotional than rational. Thus, they typically played the roles of wives and mothers relegated to the household.

*Fig. 002*

Howard Schatz , Sacred



In their family life, women are treated as commodities. “Women moved from One Kurios\* to another: father, husband, and son, and never reached majority. Nor had they any independent economic status.”<sup>1</sup>

As Luce Irigaray in her essay, “women on the market” declares, “women were objects to be used and exchange”<sup>2</sup>, apparently they were devices to comply with men’s intentions and desires.

\*. Kurios is a Greek word that refers to a person or thing which has the power of deciding i.e. God, lord, master, or guardian.

1. Rabinowitz, Nancy Sorkin. 1993. *Anxiety Veiled: Euripides and the Traffic in Women*. New York: Cornell University Press. 5

2. Irigaray, Luce. 1985. *This sex which is not one*. New York: Cornell University Press. 170

By the emergence of Islam, a set of beliefs and rules were set forth. One of these rules was to encourage both women and men to be modest and descent and to lower their gazes. Women were asked to cover their chests and not to display their ornaments before strange men.

After Mohammad's death, and in order to establish an Islamic government, the religious elite of the day gathered and started to extract rules from the Qur'an's verses and hadiths. In one of those hadiths, Mohammad drew a curtain between the strangers and his wives, in order to decrease the interactions between them. This, along with other hadiths was eventually transformed into regulations such as gender segregation.

In Iran, long before the emergence of Islam, women of high aristocracy were asked to cover their hair and body in order to maintain their social class. Therefore, when Islam came to Iran in 656, the veil easily became a medium in implementing the gender segregation, as women were already familiar with the concept of veiling,

Women were kept in private rooms more strictly than before in order to be hidden from strangers' eyes and whenever they decided to enter the public realm, which was men's inherited domain, they had to stay within this cover. Although initially labeled as a cover of sacredness and respect, recently it has turned to a political device in order to repress women and eliminate them from the society.

Based on solely cultural traditions, Fadwa El Guindi points out five different patterns and features of the veil: “1- Complementary, as in Sumeria. 2- Exclusionary and privileging as in the Persian-Mesopotamian case; 3- Egalitarian, as in Egypt; 4- Hierarchal, as in Hellenic culture; and 5- Seclusionary, as in Byzantine culture.”

<sup>1</sup>

The shape of the chador varies in different cultures and has changed a lot during its history. In the late 18th century in Iran, this all-encompassing cloth took its current shape and was called chador. \*

<sup>1</sup>- Guindi, Fadwa El. 1999. *Veil: Modesty, Privacy and resistance*. New York: Oxford. 13

\*. In this text, “the veil” in Iran is referred to the chador.



The veil has often been discussed from either feminist or a religious elitist point of view. This thesis, however, aims to provide a broader perspective in which this all-encompassing cloth is explored not just as a single layer of fabric, but rather as several invisible layers that act as an extended threshold and create a space that holds the many buried senses of the veiled woman.

This thesis attempts to fully explore this space and visualize those senses by first examining the image of the women in ancient Greece, ancient Iran, and in some of the ancient Eastern Europe societies. It will investigate the history of the veil in pre-Islamic era and its emergence in Islamic societies. Based on those observations, the pro-veiling and anti-veiling viewpoints are discussed. Following this, a number of architecture precedents from both Iran and the West will be studied as visual manifestations of the veil. Finally, a theatre along with five galleries is designed that delineates and visualizes the life of women behind the veil, through a constructed journey.

# Chapter 1

The history of Women and the veil

## Ancient Greek Tragedies (550-220 BC)

*In ancient Greek society, an Athenian woman was always under the supervision of a male. As a child her father was responsible for her protection and as an adult she was treated as a commodity for exchange. According to Claude Levi-Strauss: "Through the exchange of women between men from another group, men formed relationships beyond the family and thus established culture." <sup>1</sup>*

*The presence of women in ancient Greek society was critical as they alone could produce the children who would become the future soldiers of the community. Any illicit sexual activity, however, could harm the family and was a sign of dishonor. Men, therefore, were deemed responsible for controlling women's interaction in public. The result of this supervision for women was to remain in the background and never be allowed to partake in social activities.*

*According to Pericles: "The greatest glory of men is not to be inferior to what god has made them, and the greatest glory of a woman is to be least talked about by men, whether they are praising women or criticizing them." <sup>2</sup>*

1. Levi-Strauss, Claude. 1969. *Elementary Structures of Kinship*. Boston: Beacon Press. Trans. of *Les structures elementaires de parente*, 1949. 67-68

2. A. B. Bosworth. 2000. *The Historical Context of Thucydides' Funeral Oration*. *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 120. 2

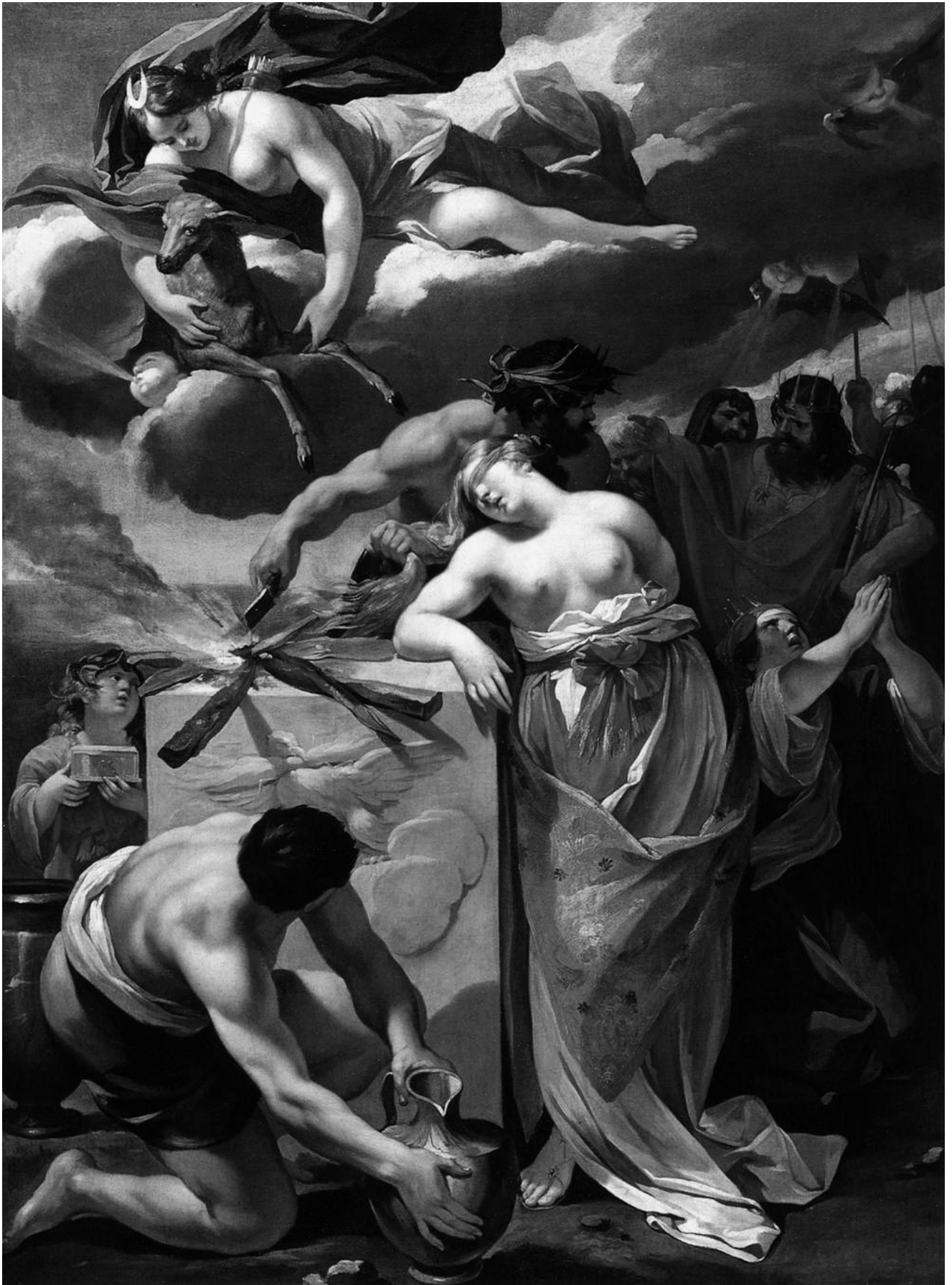
Consequently, women were not allowed to participate in public performances and tragedies but instead had to remain within the audience and honor men's performances. The transcripts of the majority of these tragedies describe a common story in which women were asked to sacrifice themselves for the well-being of men and were fetishized and glorified for conceding to men's requests.

For instance, tragedies such as *Agamemnon*, *Iphigenia at Aulis*, *The Death of Alcestis*, and *The Trojan Women* and *Hecuba* had a common scene in which a woman (maiden or wife), willingly sacrifices herself to preserve her community's soldiers from death. In order to give the impression that sacrificing was the maiden's best choice, which she takes freely, several rewards were offered to her. One of the rewards was praise which would have then become a form of fetishism and glorification. Unlike what might be displayed in the plays, the maiden had no choice. She had to choose either to be sacrificed or to get married. In fact, the choice for her was death with honor or life without honor; which was no more than a living death. "Sacrifice was a cut through her breast and marriage was a cut through her throat."<sup>1</sup>

Fig. 003

François Perrier , *The Sacrifice of Iphigenia*, painting

1. Rabinowitz, Nancy Sorkin. 1993. *Anxiety Veiled: Euripides and the Traffic in Women*. New York: Cornell University Press. 61



## A South-Eastern Europe Legend

The notion of sacrificing maidens, women, and brides can also be traced to some South-Eastern European legends and folklore. Many Bulgarian and Romanian songs describe brides being immured in the process of building new bridges or other structures in order to provide a better fate and fortune.

There is a story based on the Hungarian folk ballad, “Kelemen the Stonemason, which is the story of twelve unfortunate stonemasons who have been given the task of building the fortress of Déva. To remedy its recurring collapse, it is agreed that one of the builders must sacrifice his bride, and the bride to be sacrificed will be the one who first comes to visit. Another Greek story titled, The Bridge of Arta, describes incessant failure of building a bridge in a city which finally ended up successfully with the immurement of the master mason’s wife.”<sup>1</sup>

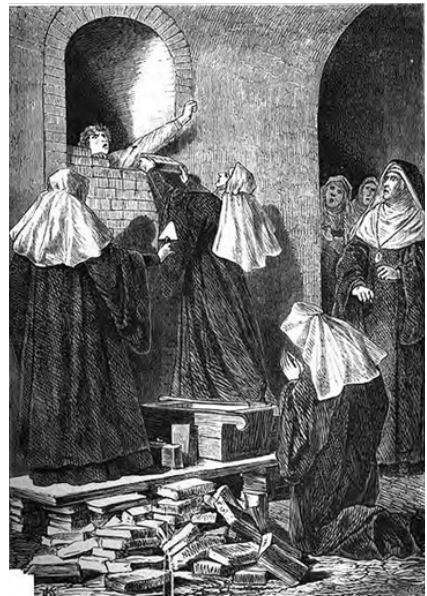


Fig. 004

Immurement of a nun

1. “Trinity Town Brothers builders”. last modified July 12. 2002. <http://litenet.bg/publish/tmollov/troica.htm>.

## The Image of women in Iran, (550 BCE - 1925)

Within the history of ancient Iran, before the emergence of Islam in the country (550 BC–633), one can rarely find evidence of women's presence. For instance, during the Achaemenian Empire (648 BC–330 BC) in Persepolis\*, women's figures were never carved or drawn. In this first Iranian Empire, even the animals carried as gifts for the king, are male; the exception is a lioness brought by the Elamites† who is accompanied by two cubs as an illustration of the lioness's predominant task.



Fig. 005

A relief of male Soldiers in Achaemenian Empire; It is a depiction of the absence of women. The Detail from the procession at Persepolis, before 4th C.BC

\*. In the ceremonial capital of the Achaemenid Empire (ca. 550-330 BCE), Persepolis was situated 70 km northeast of the modern city of Shiraz in the Fars Province of modern Iran

†. Elamites were people who lived in the south west of Iran during the Achaemenid Empire.

Islam emerged in Iran in 633 – 656 and provided the country with new principles and beliefs, such as the segregation of sexes. The intent of this separation was to reduce the chance of interaction between na-mahram\* women and men. A woman willing to leave the house had to conform to a number of protective norms designed to minimize contact and maximize social distance with na-mahram males. First she was required to seek her husband's permission. If permission was granted, the provision of a chaperone to accompany her in public spaces was then a necessity. The chaperone could be a related male or an elderly female whose sexuality was no longer a threat to the social order. In order to further control the so-called fluid sexual exposition of women, modesty in dress was regulated as a third norm.

\*- Na-mahram refers to one with whom marriage is not prohibited: everyone except for close relatives.



In compliance with these three norms, there were, however, specific areas within the cities where women were not expected to enter, such as major streets and squares that were primarily used by men. Women were almost never seen in tea or coffee houses where men spent a significant amount of time socializing and exchanging information, nor were they frequently seen in the bazaar.

Very rarely would any woman from a “good” family go out alone in the provinces, even for household shopping, which was often done either by the husband if the family had no servant or by the husband and wife together, or by the wife with a female companion.<sup>1</sup>

Although women were not prohibited from sacred spaces such as mosques, they were encouraged to do their prayers at home. For the congregational Friday Prayers they were separated from men either by a screen or by being seated in a totally separate room. Public baths that did not have separate rooms allocated to men or women, assigned different days to the use of each sex.

1. Khatib-Chahidi, J. 1981. Sexual Prohibitions, Shared Space and Fictive Marriages in Shi'ite Iran. In S. Ardener (ed.) *Women and Space: Ground Rules and Social Maps*, London: Croom Helm

Beyond these physical restrictions, women's attitudes were also a matter of discussion and debate. Self expression, either bodily or verbally, was confined even within the private world of the family. In Iranian society, a virtuous woman was expected to have an inward attitude. She was not supposed to interfere and merge with the outside realm. Traditional propriety, *Hojb-o-Haya* or *Sharm*, defines the character of an ideal woman as one whose body is covered, her voice unheard, her portrait never painted, and her life story untold.



The word *Sharm* has a deep connotation in Iranian culture. *Sharm* rules the social world in Iran, and stretches into the furthest reaches of the individual's psyche. It affects both the internal state and the external behaviour; it carries feelings of embarrassment, shyness, self-restraint, decency, the sense of having an ordained place in the world, and ultimately a woman's public eradication.



The concept of girls' schools names in Iran is another example illustrating the degree to which the society wanted women to remain loyal to these ethics. Names such as: Effatiyeh [House of Chastity], Esmatiyeh [House of Purity], Maktabkhanehye Shari'at [School of Holy Law], Ehtejabi-ye [Place of Seclusion], and Nosratiyeh-ye Pardegian [Nosratiyeh School for Veiled Girls].

Ferdowsi \* indicates the competencies of an Iranian ideal woman in one of his poems and points at Sharm as the primary requisite which takes precedence over wealth, physical beauty, and fertility:

“Three qualities make a woman  
Fit for the throne of superiority  
The first is her Sharm and her wealth  
With which to adorn her husband's house  
The second is her procreation of auspicious Sons  
Who will increase her husband's delight  
The third is her face and her figure  
Coupled with her covered hair.”<sup>1</sup>

*Fig. 006 (opposite top)*

Ornella Sessa, A moment in life

*Fig. 007 (opposite bottom)*

Iranian Women wearing chador in early Qajar Era, 1794-1800

\*. Ferdowsi, 940–1020 C.E. is an honoured Persian poet. He is the author of Shah-Name, the book of Kings. This work provides a more or less connected story told in material and rhymed verse, of Iranian Empire, from the creation of the world down to the Mohammad conquest and it purports to deal with the reigns of fifty kings and queens. Levy, Epic, prologue

1. Milani, Farzaneh. 1992. *Veils and Words: the Emerging Voices of Iranian Women*. New York: Syracuse University Press. 52



Taking all the above into account, women with their so called enticing bodies were underestimated and forced to conceal themselves behind unseeing walls. Men, on the contrary, were empowered and their roles in public activities have been incrementally emphasized. The men's world deals with the power, status, control of information, and decision making, whereas the women's world is associated with relative powerlessness and domestic life. "Women are portrayed as helpless, passive victims, whose very identity, status, and existence is dependent on their male kin." <sup>1</sup> This has more or less the portrait of women in Iran for more than fourteen centuries.

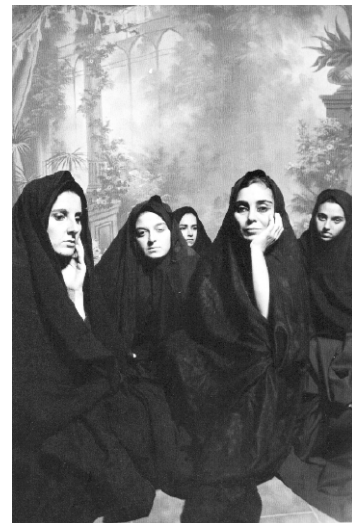
Fig. 008 (left)

Tahminah Comes to Rustam's Chamber

One of the great romantic episodes of the shahnameh, Tahminah's meeting with Rustam is shown here. The slender height of Tahminah is repeated in the long lines of the windows and door, while the curve of the curtain enhances the grace of her gesture which is full of Sharm. Rustam, reclining, props up his head and gazes eagerly in anticipation of her approach.

Fig. 009 (right)

Shirin Neshat, Women of Allah, Iranian women in black chador



1. Mazumdar, Shampa, and Mazumdar, Sanjoy. 2001. Rethinking Public and Private Space: Religion and Women in Muslim Society. *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research*, Vol18. 302. Chicago: Locke Science Publishing Co. Inc.

## The Veil

### The Origin of the Veil

The veil predates Islam by many centuries. In the Near East, Assyrian kings introduced both the seclusion of women in the royal harem and the veil for the first time. Prostitutes and slaves, however, were told not to veil, and were slashed if they disobeyed this law. Beyond the Near East, the practice of hiding one's face and largely living in seclusion appeared in classical Greece, in the Byzantine Christian world, in Persia, and in India. <sup>1</sup>

“For many centuries, until around 1175, Anglo-Saxon and then Anglo-Norman women, with the exception of young unmarried girls, wore veils named wimples that entirely covered their hair, and often their necks up to their chins.” <sup>2</sup>

There is also evidence that women of 15th century Burgundy and France, Northern Europe, Hungary and Poland wore headdresses in the shape of a cone or steeple known as a Hennin. These and many other forms of head coverings and garments are depictions of manifold styles and shapes of the coverings practiced by various social classes.

\*. Stateira I (died circa 332 BC) was the wife of Darius III of Persia of the Achaemenid dynasty. She was known as the most beautiful woman on Earth. <http://en.wikipedia.org>

1. “WOMEN in the MUSLIM WORLD”, Last modified: 2011, <http://www.womeninworldhistory.com/toc-13.html>

2. Owen-Crocker, Gayle R. 2005, Dress in Anglo-Saxon England. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press

In addition to its various shapes, the veil has been worn under various circumstances. Sometimes it was draped over and pinned to the hat of a woman in mourning, especially at funerals. Veils also have been used as a substitute to a mask, a method of hiding the identity of a woman in some occasions such as when she was traveling to meet a lover.

## The emergence of the veil in Muslim Societies

The origin of the veil in Islam was stated in three Hadiths \*. Many pro-veiling Muslim clergy declare that the veil verse was revealed to Muhammad at one of his weddings five years before his death. As the story goes,

Three tactless guests overstayed after the wedding and continued to chat despite the Prophet's desire to be alone with his new wife. To encourage them to leave, Muhammad drew a curtain between the nuptial chamber and one of his inconsiderate companions while uttering "the verse of the Hijab" Qur'an, S. 33:53. <sup>1</sup>

Another set of Hadiths claim that the verse of Hijab was prompted when one of the Prophet's companions accidentally touched the hand of one of Muhammad's wives while eating dinner. Yet a third set of Hadiths describe the revelation of the verse by the incessant gaze of a strange man at Prophet Wives and promising them marriage after Muhammad's death.

In these verses and hadiths, the veil was described as a curtain to separate women and men and also as a cover which would disguise women's bodies and ornaments.



*Fig. 010 (above)*

Georgina Choueiri, "Veils Mural", Acrylic, Spray Paint, and Fabric

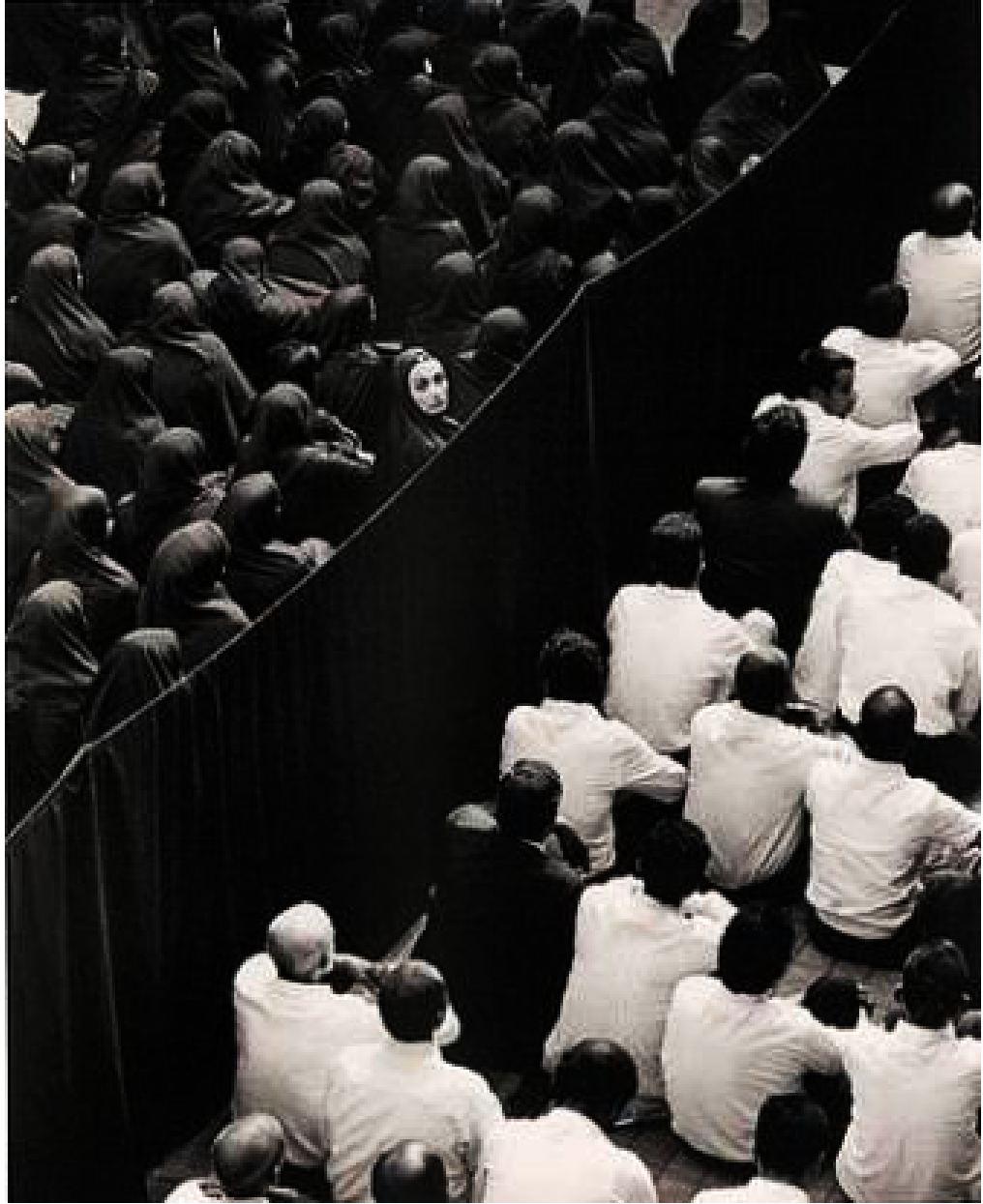
*Fig. 011 (opposite)*

Shirin Neshat, 2000, *Fervour*: Film Still  
Spatial segregation of women and men; aside from the curtain which hinders both physical and visual access; women are also wearing black chador.

\*. Narrations concerning the words and deeds of the Islamic prophet Muhammad

1. Mazumdar, Shampa, and Mazumdar, Sanjoy, winter 2001, Rethinking Public and Private Space: Religion and Women in Muslim Society, *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research* 18:4, pp. 302





Muslim elites believe that the untamed sexual activity of men is part of their nature and the veil is a God-ordained solution to the apparent dissimilarities in men's and women's sexual drives. Women therefore, were deemed responsible to control men's sexual attitudes. Sharadda who is a Muslim woman, states: "Islam is natural and men need some things naturally; if we abide by these needs [and veil accordingly], we will all be happy." <sup>1</sup>

Since the early years of Islam, the veil has been widely used to cherish, appraise, and respect sacred objects. The best illustration of this is The Kaaba.



*Fig. 012 (left)*

Kabaa, The holiest place for Muslim people; a cube covered by black silk and gold curtain.

*Fig. 013 (opposite)*

Adilnor Collection, A Persian miniature painting, depicting the Kaaba and pilgrims, 17th century;

\*. The Kaaba (al-Kaabah IPA: English: The Cube, is a cube-shaped building in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, and is the most sacred site in Islam.

1. Qur'an. 24.31.

2. Read, Jen'Nan Ghazal, and Bartkowski, John P., Jun. 2000. To Veil or Not to Veil? A Case Study of Identity Negotiation among Muslim Women in Austin, Texas. In *Gender and Society*, Vol. 14, No. 3. 395-417. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, Inc.

The Kaaba is undoubtedly the center of the Islamic world and to the Muslims, reaching to it, is the ultimate goal of their pilgrimage to Mecca. It is a place of worship which God commanded Ibrahim and Ismael to renovate four thousand years ago. The original building is believed to be constructed by Adam, 1,400 years ago.

Kaaba is derived from an Arabic word meaning cube, and literally means a high place with respect and prestige.

Due to the significance of the Kaaba, a great degree of importance is given to the majestic curtain which covers it. The curtain is known as the Kiswa and is considered to be a symbol of reverence and divinity. During the Prophet Muhammad's time, the Kiswa was made of cloth from Yemen and it was changed and renewed twice a year. During the Ottoman Empire, the Kiswa was made of black silk onto which were various complex designs and embroidery. The Kiswa has remained black since then; a layer of cloth woven and embroidered in gold thread with Quranic verses.





## The veil (chador) in Iran

Practicing the veil was mandatory for all women in Iran until around 1931 that Reza Shah\* became Iran's ruler. He had the intention of modernizing Iran's society. His first () was to unveil women and encourage them to dress like western women. Along with the Shah's plan, women's awakening movement during 1936-1941, asserted that the veil impedes physical exercise of women and prohibits them from entering the society and contributing to the progress of the nation. "Thus, with the support of the king and this movement's impact, finally in 1936 women were unveiled and encouraged to participate in the public sector." <sup>1</sup>

*Fig. 014 (opposite top)*

A group of veiled women in a public ceremony, Tehran, Iran

*Fig. 015 (opposite bottom)*

sky view of Birjand, a city in Khorasan, Iran

\*. Reza Khan, later Rezā Shāh Pahlavi (March 15, 1878 – July 26, 1944), was the Shah of the Imperial State of Iran, from December 15, 1925, until he was forced to abdicate by the Anglo-Soviet invasion of Iran on September 16, 1941.

1. Reza Shah's "Women's Awakening Project",

Last modified July 10, 2002, <http://www.iranian.com/Books/2002/July/Amin/index.html>

After Iran's revolution in 1979, the governing principles of the country were radically altered. Hijab\* was mandated again in 1983 and the veil was considered as the best and the most appropriate shape of it. Once again, men's unleashed sexual behavior was considered natural and unquenchable unless the freedom of their lustful gazes was impeded. In the words of President Rafsanjani,

A cleric could not walk through the university with those scenes on the grass, in classes, in streets. We could not go to government offices. If you stood in front of a desk, you would commit a sin, because there was a nude statue [an unveiled woman] behind the desk.<sup>1</sup>

The form, shape, and the extent of coverage of the veil varies from region to region. It ranges from a head-scarf to a full, all-encompassing cloak called Burqa in Afghanistan and Burkha in India. In Iran this cover is called chador and is a full-body-length semicircle of fabric that is split open down the front. This cloth is tossed over a woman's or girl's head, but then she holds it closed in the front. It has no hand openings, no buttons, or clasps, but rather, it is held closed by the wearer's hands.

This current form of the veil has existed since 1983 and is mandatory in several public spaces, offices, and universities in different cities of Iran.  
and universities in different cities of Iran.

\*- Hijab refers to both the head covering traditionally worn by Muslim women and modest Muslim styles of dress in general. 1. Milani, Farzaneh. 1992. *Veils and Words: the Emerging Voices of Iranian Women*, New York: Syracuse University Press. 25

Since 1983, the act of separation has extended beyond drawing a boundary line around a woman's body. It has spread and has created a whole segregated society with sharp lines of division which are drawn at the intersections of male and female realms. For instance, public transportation such as buses, subways, and trains in Iran, has compartments exclusively for women. Other separate situations include separate recreational facilities for women, and parks which were designed for the use of veiled women. Public beaches in the Caspian Sea resort areas in Iran are also partitioned into male-female zones. Public swimming pools are similarly separated.

The veil, while being a simple fabric which wraps around the body of women, maintains a large spectrum of meanings, from a physical object which provides protection and sacredness, to a matter of confinement and limitation. In the next chapter, the ideas of both pro-veiling and anti-veiling groups will be discussed.





# Chapter 2

Glorify or Disdain?

## Pro-Veiling

### The veil: A cover of respect and holiness

In Islamic countries those women who voluntarily practice the veil have never considered it as a source of oppression or dependency. To them the veil has always been a source of pride, honor, and dignity. Thus, throughout the long history of veiling, not only men but also many women have supported its practice. They have valued the veil, opposed its banishment, and justified its practice.

As Ayatollah Khomeini said, “what we don’t want and what Islam does not want, is to make a woman an object, a puppet in the hands of men.”<sup>1</sup> In this view, the veil is a refusal of all relations and beliefs that reduce a woman to the level of a sex object.

*Fig. 016 (opposite)*

Photo by Shirin Neshat, 2010

1. Milani, Farzaneh. 1992. *Veils and Words: the Emerging Voices of Iranian Women*, New York: Syracuse University Press. 38



Women to choose:  
Social Esteem vs. Autonomy

“A woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction.” <sup>1</sup>

Expanding the discussion of social esteem, we recognize that the majority of Muslim women have voluntarily given up their autonomy, especially their economic independence and have decided to stay at home. The desire to be praised, therefore, is preferred to the fear of appearing in a society where males believe in themselves to have the right to unleash their sexual desires on unveiled women.

*Fig. 017 (opposite)*

Shirin Neshat, 2000, *Fervour*: Film Still  
Crowd of Women, One Leaving

1. Woolf, Virginia. 1989. *A Room of One's Own*. New York: Harcourt Brace & Co. 4.



## The veil: protection and control

To some women, the veil is a tent, a shelter which acts as an impediment that blocks masculine gaze, subverts man's role as the supervisor, and removes the woman from the category of object-to-be-seen. This attitude towards the veil provides it with a quality that enables women to control and supervise their surrounding area.

Owning a sheltered space and having power and control over our intimate zone is apparently what every human being requires. However, the policies and norms which rule the society are not completely in our hands. In a so called modern society, constructing thousands of cages and trying to keep women inside these cages, not only would be disrespectful to women but could also be offensive to men. Possessing a space in order to feel safe and protected is essential; however, we need to have the opportunity to come out of our enclosed spaces in order to interact freely with people in a congenial environment.

Moreover, we need to be able to determine the quality of our intimate zone. That is to say, all human beings need a flexible space that could be expanded and become as large as a public space and at the same time have the ability to shrink and surround us as our clothes do. With the veil, on the contrary, one owns a fixed space which is always defined with the same quality, color, and fashion.

*Fig. 018 (opposite)*

Mohsen Makhmalbaf, 2001, Kandahar: film still  
A woman in Afghanistan with Burqa



*Fig. 019*

DeAngel, *Protegida con rojo* (Sheltered with red)





## The veil: A sign of freedom

From some women's point of view, veiling is as an expression of identity, loyalty to Islam, and cultural authenticity. These women tend to redefine the meaning of the boundary. To them, the veil is not a confinement; rather it is a device which facilitates their access to the public realm by disguising their body.

Although some people believe that women in post-revolutionary Iran have disappeared from public life, pro-veiling advocates assert that they have instead made remarkable contributions in artistic endeavors, professional achievements, educational and industrial institutions, and even in sports activities.

In the eyes of Fatima, a friend of author, who follows the practice of veiling, the veil has never limited her activities and interactions in the public realm. During our conversation, she did not mention though, whether riding a bicycle or swimming in the sea is one of her desires - activities that might prove difficult with the practice of veiling. When asked if she would she still be loyal to the veil if she was not being stared at, her answer was familiar to me: "men are intrinsically different from women and they have natural passions and desires that are often hard to control; so by covering ourselves, we help them to handle and direct their sensualities."

*Fig. 020*

by Author, freedom with the veil



In line with Iranian pro-veiling beliefs, veiled students in Cairo claimed to be the most progressive on achieving liberation. These women have complied with the veil and have found it as a great equalizer that enables them to work alongside men.

If the act of practicing the veil is to protect women, respect them and establish a congenial environment, the argument would still continue as to whether men's sexual desires will be tamed or decreased by women wearing the veil. John Hilliard's photograph of a blank screen would be a good example to further illustrate the discussion.



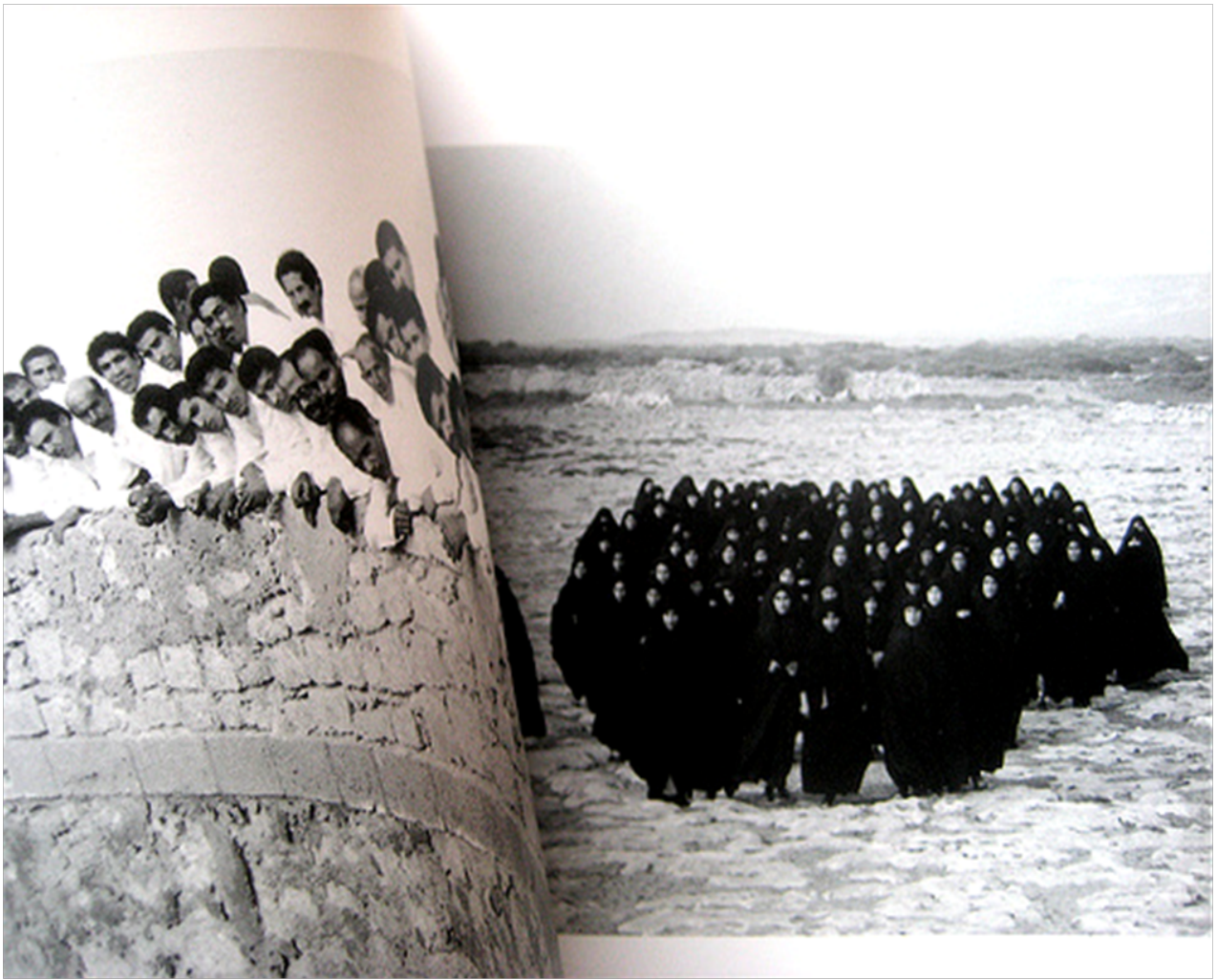
Fig. 021

photo by John Hilliard

*You, the observer, are being placed on one side of the screen as the viewer of the photo, while other people in the photo are situated on the other side. Those people seem so excited about what they are viewing. However, you are not capable of seeing what is behind the screen. The screen in this photo could resemble the chador. The excited people on the other side, whose expressions would give you a vague understanding of what is beyond the screen, could be comparable to the vague, yet exciting image of the body of a woman behind the chador, as in a man's mind. The excitement, eagerness, and fervour to see beyond the screen are inevitable.*

*Fig. 022*

Shirin Neshat, 1999, Rapture



## Anti-Veiling

There is another group of women for whom the veil is neither a choice nor an option. These women take the view that they are exploited commodities rather than the most liberated, honored, and cherished creatures on earth, as adherents to the practice of veiling would claim.

This act of forcefully veiling and admiring women seems to be more or less comparable to the sacrifice of maidens in Greek Tragedies, and the act of immurement.



Islamic feminists believe that the veil excludes women from a normal life, with all its desires and rights. They contend that by practicing the veil, not only will a woman's body be surrounded and enclosed, but her voice will also be constrained. Body and voice are both powerful transmitters; both can communicate and speak. Merleau-Ponty's philosophy which places the human body in the centre of the experiential world, stresses the importance of keeping the body and its sensations lively and vigorous in his own words,

Our own body is in the world as the heart is in the organism: it keeps the visible spectacle constantly alive, it breathes life into it and sustains it inwardly, and with it forms a system and sensory experience which is unstable and alien to natural perception, and which we achieve with our whole body all at once, and which opens on a world of interacting senses. <sup>1</sup>

1. Pallasmaa, Juhani. 2005. *The eye of the skin: Architecture and the senses*. West Sussex, England: John Wiley & Sons Ltd. 40

## A Boundary for Voice

Voice refers to both the freedom of singing and the freedom of expressing ideas.

In Islamic countries, a woman's voice is considered as her *owrat*\* and whether it prompts sexual ecstasy or grieving, it is considered as seductive, tempting, and enticing as a woman's body and is subjected to strict concealment. <sup>1</sup>

According to the Islamic philosopher Ghazali †,

It isn't proper for the woman to answer soft and easy, because the man's heart may draw to the woman. She should instead put her finger to her mouth to change her voice. It is not permissible for a male stranger to hear the sound of a pestle being pounded by a woman he does not know. <sup>2</sup>

In a society where a woman's spoken words are assumed to be tempting, the act of singing would undoubtedly be prohibited.



Fig. 023  
photo by Shirin Neshat, 2009

\*. *Owrat* is referred to the most private part of each person's body which has to be covered.

†. Al-Ghazali is an Iranian renowned Muslim scholar of the 11th century

1. Milani, Farzaneh. 1992. *Veils and Words: the Emerging Voices of Iranian Women*. New York: Syracuse University Press. 48

2. Neshat, Guity, 1999, *Women in the Middle East and North Africa: restoring women to history*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 41

The voice could also be seen to represent a peaceful ground in which to express opinions and ideas and to contribute the process of decision making, and to advocate for human rights. “The veil, one might argue then, was a major barrier to a woman’s struggle for autonomy and authorship. It immobilized her body and muted her voice.”<sup>1</sup>

As Forough Farrokhzad \* describes it in her poem:

“Don’t put the seal of silence on my lips  
I have tales to tell  
Take off the heavy chain from my foot  
I am disturbed by all of this.” Osian, from the book:  
Asir

\*. Forough Farrokhzad 1935-1967 was an Iranian poet and film director. She is arguably one of Iran’s most influential female poets of the twentieth century.

1. Milani, Farzaneh. 1992. *Veils and Words: the Emerging Voices of Iranian Women*. New York: Syracuse University Press. 8

## A Boundary for Body

In addition to the confinement of the voice, the veil also acts as an impediment against fully employing the human senses. For instance, the sense of touch is confined to the space between the veil and the woman's body. Moreover, the sense of hearing and fully perceiving the world relies on how much one's ability to interact with his/her surrounding environment, which in the case of donning the veil, is minimized. The only human sense that is not restrained by practicing the veil is vision. However, the question still remains as whether with vision alone one would be able to feel and fully interact with her surrounding environment.

Fig. 024 (below left)

*Rene Magritte, The Suppression of vision, the lovers*

Fig. 025 (below right)

*Herbert Bayer, The fusion of vision and tactility, The lonely*

Fig. 026 (opposite)

*by Author, Only having vision to connect to the outer world, The shape of chador in Qajar era in Iran*







According to Merleau Ponty, "Our body is both an object among objects and that which sees and touches them."<sup>1</sup>

*Fig. 027 (opposite)*

*Jananne AL-ANI, 1997, Veil*

*The relationship between the viewer/  
photographer and the veiled woman*

*Fig. 028 (right)*

*by Author, The veil as the initial  
architecture surrounding the body,  
The illustration of the space between  
the veil (chador) and the body of the*



1. Pallasmaa, Juhani. 2005. The eye of the skin: Architecture and the senses. West Sussex, England: John Wiley & Sons Ltd. 19

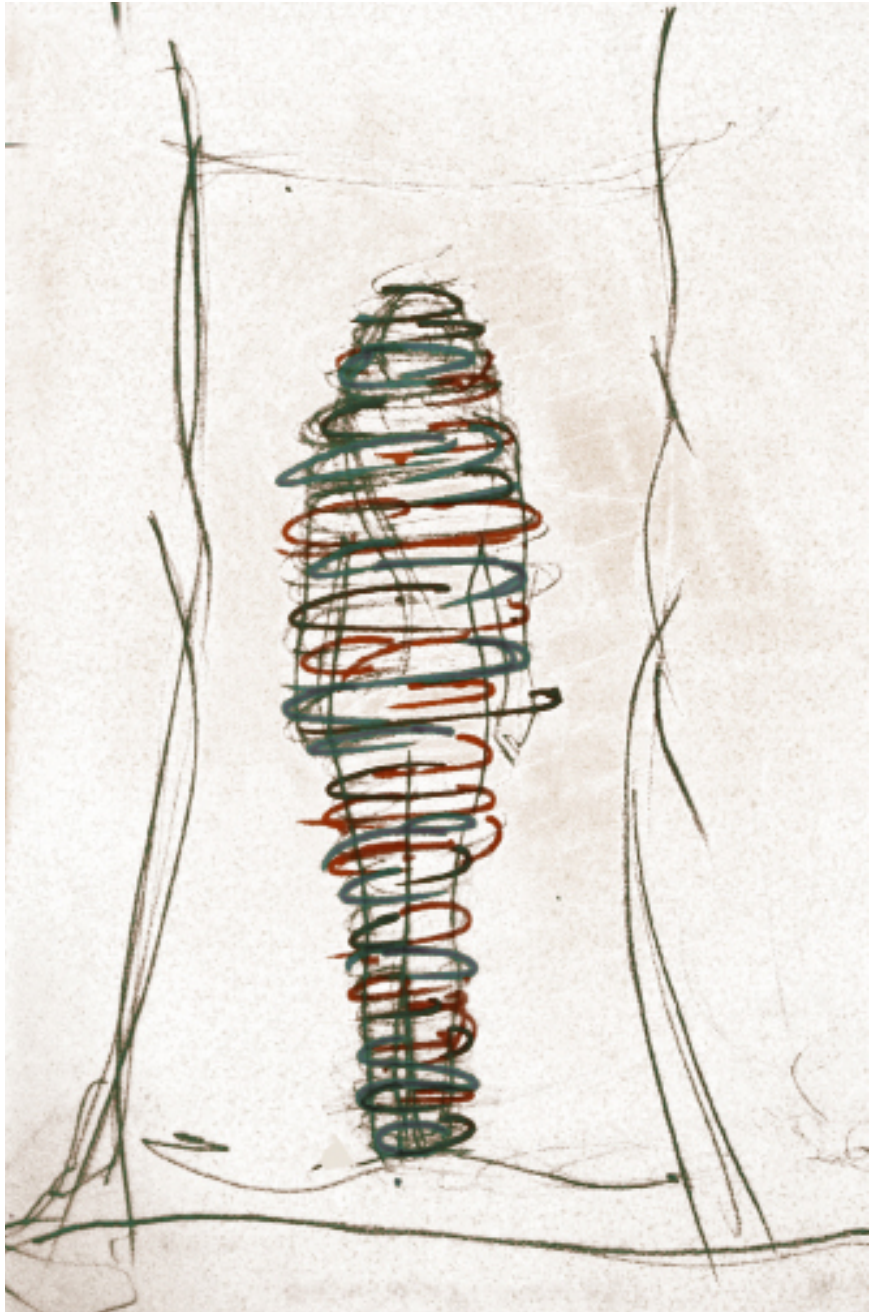






Fig. 029 (opposite)

by Author, *Body and its surrounding boundaries*

Fig. 030 (right)

by Author, *The space between the body of the woman and the veil from anti-veiling perspective.*



## Changing the vision through the Veil

“Fatima Mernissi, the most prominent Muslim feminist, is highly critical of dominant gender conceptualizations that construe veiling as the ultimate standard by which the spiritual welfare and religious devoutness of Muslim women should be judged.”<sup>1</sup> Mernissi seeks to reverse the sacredness of the veil. By investigating the historical evidences that illustrate the practice of veiling in the ancient Near East and Arabia long before the rise of Islam, she strives to change women’s perspective towards the veil.

*Fig. 031 (opposite)*

*by Author, Anti-veiling  
perspective, the veil and the  
body*

1. Read, Jen’Nan Ghazal, and Bartkowski, John P., Jun. 2000. To Veil or Not to Veil? A Case Study of Identity Negotiation among Muslim Women in Austin, Texas. In *Gender and Society*, Vol. 14, No. 3. 395-417. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, Inc.

## Boundary for all aspects of living

Veiling in a country like Iran is more than a matter of taste in clothing or a religious regulation affecting women alone. It indicates modes of behavior within the society, broadcasting authority, and networking. Censorship is a regular aspect of everyday life in such societies. Everything is influenced by the notion of concealing, vagueness and lack of clarity. Everything is under a visible or invisible curtain.

*Fig. 032 (below)*

*collage by Author, A veiled society*

*Fig. 033 (opposite)*

*Tokujiin Yoshioka, Confinement*

A veiled society is like a garden invaded by snow. Just as trees, flowers, weeds and every little space in garden get covered by the mantle of snow, so, too, every corner of the society is pervaded by the veil. Nothing can evade its presence. A society that veils its women is a veiled society. In other words, women are not the only ones veiled. Men are veiled, too. <sup>1</sup>



1. Milani, Farzaneh. 1992. *Veils and Words: the Emerging Voices of Iranian Women*. New York: Syracuse University Press. 25



## Uprising

Being deserted and abandoned as a consequence of being veiled and covered, women are motivated to fight their situation. They unanimously agree that the elimination of the physical veil will lead them towards the omission of all the restrictions against women. However, their uprising always resulted in hostile and fatal reactions from the government.

“The first men who supported unveiling were harshly criticized, ostracized, or sent into exile; theirs was not as harsh as that allotted to Tahereh Qorrato’Ayn, the first woman known actually to unveil herself publicly in nineteenth-century Iran. She was later executed by strangulation.”<sup>1</sup>

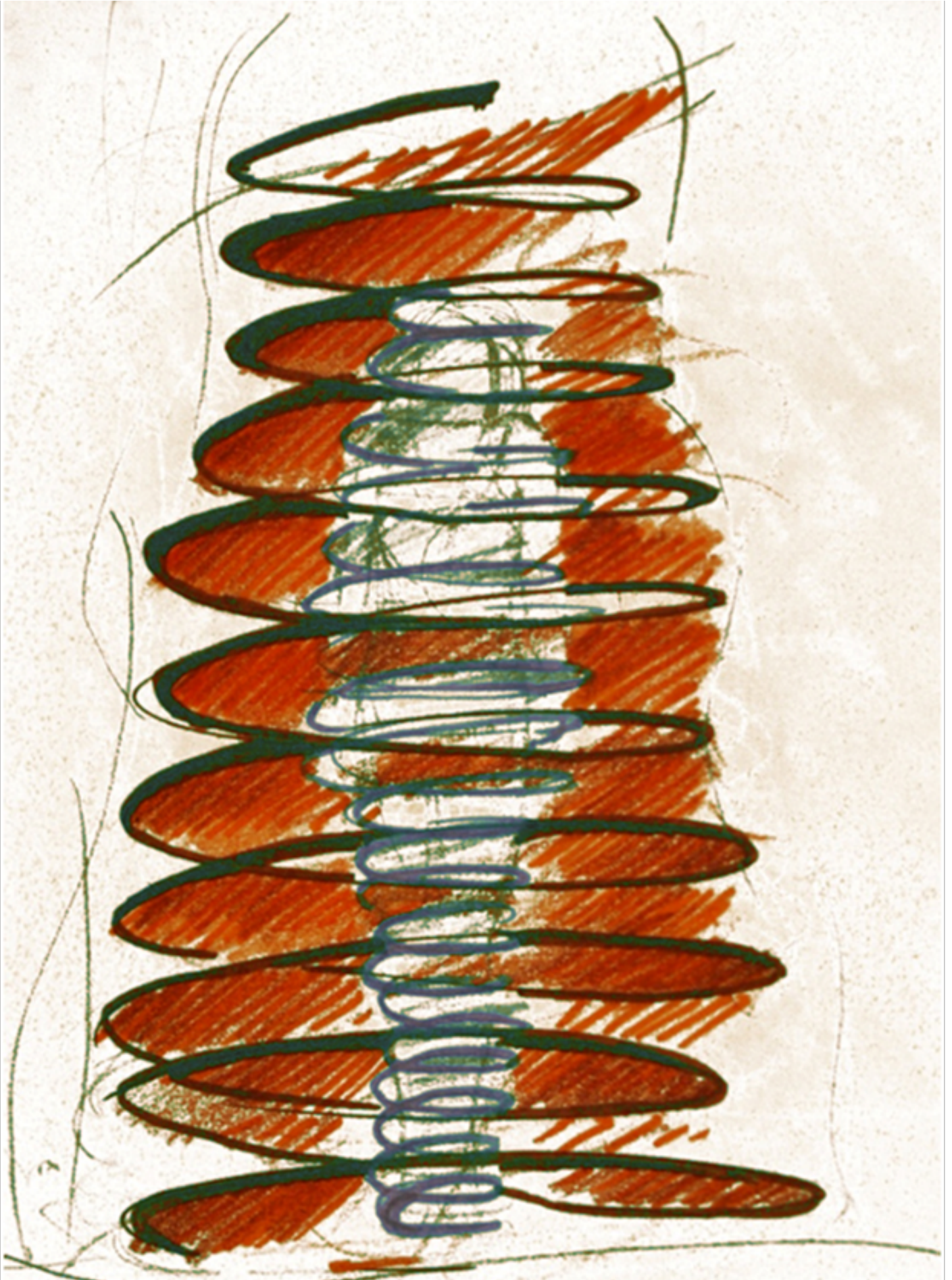
*Fig. 034 (opposite)*

by Author, The senses between the body and the veil, the blue represents purity, peace, and essentially the intimate zone; the dark brown represents the rigid boundary, and the light brown shows the passion and the struggle

*Fig. 035-041 (next pages)*

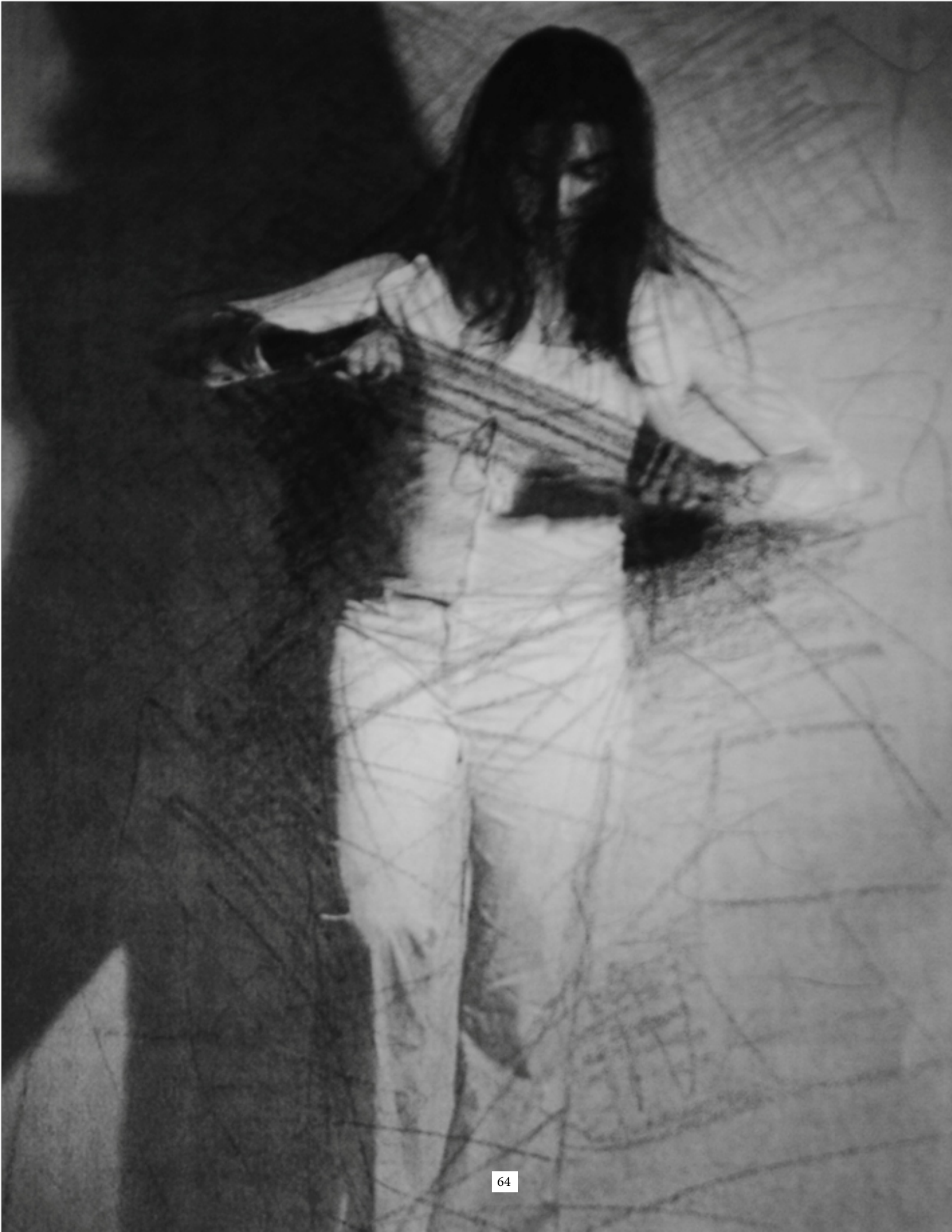
by Author, 6 images of a girl in struggle

1. Milani, Farzaneh. 1992. *Veils and Words: the Emerging Voices of Iranian Women*. New York: Syracuse University Press. 27

















## Struggle by Words

With the increase of restrictions and impediments, public activities by women gradually fell into oblivion until around the mid-19th century that some women found a way to validate themselves without trespassing on regulated boundaries. They found writing as one solution.

Voices could be liberated by writing, and be heard without the woman being physically presented in the public sphere.

Forugh Farrokhzad was one of the main Iranian avant-garde authors. Her poems that challenge the rights of women have been forbidden and published illegally for many years. "Bold, intimate, sensual and epic", is how Jasmin Darznik describes Forough. "She went farther than just refusing silence. She transgressed the social boundaries and raised her voice above and against taboos, traditional values and social old norms from her solitude." <sup>1</sup> The wall is one of her poems:

"In the cold flurry of moments  
Your silent barbaric eyes  
Erect a wall around me  
I flee from you through uncharted roads  
To see the moon-misted fields,  
Wash my body in distant springs,  
Slip on light's steep roads,  
Swell my skirt with lilies  
In a warm summer mornings color full haze,  
And hear rooster call from the farmers' roof.  
I flee from you into the pasture's arms  
To press my feet hard on its green  
And drink cold dew from grass  
I flee from you  
To watch from high up on a boulder  
Lost in dark clouds, the distant sea's  
Dizzy dance on an abandoned beach  
Like a wild dove at sunset  
I will fold under wings the deserts,  
The mountains, and the sky, listen  
From among the bushes' dry pleats  
To the field bird's elated songs.  
I flee from you  
So that far from you I can enter  
My dreams' city, break  
The weighty gold lock  
To my fantasies palace

But the mute roar of your eyes  
Blurs all passages to my view  
And in its cunning secret dark  
Erects a wall around me  
But I will flee,  
Flee from the spell of doubts,  
Seep out like a flower's perfume in dreams,  
Set off to the banks of sun,  
Slither on the night zephyr's wavy locks.  
While light's flickering fingers  
Spread like a melody on jocund sky,  
I will soft-slither into the bed of a gilded cloud,  
high over a world snug-asleep in ceaseless peace.  
From there, un-caged and carefree,  
I will gaze on where your shaman eyes  
Blur all passages to my view  
And in their cunning secret dark  
Erect a wall around that world”<sup>1</sup>

Fig. 042 (bottom)

*by Author, Persian Calligraphy on Forough Farrokhzad's image as an illustration of her poems and her willingness to raise her voice against all the oppressions against women.*



1. Farrokhzad, Forough. 2007, Fayetteville, North Carolina: the university of Arkansas press, Trans. Shole Wolpe, 12-13



In addition, there are male poets and authors among men who have also appealed for the freedom of women.

Eshqi \* raged against burying women in veils:

“What are these unbecoming cloaks and veils?  
They are shrouds for the dead, not for those alive  
I say: “Death to those who bury women alive”  
If a few poets add their voices to mine  
A murmur of discontent will start  
With it women will unveil  
They’ll throw off their cloak of shame, be proud  
Joy will return to lives  
Otherwise, as long as women are in shrouds  
Half the nation is not alive.”<sup>1</sup>

A woman’s act of liberating her voice is more or less similar to the act of unveiling; both reveal and let the woman express herself in public. “Through both, an absence becomes a presence. Both are means of expression and communication: one gives her voice a body; the other gives her body a voice. Writing, like unveiling, makes a woman publicly visible and mobile.”<sup>2</sup>

\*. Mirzadeh Eshghi or Eshqi, born Sayed Mohammad Reza Kordestani (1893 - July 3, 1924), was a political writer and poet of Iran

1. Milani, Farzaneh. 1992, *Veils and Words: the Emerging Voices of Iranian Women*, 29.(quoting Mirzade-ye ‘Eshqi, Koliyat-e Mosavar-e ‘Eshqi [Illustrated Works of ‘Eshqi] 218 (‘Ali Akbar Moshir-Salimi ed., 1978)).

2. Milani, Farzaneh. 1992. *Veils and Words: the Emerging Voices of Iranian Women*, New York: Syracuse University Press. 6

## Struggle for equal rights by practicing the veil

After the Islamic Revolution, some of the anti-veiling women finally consented to it in order to be authorized to enter the dominating realm of men and claim their rights,. These women believe that by practicing the veil, they fight against gender segregation and inequality. By covering themselves, these women enter men's territories legitimately and redefine the balance of power and domination.

Fig. 043

*Marzieh Makhmalbaf, 2000, The day I became a woman: Film Still*



## Struggle by street revolts and riots

Tehran: 8th March 1979

In the early hours of the morning of March 8, 1979, Tehran University, the Office of the Prime Minister, and the Ministry of Justice faced massive demonstrations by women who were celebrating International Women's Day and concurrently protesting against veiling. "Some of the slogans of the demonstrators were: Freedom in our culture, to stay at home is our shame, Liberty and equality are our undeniable rights, We will fight against compulsory veils, down with dictatorship, In the dawn of freedom, we already lack freedom, Freedom does not take rules and regulations." <sup>1</sup>

Fig. 044

*Iranian revolt against the act of forcing women to veil and put on chador, 8th march 1979, Tehran*



1. "Right to choose: First protests against mandatory hijab", 7 March, 2000, [www.-iranian.-com/-History/-2000/-March/-Women/-index2.-html](http://www.-iranian.-com/-History/-2000/-March/-Women/-index2.-html)

## Toronto: 3rd April 2011, Slut Walk

The theory of being responsible for controlling men's gaze and sexual behaviors has been brought forward in Western society as well. For instance, in Toronto women have arranged a procession against sexual harassment. As was reported, "Toronto police constable Michael Sanguinetti thought he was offering the key to rape prevention. I'm not supposed to say this, he told a group of students at an Osgoode Hall Law School safety forum on January 24, but to prevent being sexually assaulted, Avoid dressing like sluts." <sup>1</sup> This speech sparked a movement that began in Canada and is spreading all over the United States and abroad: SlutWalks. Women are frustrated in how they have been treated and they view themselves as victims who are responsible for being mistreated.

Fig. 045

Toronto Slut-Walk



1. "SlutWalks Sweep the Nation" last modified, 25 May, 2011, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/04/20/slutwalk-united-states-city\\_n\\_851725.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/04/20/slutwalk-united-states-city_n_851725.html)







*Fig. 046 (opposite and right)*

*By Author, Visualizing the severity  
of unbinding and unveiling.*

# Chapter 3

Architectural manifestation of the veil



## Introduction

*The veil is like a structure, an envelope, and a threshold which is not simply a layer of dark clothes but several layers of carved history. It has all the implications of segregation. It is a compressed shape of the extended threshold in Ancient Iranian houses. It has the shame of the shadowy corridors of Yazd, and the twisted complexity of the vestibule. It has the figures of the hallways' ornaments on its skin. It has the seduction of the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque and it has the warmth and intimacy of the women's courtyard in the Abbasid house. It maintains a lengthy distance from itself to the pearl it is keeping inside. And from the private body of a woman, it is the doorway to the world of strangers.*

As mentioned before, the act of separation was first carried out by a curtain which was drawn between men and women. Later, the quality of the separated spaces and the hierarchy of access became significant. The role of architecture in implementing this action became explicit, inevitable and vital.

Safavid and Qajar's era (1500–1925) were Iran's most glorious periods of art and architecture. During this time, architects created splendid constructions celebrating holiness, protection, and privacy. Architectural elements of these buildings were to embody the notion of gender segregation by creating layered spaces and implementing the hierarchy of access.

Inward facing houses with courtyards, angled corridors, together with several thresholds that would engage both physical and visual access, portrayed a great manifestation of the veil.

## Tabatabaee House, Kashan, Iran, 1857

In the design of Tabatabaee house and many other Iranian traditional houses, one can perceive a visual illustration of the veil. The veil, not just as a simple layer, but as a combination of several intricate layers which inhibit one from having a direct physical or visual access to the most private zone of the house: the female dominating area and the private courtyard where women could freely move without having to cover themselves.

Tabatabaee House is a splendid residence built by the Tabatabaee family in 1840. It was designed by Ustad Ali Maryam who was also responsible for the design of Boroujerdi-ha House, next to Tabatabaee house.

The journey to the Tabatabaee house starts by stepping into a small enclosed space called Hashti, an octagonal space which separates you from the outside world and connects you to the interior spaces of the house. The walls of the Hashti recess form the heavy brick columns and provide seating areas for visitors and guests who have to wait before having the permission to enter. Hashti is followed by Dalan-e-vorudi (vestibule), a dark narrow angled corridor. By reaching the end of this passageway you will be fascinated by the huge light flowing into the space. At first glance, the courtyard seems to be veiled by light, preventing the eye from monitoring it instantly. The ornamental arched walls, stucco works, large balconies, and stained glass are further decorated with sharp light and shadows. By going up the stairs on the corner of the courtyard, one would enter a room, which is joined to other rooms by a small door. The doors of the ancient houses were short in height as a symbol of decency, since one had to bow his head while entering. From one room to another, each decorated with small pieces of mirror and stained glass, carpeted with large and colorful Persian carpets, you would then enter to the main Tallar, which is a large, high roofed room, facing the balcony and the main courtyard. Following the other door on the other side of the Tallar and passing through a small room, you would finally reach the women's place: a courtyard, with a small water pool in the middle. The hemisphere shaped roof that encloses the courtyard, has an open peak which frames the sky in a circular shape. A trace of the decorations of the main Tallar can also be seen here. It is an intimate, hidden space which is dedicated exclusively to women.

*Fig. 047 (opposite top)*

*Tabatabaee House plan, the access way from the entrance to the most private part of the house is illustrated in grey*

*Fig. 048 (opposite bottom)*

*Tabatabaee House entrance*





*Fig. 049 (top)*

Tabatabaee House main courtyard

*Fig. 050 (bottom)*

Tabestan neshin, Terrace facing North





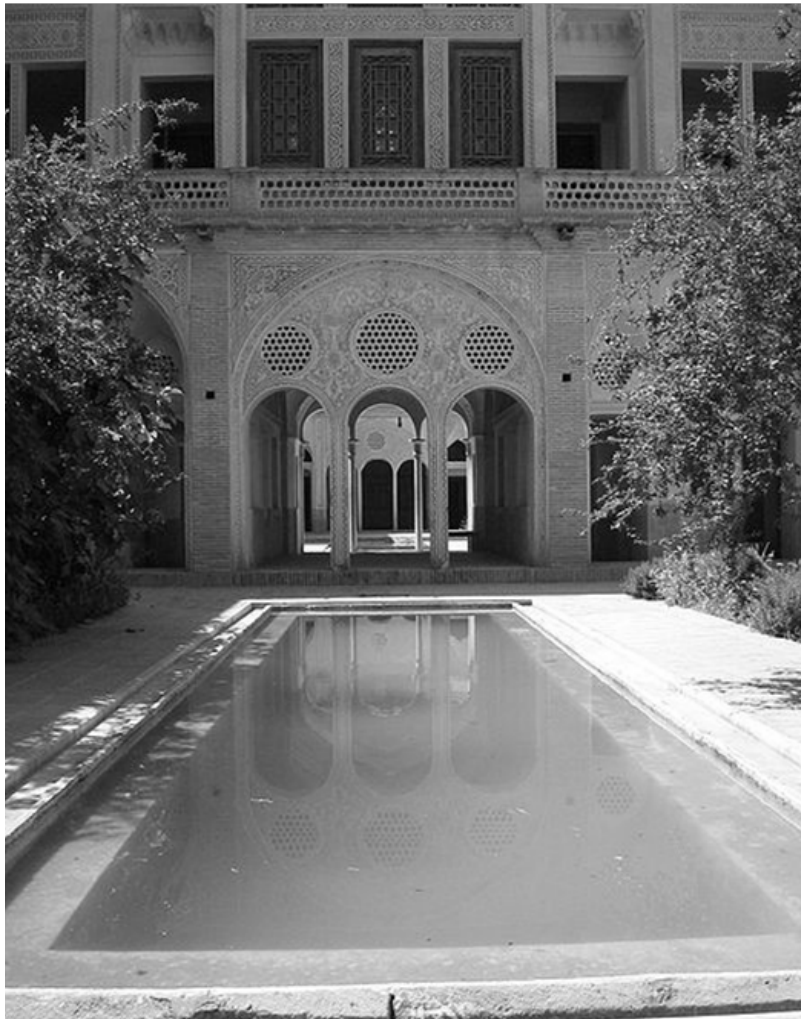
*Fig. 051 (top)*

Tabatabaee House, openings of the roof of one of the courtyards

*Fig. 052 (bottom)*

Tabatabaee House, minimal openings to the courtyard







*Fig. 053 (opposite top)*

*Abbasid House, Kashan, Iran, courtyards*

*Fig. 054 (opposite bottom)*

*Abbasid House, Kashan, Iran, courtyards*

*Fig. 055 (bottom)*

*Abbasid House, Kashan, Iran, roof of the women's courtyards*



## Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, Isfahan, Iran 1590-1602

Covering the body of women and veiling did of course not totally relinquish men's sexual desires. Instead, the concealing and revealing nature of the veil made the woman's body more seductive and mysterious. There is an architectural masterpiece in Isfahan named Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, which is a manifestation of a mysterious veil. The Mosque was designed for the wives of Shah Abbas \* and was meant to be a private sacred space into which no-one could enter its innermost part, except for the King himself. Remarkably for Iran, this mosque does not have a courtyard or minarets to signal its presence. The building overall is not large; it has a total depth of 40 metres, and its prayer hall measures 18 by 18 metres. Yet it conveys an extraordinary sense of spaciousness. By passing through the handsome portal, below blue faience muqarnas<sup>†</sup>, and by making a 45 degree turn to the left, you discover a dark corridor covered with tiles and roofed with a series of small domes. At this end of this first section, the corridor bends to the right. A further turn, at right angles, leads to a door from which the sanctuary with its calligraphies, tiles, and seven-color mosaics suddenly appears.

\*. Shāh 'Abbās the Great 1571 – 1629 was Shah (king) of Iran, and generally considered the greatest ruler of the Safavid Dynasty

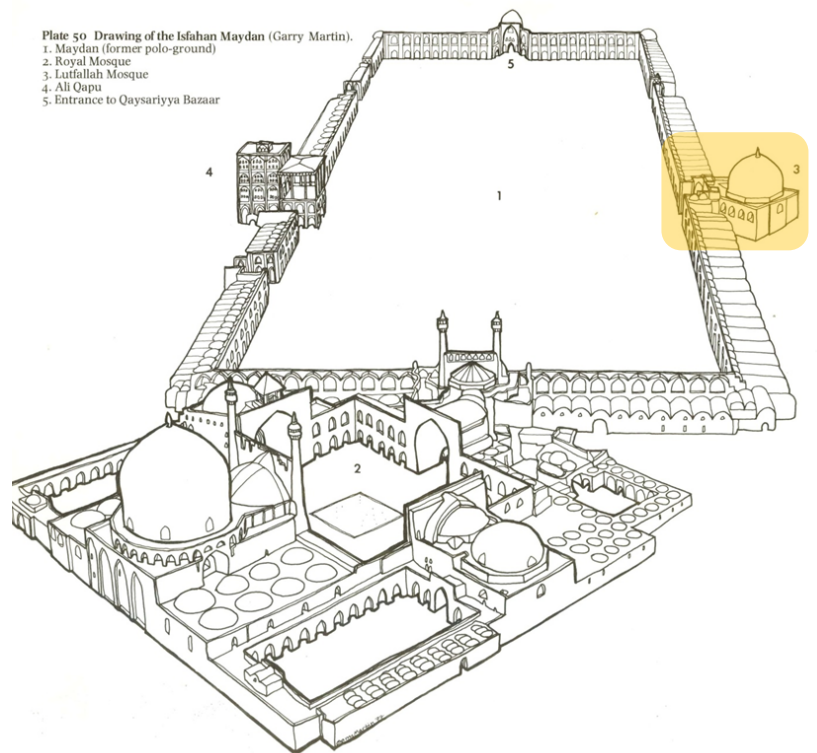
†. Muqarnas: Arabic word for a system of serried tiers of small niches or concave cells in vaults, peculiar to Islamic Architecture

In order to reach the sanctuary you travel along a twisting path that makes you lose all sense of direction before facing the qibla\* wall. “The architect has devised an ingenious spatial journey that leads the faithful into the sanctuary facing mihrab†, rather than bring them in from the side, which enhances the importance of the mihrab and makes it the immediate centre of attention.”<sup>1</sup>

The corridor with its minimal openings provides the viewer with a glimpse of what is hindered and creates a magnificent illustration of a mysterious veil.

Fig. 056

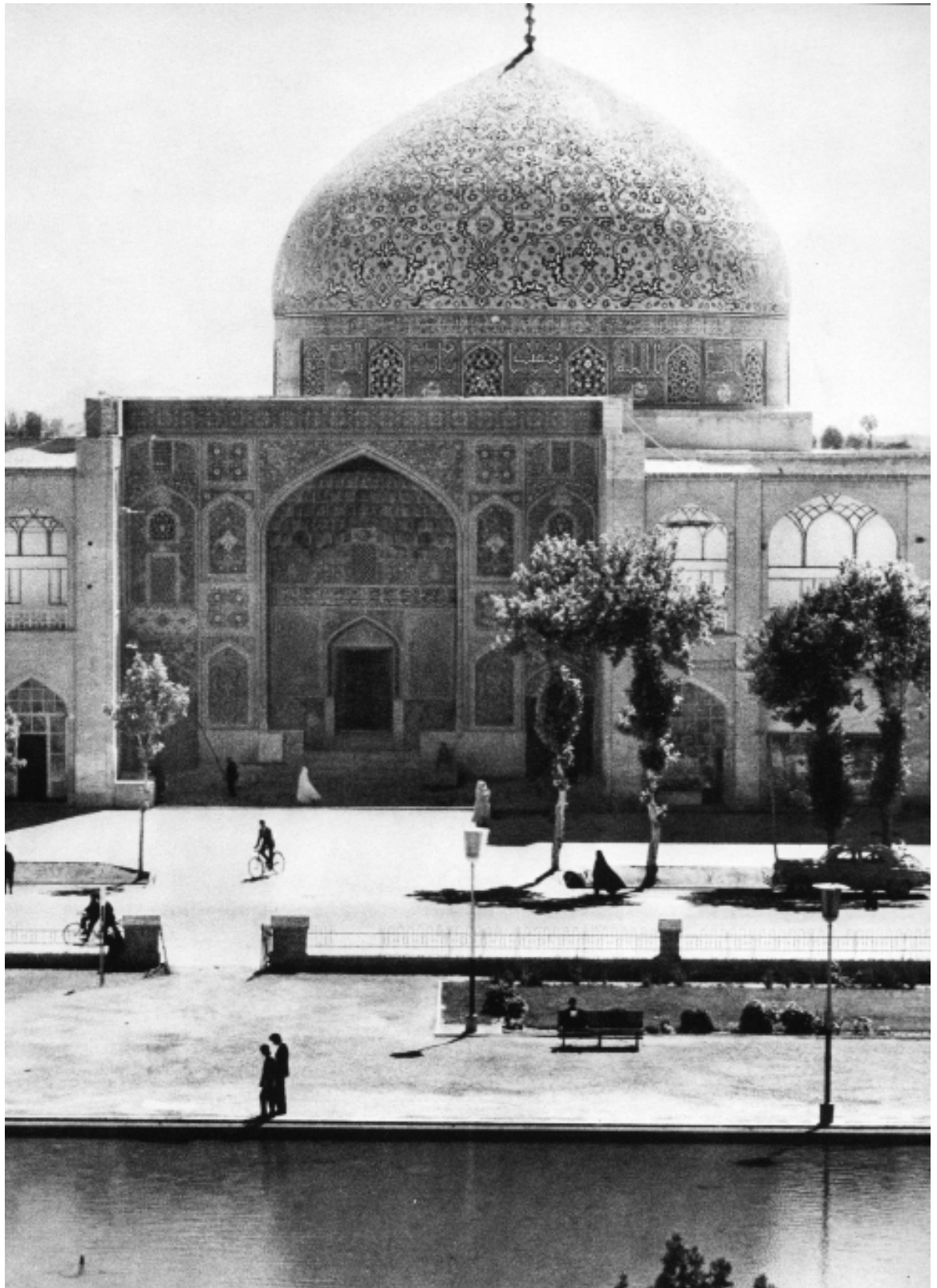
Naqsh e Jahan Square, Isfahan, Iran



\*. Qibla is the direction that Muslims should face when doing their prayers. It is considered as the symbol of unity of all Muslims.

†. Mihrab is a semi circular niche in one of the four walls of each mosque and illustrates the direction of Qibla.

1. Stierlin, Henri. 2002. *Islamic Art and Architecture*. London: Thames & Hudson Lt. 140





*Fig. 057*

Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, Isfahan, Iran

*Fig. 058*

Entrance of the mosque



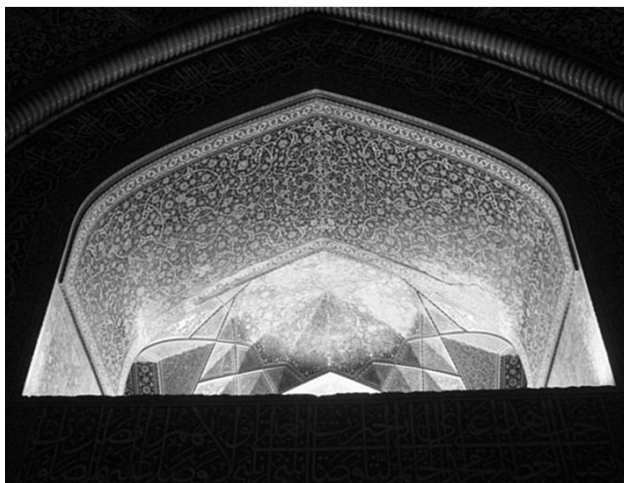
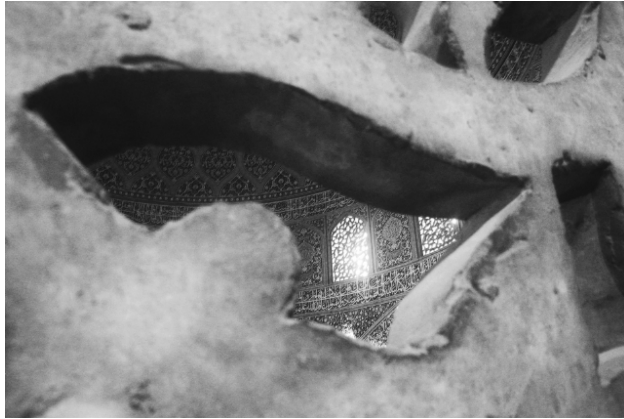
*Fig. 059*

Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, Isfahan, Entrance vestibule

*Fig. 060*

Entrance to the "mihrab" the main place for prayer.





*Fig. 061 (top)*

View from the vestibule to the "mihrab"

*Fig. 062 (middle)*

View from the most interior parts of the mosque to the vestibule through minimal openings

*Fig. 063 (bottom)*

Opening from the most interior part of the mosque to the outside.





## Vasari Corridor, Florence, Italy, 1564

As mentioned before, the veil is a cover that enables one to dominate her surrounding space without being observed or identified; similar to the design concept of the Vasari Corridor where the king could freely move and engage with the city life and merge with people, while remaining anonymous and unseen.

The Vasari Corridor is an elevated enclosed passageway in Florence, designed by Giorgio Vasari for the Grand Duke: Cosimo I de' Medici in 1565. The idea was to connect the king's residence (Palazzo Pitti) to the governmental palace (Palazzo Vecchio). Its privileged position, along with the minimal openings to the city streets, provided an opportunity for the king to freely move and engage with the city life and merge with people, while remaining anonymous and unseen. This empowered him and allowed him to control his surrounding environment.



*Fig. 064 (left)*

Vasari Corridor, view to the streets of Florence through a small opening

*Fig. 065-070 (opposite)*

View from the streets to Vasari Corridor



## Moller House, Villa Moller, Vienna, 1926 by Adolf Loos

Another example of this idea at the domestic scale can be seen in the design of the Moller house. Loos has designed an elevated sitting area at the top of the main entrance of the house that overlooks the internal social spaces. As you enter from the opposite entrance, you will be astonished by the huge volume of light invading through the window of this raised area and thus could not identify the person who is sitting in front of this window.

In both the Moller and Muller houses, Loos has designed a virtual theatre box which overlooks the internal social spaces. It is a device which protects while drawing attention to it. These spaces are marked as female spaces and can easily be distinguished by their distinctive furniture. The theatre box seems to have the same role as the veil as it resembles a cube which protects and disguises as the veil protects and disguises the body of women.

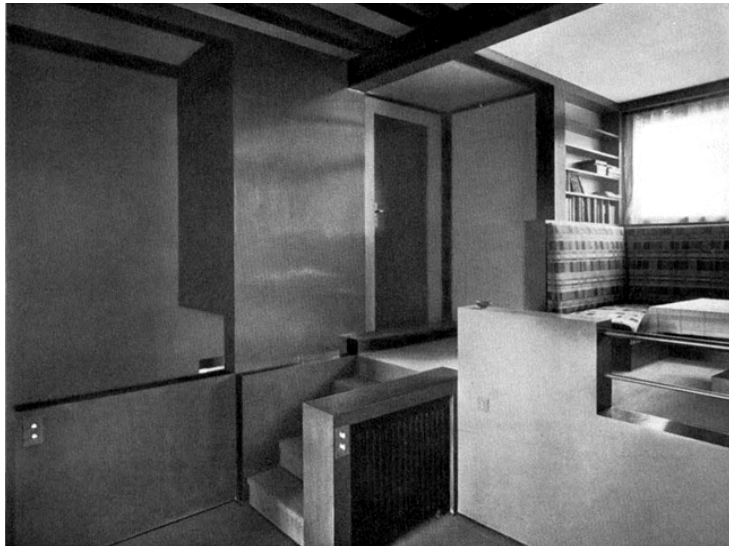


*Fig. 071 (opposite top)*

Section and Plan of the Moller house, view to and from the elevated sitting area of the house.

*Fig. 072 (opposite bottom)*

Moller house, the cantilevered space shows the placement of the interior elevated sitting area



*Fig. 073 (top)*

Moller House: View from the elevated sitting area

*Fig. 074 (bottom)*

Moller House: View from the music room into the dining



## The Danteum by Giuseppe Terragni,

At the intersection of Rome's Via dei Fori and the Via Cavour, across the medieval Torre dei Conti, lies the site for the Danteum; A rectangular building whose purpose was to be a temple for the greatest Italian poets. It was to be erected as a celebration of the words of Dante in his Divine Comedy. It comprises 4 main sections: a forest, the Inferno, Purgatory, and Paradise.

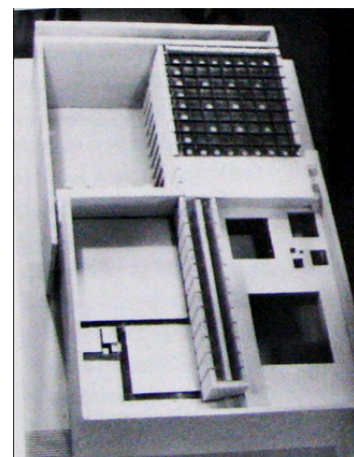
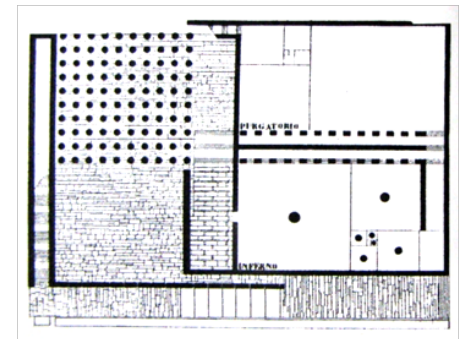
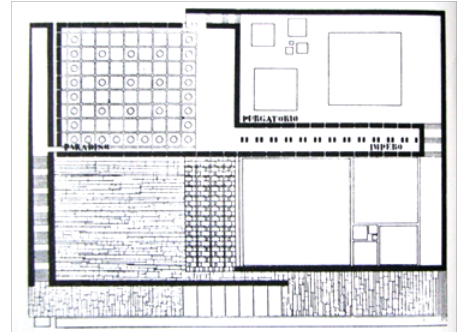


Fig. 075 (top)

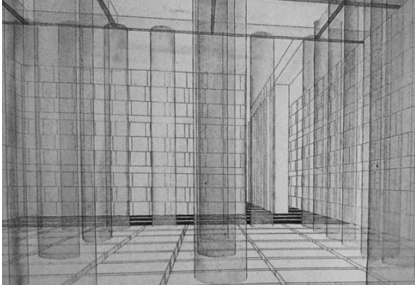
Second floor plan

Fig. 076 (middle)

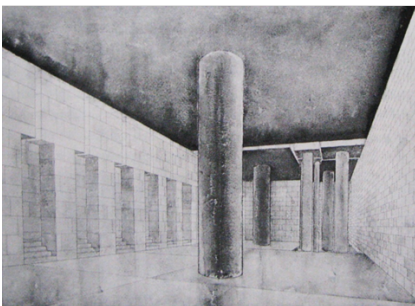
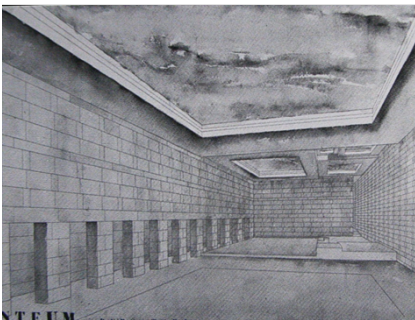
Main floor plan

Fig. 077 (bottom)

Physical model of the Danteum



The inferno's ceiling and the floor are fractured and disintegrated into 7 squares decreasing in proportion. And in each of these squares a column has been placed. This combination creates an imagery line of a descending spiral and gives the sense of a disaster, calamity, and pain. By passing through a long, stepped ramp, one would enter purgatory; a space with the same shape and size of the inferno, but a different atmosphere. The golden rectangle in here is also divided into 7 squares arranging in an ascending order. The ceiling is open to the sky in the shape of the squares of the floor. In order to reach to Paradise, you must climb a stairway which is narrower than the ramped passageway maybe as a symbol of the difficulty of the soul in reaching the Paradise. This square is filled with thirty-three columns made of glass below a transparent grid of the ceiling, open to the sky. The floor with the same grid of the ceiling, and glazing between the blocks, makes the whole space float.



The Danteum is an architectural manifestation of a narrative. It is a journey through a series of filters that creates specific sensory and poetic relationships.

*Fig. 078 (top)*

Danteum, Paradise

*Fig. 079 (middle)*

Danteum, Purgatory

*Fig. 080 (bottom)*

Danteum, Inferno

# Chapter 4

The visualization of buried senses



## The story of the design

(Initial thoughts about the design of a theatre)

*The theatre is a place where you would be captured by the hidden mystery of the house and the stage and then would be invited to a story by rolling your eyes on the lifting curtain. The design of the theatre in this thesis is instead to astonish you in a different way. In this experience, you will start a journey from the moment you enter; through the entrance, vestibules and the corridors, you will follow the story of a girl yearning for the wind blowing in her hair and the story of a girl who is covering her hair, hoping for the soothing breeze in heaven. You will see her through your eyes and see the world through her eyes. There are several layers that you need to pass through as a threshold which expands and becomes as large as a gallery and shrinks and becomes as thin as a stage curtain. Walking through the galleries, you will be able to observe and hear, while walking onto the stage where you would expect to be heard or observed, you would instead find yourself in an all encompassing draped area. Here is the climax of the story. Leaving this mysterious space, sitting and waiting for the curtain to be lifted, you will once again be invited to another story which could be a story of a woman, a man or both. Finally, you leave the main house and merge with the city and city life.*

## Site

*I can stand wherever you may imagine. I live in a house on top of the highest hills and in the deepest underground of the city. You will find my footsteps in front of every girl's school, in every shopping mall entrance where a guard is waiting to capture an uncovered woman. I will stay on every bicycle trail which lacks the trace of their bikes' wheels. You can follow my trace in every sports field where the women are not allowed to enter or every woman's park where men are not allowed to enter.*

The theatre is being proposed in a very unique location in Tehran, a park exclusively allocated for the use of women and only open to the families during evenings and holidays. This women's park is located on the margins of two main highways on a high hill and is surrounded by trees and fences. Therefore, the interior of the park is hidden from the public eyes.

## The Journey

For the first time in my life I am exposing myself to the city. I am sitting on top of a high hill, facing the city. Along with my enclosed body, are my opened bewitching eyes; mysterious, alluring, and enchanting. The most glorious desire of mine, is to be descent and modest. The proposed space for narrating the story of my life is composed of a red cube which is curtained with several narrow strips. By vigorously opening up and revealing and gradually closing up and concealing, these strips hold the mystery of the cube and give a glance of its provocative red surface.

The strips grandly embrace the red cube and continue on the front ground. Red is a symbol of passion, energy and strong will and may also represent insecurity and aggressiveness. The white color of the strips resemble a bridal dress; pure, full of chastity and in opposition to the usual color of the veil which is black. The red cube together with the white strips covering it will create a mysterious facade that represents an imprisoned energy and passion while portraying a protected insecurity and an assured horror.

In order to enter this space, the visitor has to look downwards to the stairs which would lead down to an underground, yet open-air passageway. Through the curved walls his eyes roll, and on the rear front, he notices a red door, the opening to the red cube above. On his left he finds a door which leads him to the first gallery. In the journey through the galleries he encounters several thresholds; from rigid, dense and high walls to fluid, and soft water. After passing the entire galleries he is ready to finally enter the cube;

He opens the door and finds himself on the stage, a place where one expects to be heard and viewed. Nevertheless, he finds himself behind the draped curtains and suddenly feels the loneliness of the woman; her passion that has been imprisoned, her seclusion and her silence. Opening the curtains though, would allow him to experience the process of unveiling. He observes feels and touches her story without interfering with it.

The circulation of the galleries, moving back and forth, walking through the narrow corridors and wide spaces are all the intentions of this design to present the woman's preoccupation in an ongoing struggle with the veil: rejecting it or striving in preserving it.

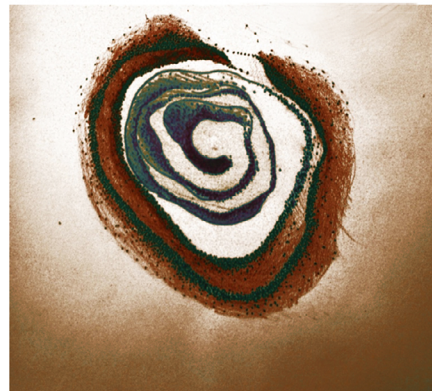
## Concepts of the design

The cube is the climax of the journey and it could be seen as resembling Kabaa as the ultimate goal of the pilgrims on their journey to Mekka is to reach to Kabaa. However, there is a difference between Kabaa and the design of the theatre, Kabaa is an empty cube which no-one is allowed to enter. In the case of my design however, one is welcomed to enter, encounter and to experience the feelings of the woman who is living her life behind the veil.

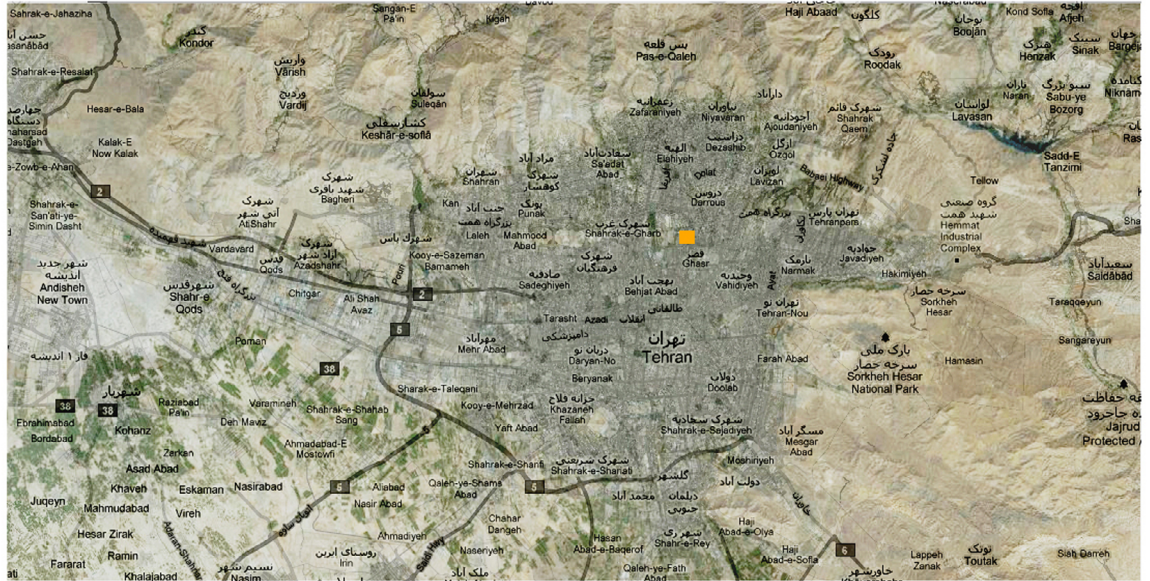
The idea of dark, coarse rock on the edge walls, gradually turning into the shimmering, bright, and soft water floating in the centre, resonates with one of my initial drawings, which shows the body of a woman surrounded by several strings. The closer boundaries to the centre are light blue as a symbol of woman's sacredness and the farther outer boundaries are turned into thicker and darker brown boundaries as a symbol of the chador itself, which is dark, black and difficult to escape from.

Fig. 081

by Author, The senses between the body and the veil, the blue represents purity, peace, and essentially the intimate zone; the dark brown represents the rigid boundary, and the light brown shows the passion and the struggle.

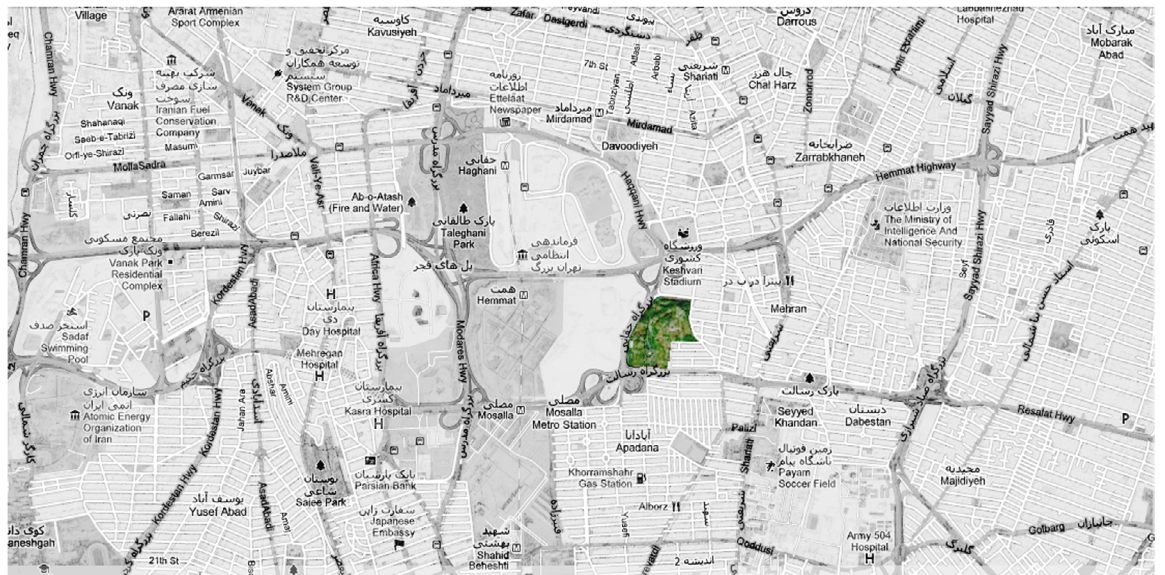


Openings of different sizes and shapes provide the opportunity to both see the world from the eyes of the veiled woman and to see the veiled woman from others' eyes. One opening provides the opportunity to see without being seen, similar to the sense of the woman behind the veil. While, The other opening, with its specific height and proportion, would not allow one to see the face of those people who are traveling on the other side of the wall; this could resemble with the experience of seeing veiled women covering almost all parts of their bodies and faces in the public realm and thus are not recognisable. Another opening with its minimal dotted shape gives the viewer a mysterious glance to the stage: the most hidden part of the theatre. Wide openings on the other hand, would allow one to stand within the space and have an extensive visual connection without being able to actually touch and have the sense of belonging like women moving in the public realm with their veil on.



TEHRAN-IRAN, SC. 1/25,000

■ DESIGNATED SITE



TEHRAN-IRAN, SC. 1/2,500

Fig. 082-083

by Author, Map of Tehran, Iran, 2010



Fig. 084

by Author, Land Use Map

LAND USE MAP  
 SC. 1/3000





Fig. 085

by Author, Placement of the theatre in the site

**PLACEMENT OF THE  
THEATRE IN THE SITE**

**SC. 1/3000**

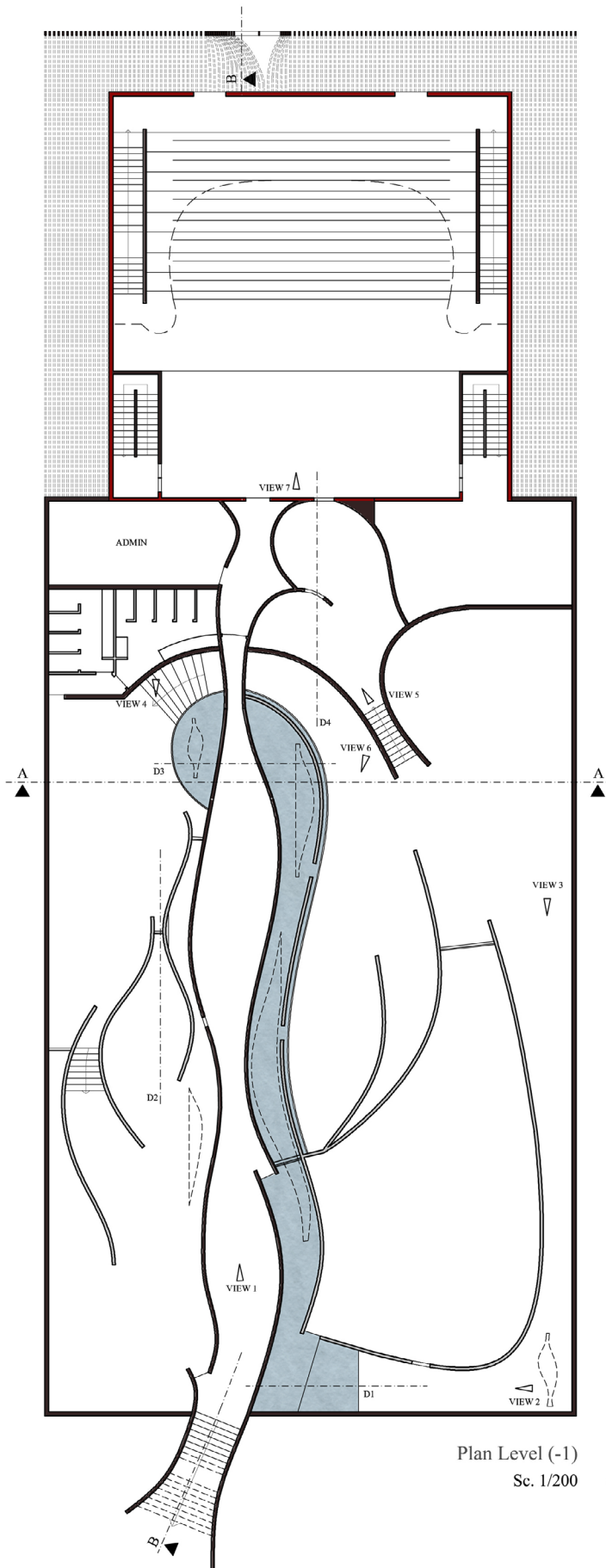
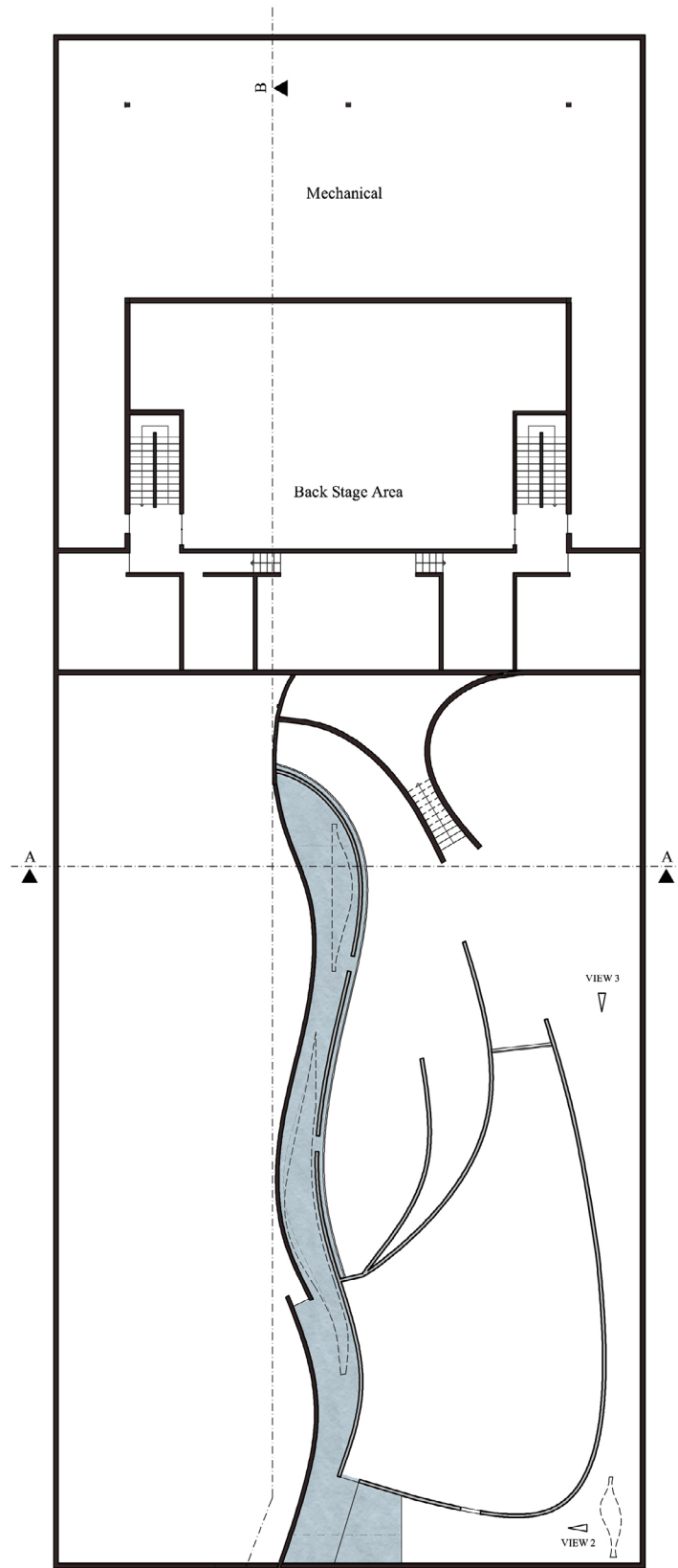


Fig. 086

by Author, Plan Level -1

Plan Level (-1)  
Sc. 1/200





Plan Level (-2)  
Sc. 1/300



Fig. 087

by Author, Plan Level -2

0.00

Fig. 088

by Author, Diagram 1,2,3

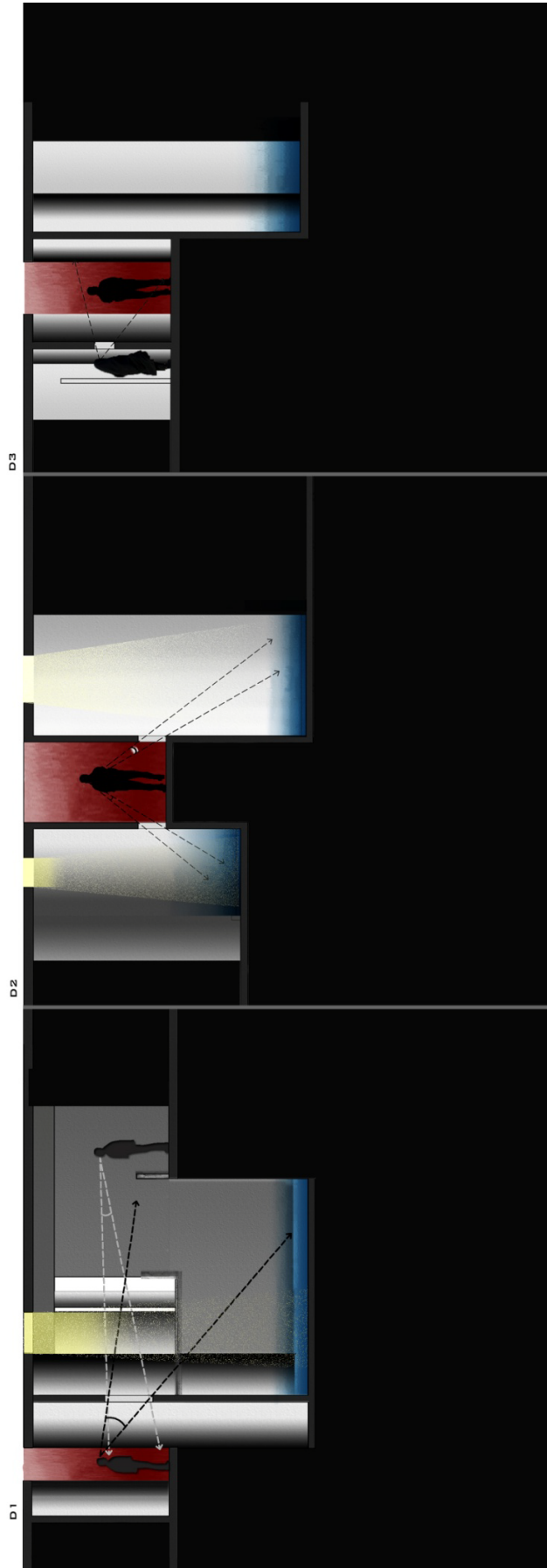


Fig. 089

by Author, Diagram 4

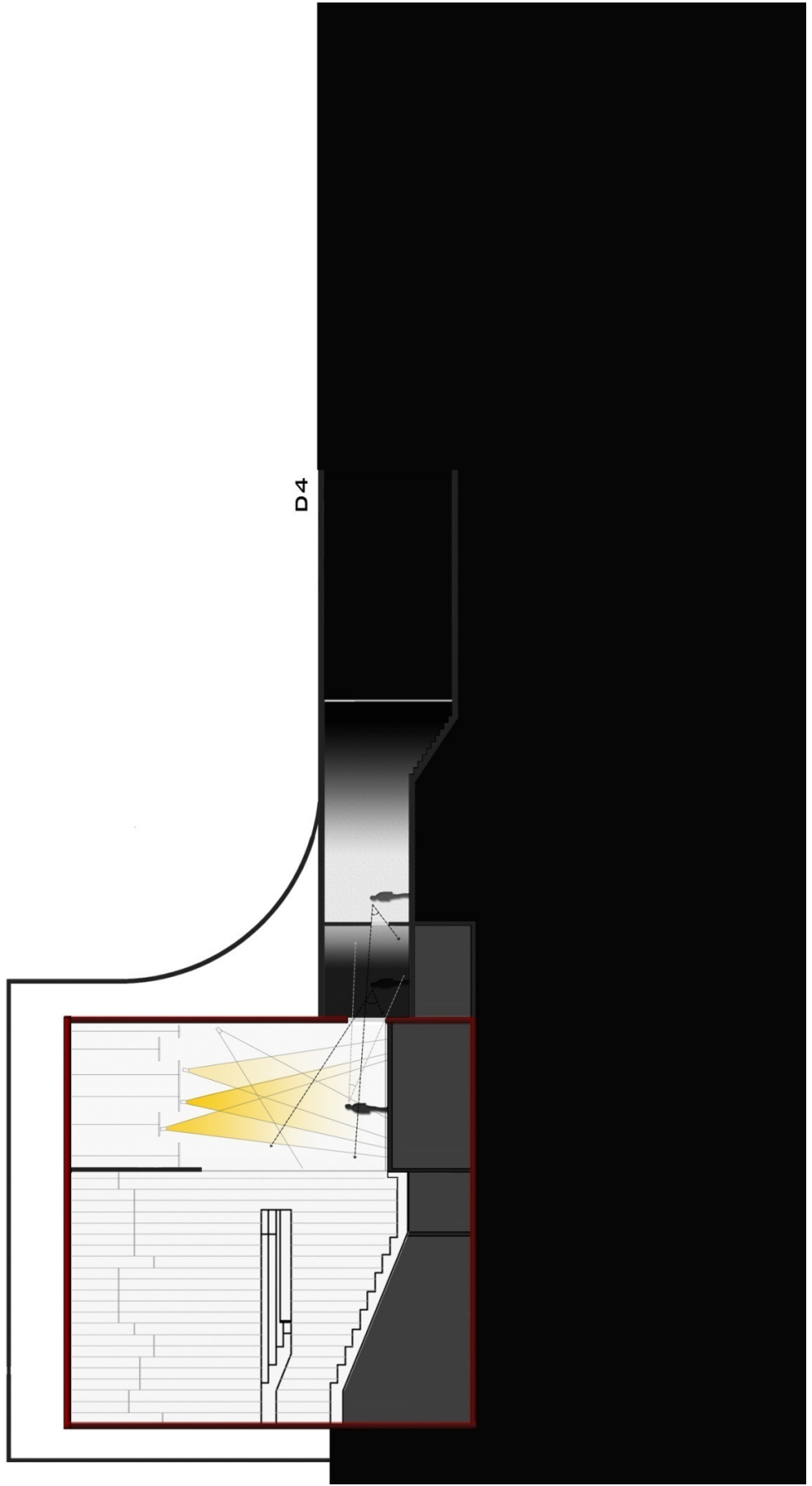


Fig. 090

by Author, Diagram 5

THE SHAPE OF THE OPENINGS OF D4

D5

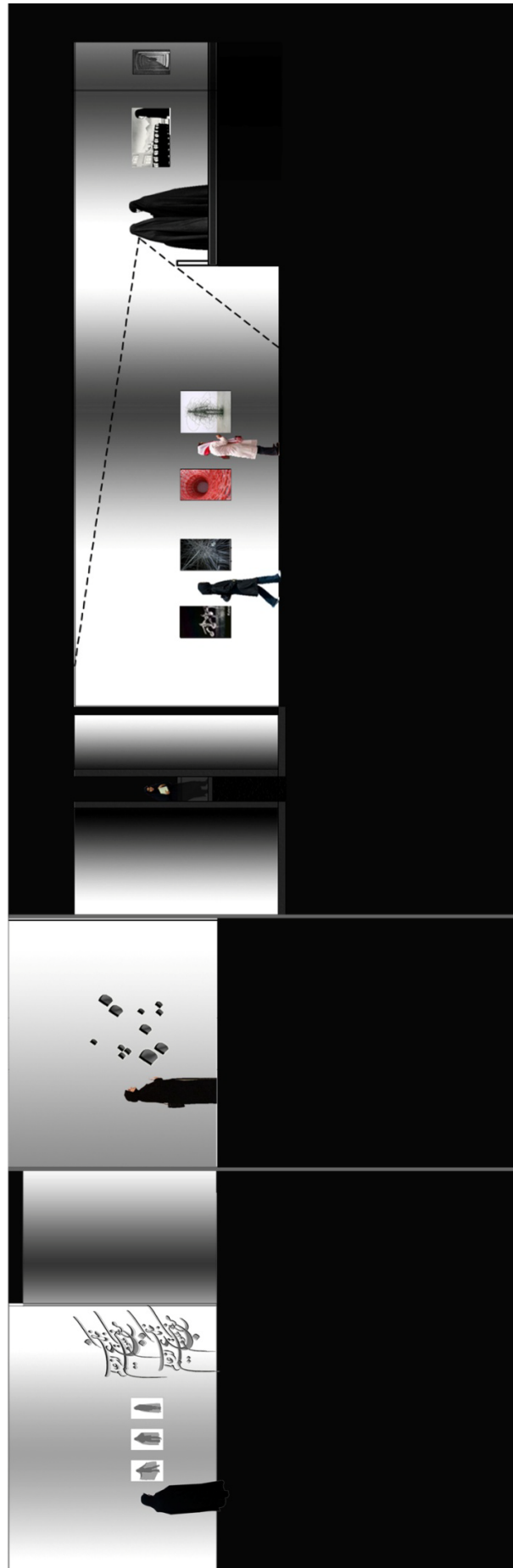




Fig. 091  
by Author, Section A-A

Fig. 092  
by Author, Section B-B

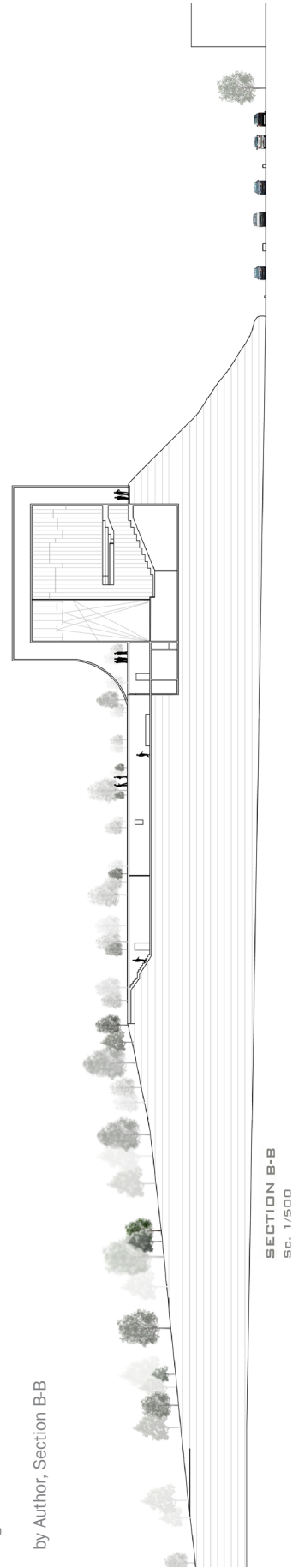
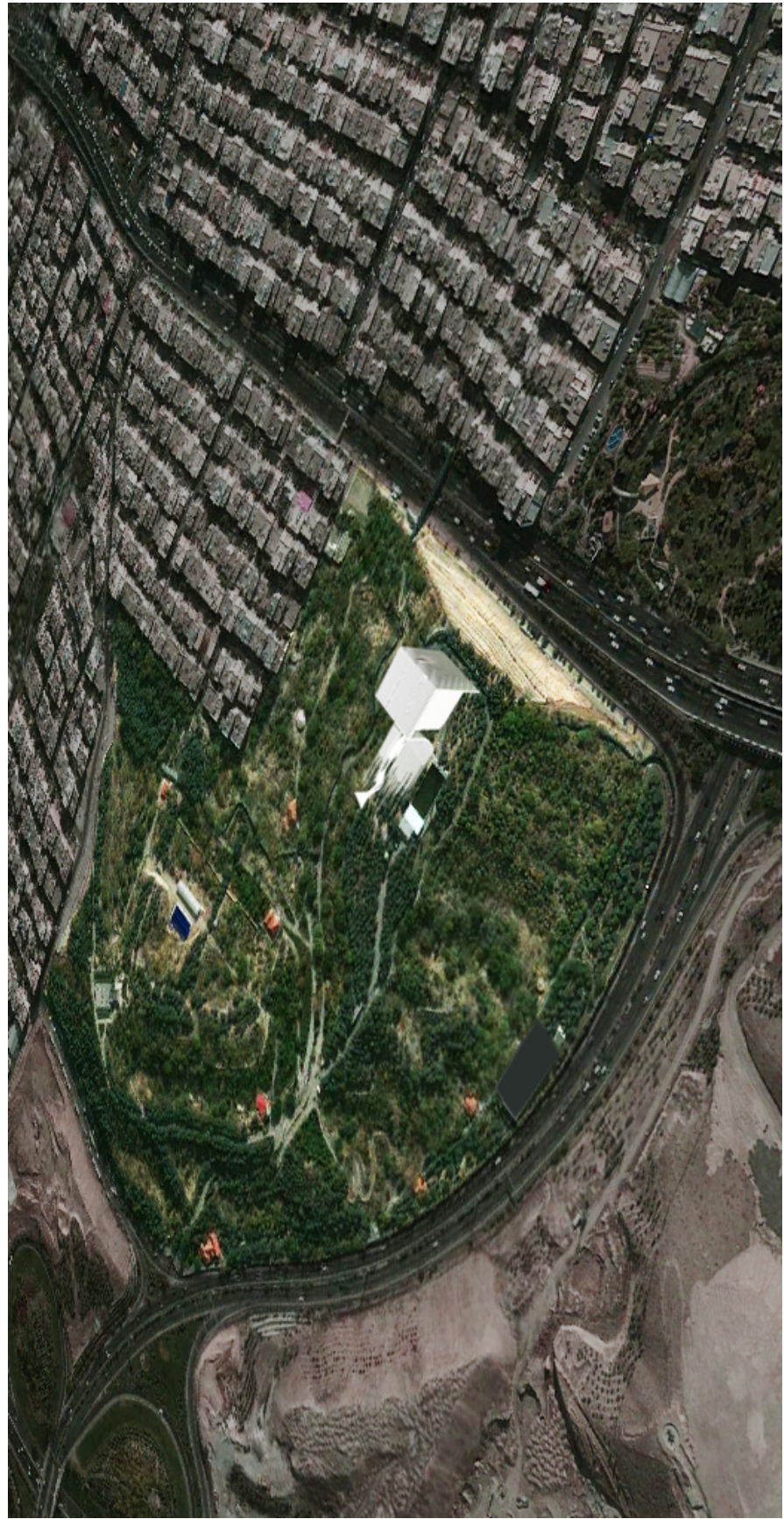




Fig. 093  
by Author, Perspective of the site (bird view)



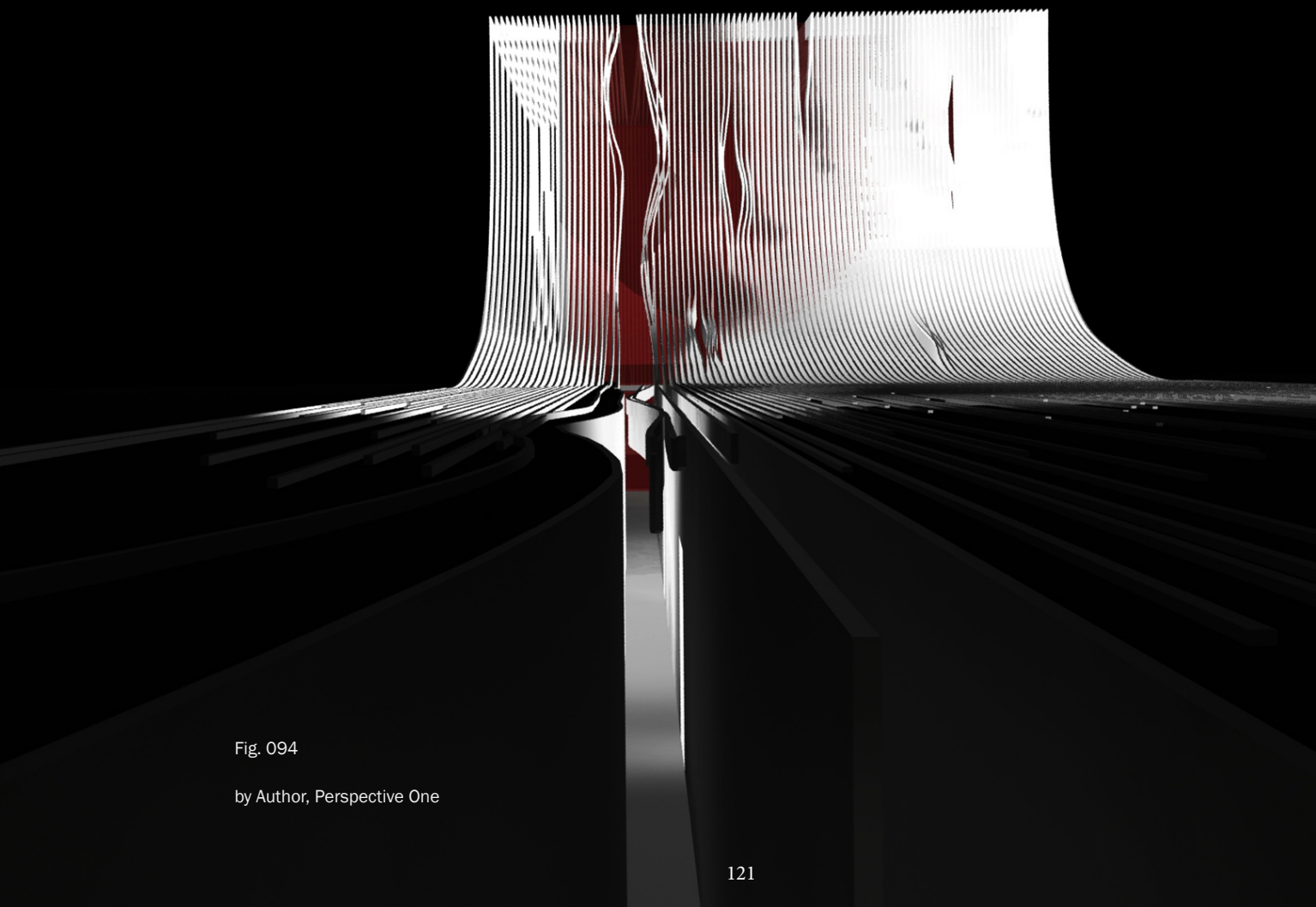


Fig. 094

by Author, Perspective One

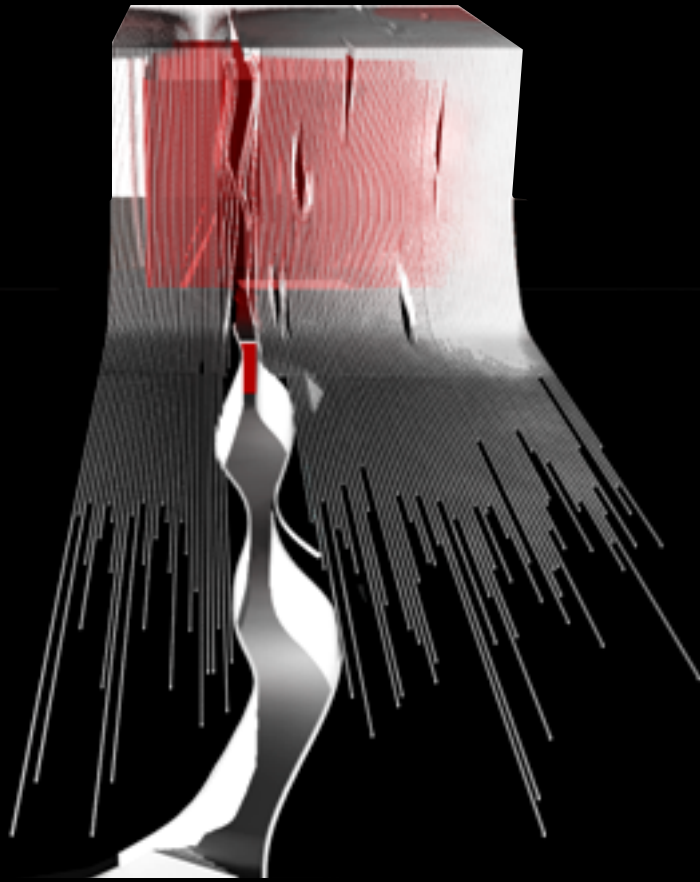
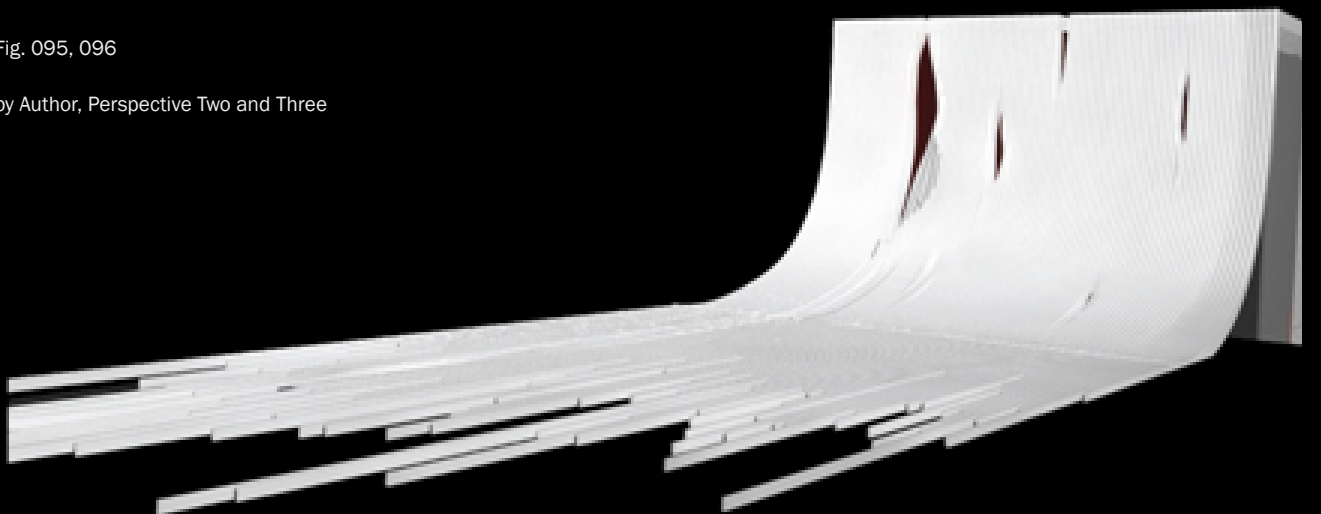


Fig. 095, 096

by Author, Perspective Two and Three



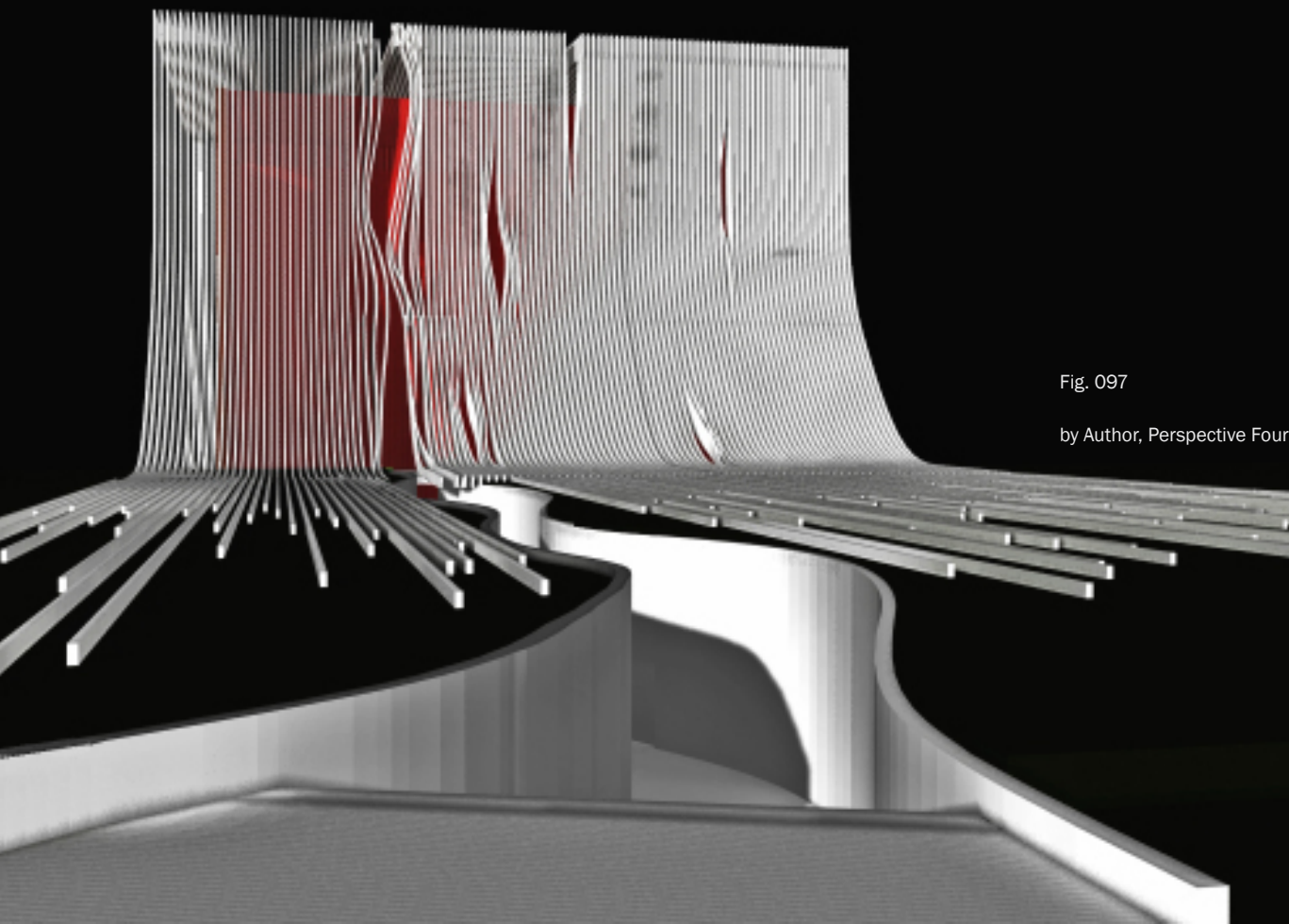


Fig. 097

by Author, Perspective Four

Fig. 098

by Author, View One

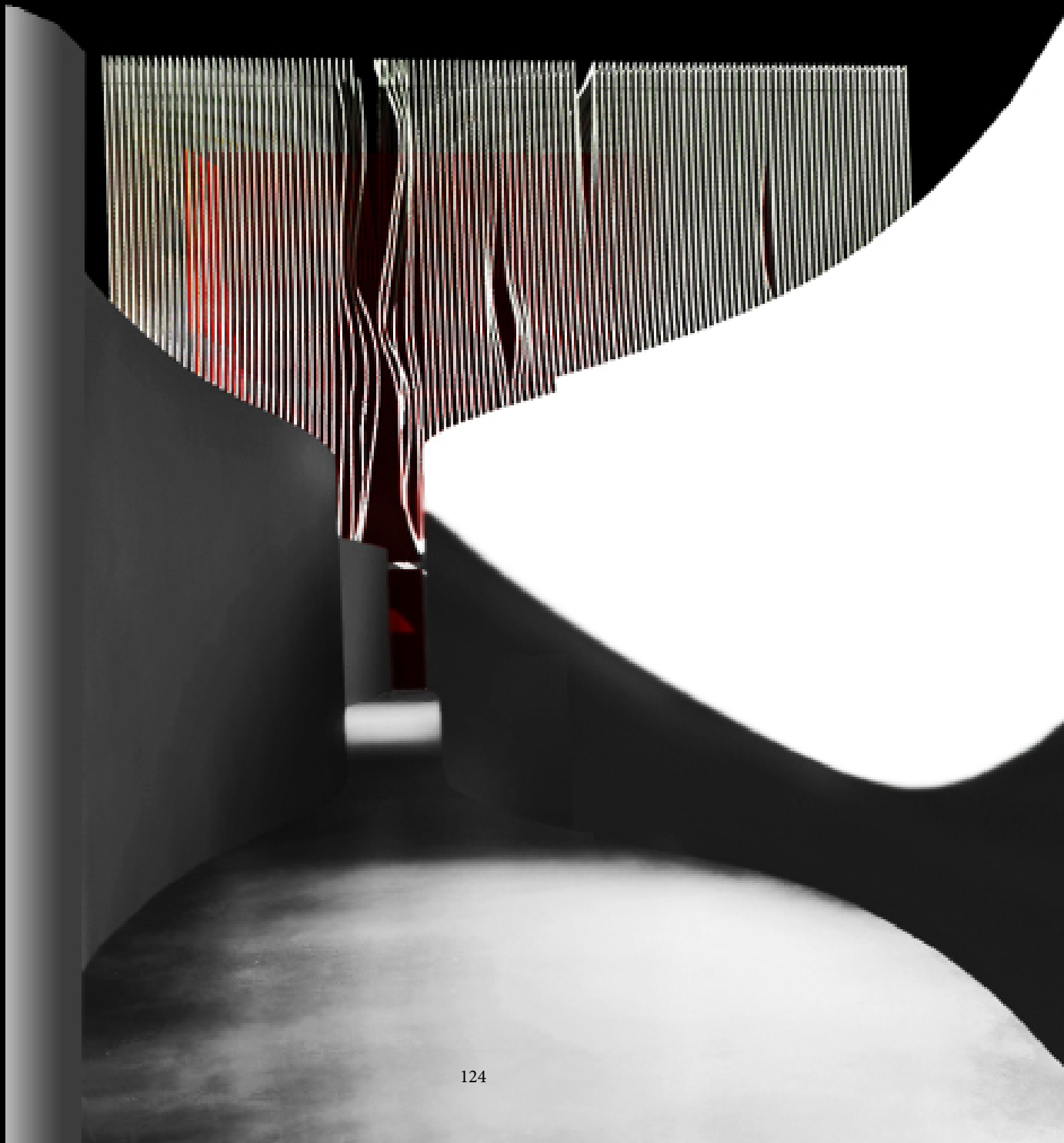




Fig. 099

by Author, View Two

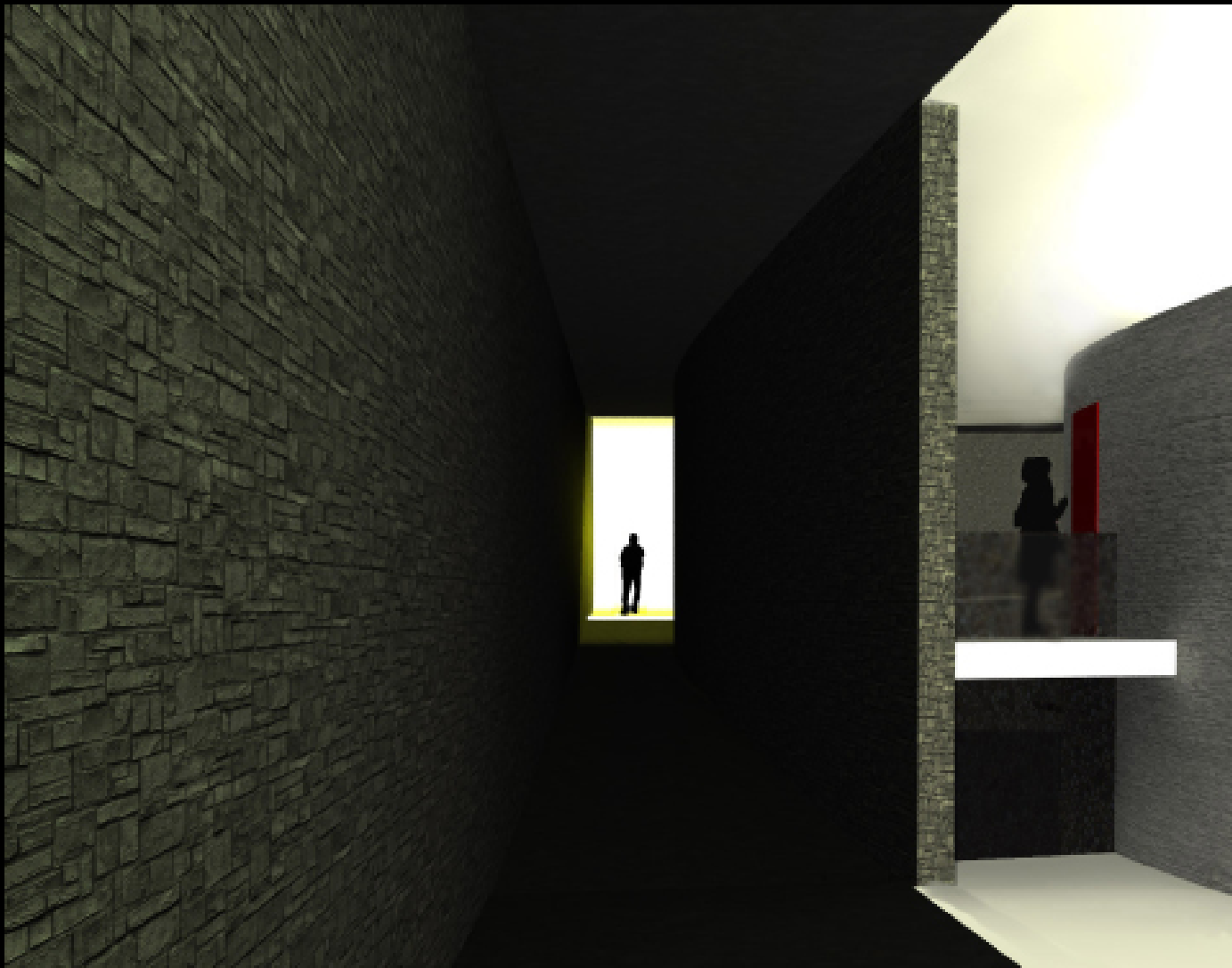


Fig. 100

by Author, View Three



Fig. 101

by Author, View Four





Fig. 102

by Author, View Five

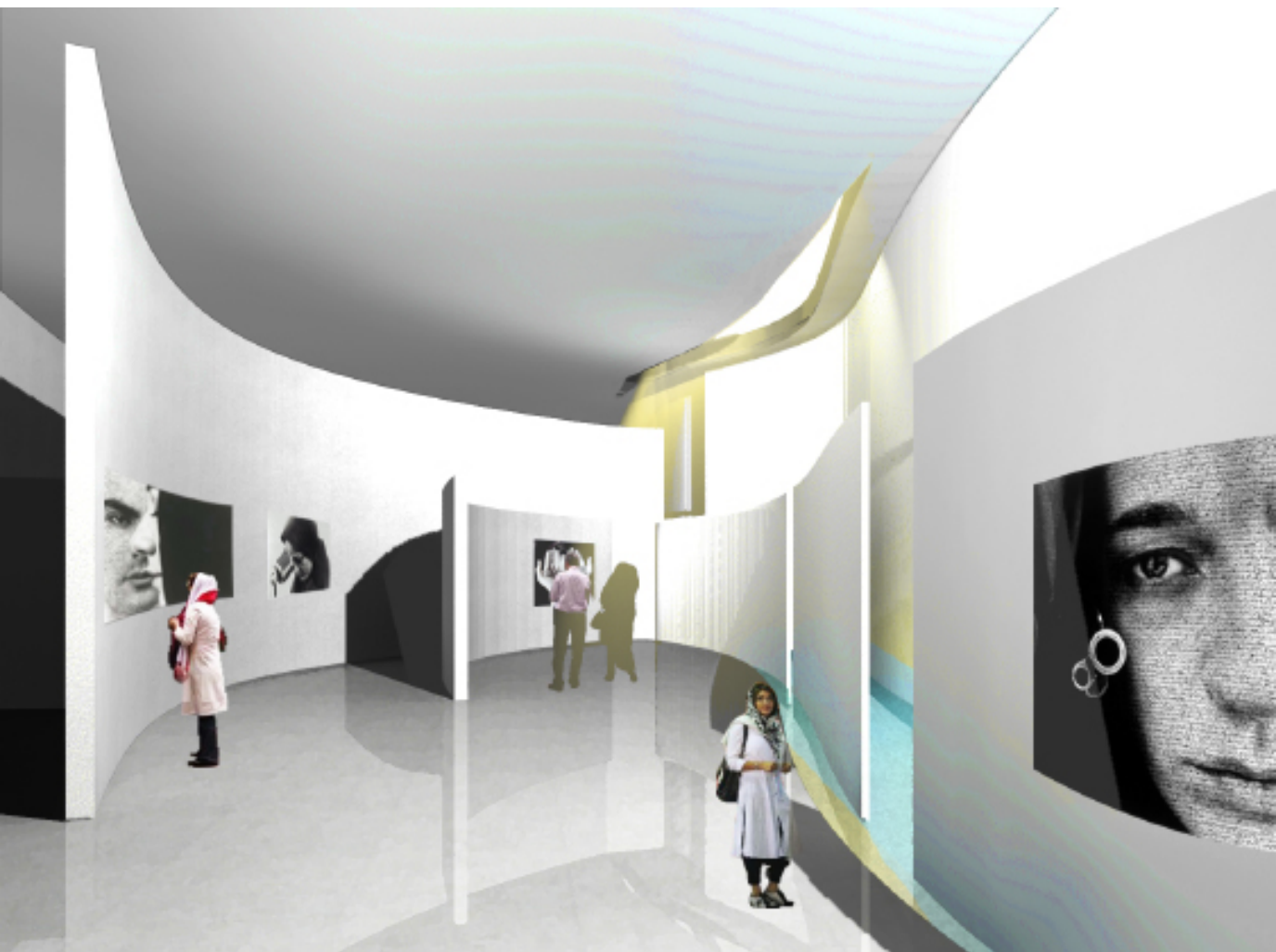


Fig. 103

by Author, View Six

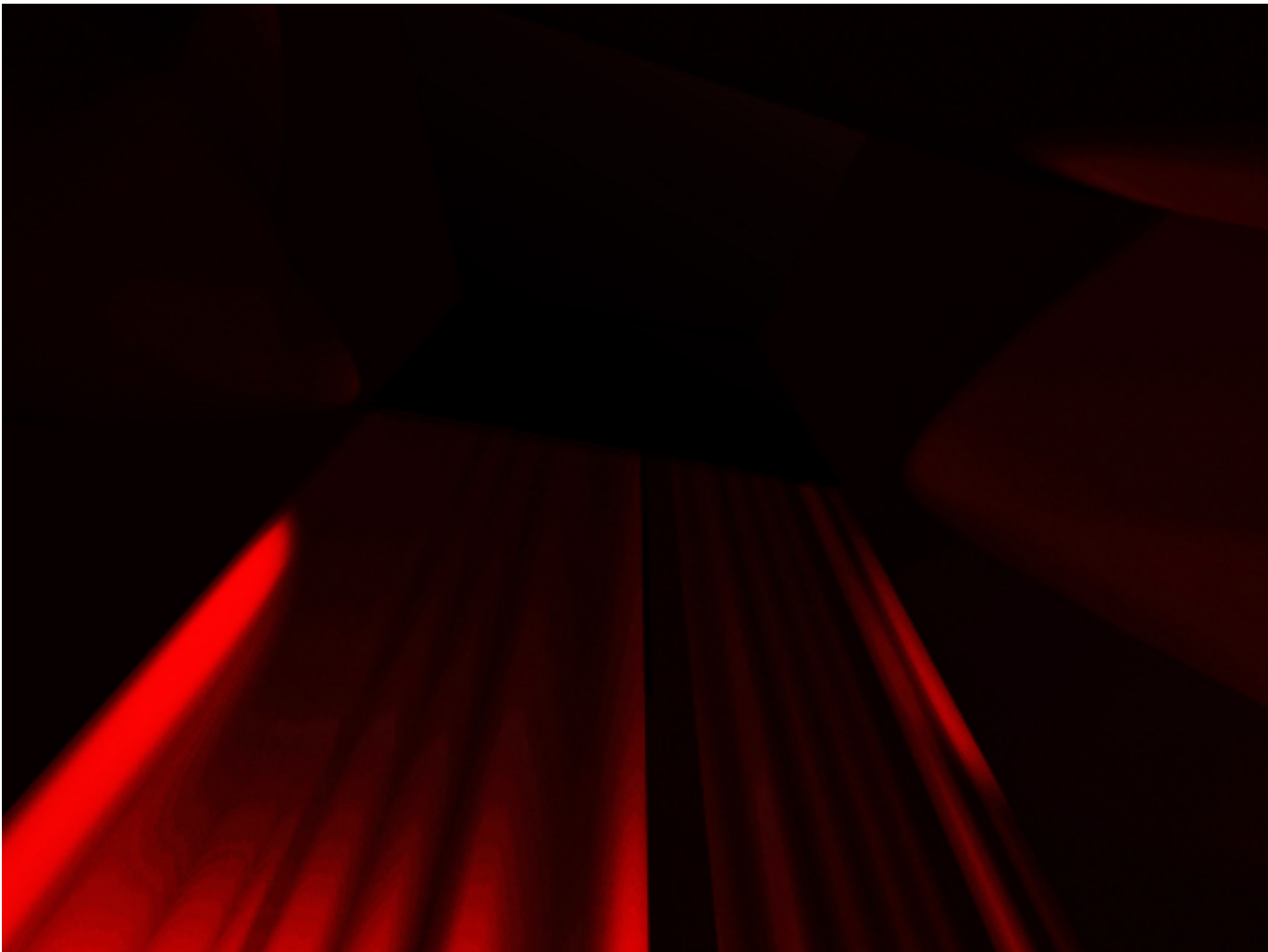


Fig. 104

by Author, View Seven

## Conclusions

The veil whether a protective and desirable dress for women who have set their beliefs in it, or seen as oppressive for its opponents, has and will continue to be deeply rooted in their beliefs. The act of forcefully veiling or unveiling women has never been totally successful and it has always left scars on their soul and psyche. This thesis aims to point out two required qualities of the human beings in relation to their surrounding environment which have been repressed in practicing the veil:

First is the significance of the quality of the space surrounding each person's body and its essential property as a flexible rather than a rigid, fixed space.

And second is the importance of employing all senses and being in direct relationship with the surrounding environment. For a veiled woman, there is always a hindrance which prevents her from being directly in touch with her surrounding world.

Whereas the focus of this thesis is more on the space between the veil and the body of the woman and the visualization of the senses buried within that space, the exploration of the space between the public and the veil could provide a ground for further research in the future.

This relationship can best be illustrated by comparing the design of a fortress in a hostile environment to that of a house in a congenial environment. The former, constructed to protect warriors from hostile forces, is made of thick, rigid materials with no openings, while the latter, is willingly opened up and allows for the flow of the sunlight and wind to and from its interior.

*Imagine an enfolded, warm space which surrounds your body and protects you. Imagine that it provides you with a glimpse of the outside world. And that you have the power to dominate it. Imagine that you are guarded against other people's eyes. Imagine that you are being respected and cherished by conceding to stay within this space and never abandon it. So you need to carry this space wherever you go. Even if you end up giving away some of your most desired wishes; you have been asked to remain within this space. This space is me; I am full of your imaginations, full of your desires. Full of the sense of protection which you have been used to. Full of power, full of light; a light from heaven, somewhere that you have been told. I used to be no more than five inches in depth but now I am a million yards deep. I am rooted in your deepest senses and hopes. I am the reflection of your sadness, sorrows, untold stories and unstable laughs. If only you could decorate my interior with your soul, furnish my enclosure with your creative hands, and determine my borders with your strong will, I would definitely become your ideal, and cherished space.*

## References

- Afkhami, Mahnaz, and Friedl, Erika. 1994. *In the eye of the storm: Women in Post- Revolutionary Iran*. London, New York: I.B.Tauris Publishers.
- Amin, Camron Michael. 2002. *The making of the modern Iranian woman: gender, state policy, and popular culture*. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida.
- Beck, Lois. Keddie, Nikki. 1978. *Women in the Muslim World*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press
- Booth-Clibborn, E. 2001. *The splendour of Iran, Volume II: Islamic Period*. London: Booth-Clibborn Editions.
- B. Boswort, A. 2000. The Historical Context of Thucydides' Funeral Oration. In *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 120. 1-16. London, UK: The Society For The Promotion Of Hellenic Studies.
- Blake, Stephen P. 1999. *Half the World: The Social Architecture of Safavid Isfahan, 1590-1722*. California: Mazda Publishers.
- Carson, Anne. 1995. *Glass, Irony and God*. New York: New Directions Publishing Corporation.
- Colomina, Beatriz. 1992. *Sexuality and Space*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press.
- Darznik, Jasmin. 2010. Forough goes West: The legacy of Forough Farrokhzad in Iranian diasporic art and literature. *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies*. Vol 6, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Durning, Louise and Wrigley, Richard. 1996. *Gender and Architecture*. Chichester, England: Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- Esposito, John L. 1995. *The Oxford encyclopaedia of the modern Islamic world*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Fleming, John. Honour, Hugh. Pevsner, Nikolaus. 1998. *The Dictionary of Architecture and Landscape Architecture*. USA: Penguin books Ltd.
- Guindi, Fadwa El. 1999. *Veil: Modesty, Privacy and resistance*. New York: Oxford.
- Hermann, Moriz. 1868. *Dunkle Geschichten aus Oesterreich*, Vienna: R. v. Waldheim
- Heynen, Hilde and Baydar, Gulsum. 2005. *Negotiating Domesticity: Spatial production of gender in modern architecture*. New York: Routledge.
- Hunt, Antony and Harrow, Leonard. 1978. *Islamic Architecture, Iran 2*. London: Scorpion publication Ltd.
- Irigaray, Luce. 1985. *Speculum of the other woman*. New York: Cornell University Press.
- Irigaray, Luce. 1985. *This sex which is not one*. New York: Cornell University Press.

- Khatib-Chahidi, J. 1981. Sexual Prohibitions, Shared Space and Fictive Marriages in Shi'ite Iran. In S. Ardener (ed.) *Women and Space: Ground Rules and Social Maps*, London: Croom Helm
- Levi-Strauss, Claude. 1969. *Elementary Structures of Kinship*. Boston: Beacon Press. Trans. of Les structures elementaires de parente, 1949.
- Levy, Reuben. 1967. *The Epic of the Kings*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Lillys, William. Reiff, Robert. And Esin, Emel. 1965. *Riental Miniatures: Persian, Indian, Turkish*. Tokyo, Japan: Charles E. Tuttle Co. Inc.
- Mazumdar, Shampa, and Mazumdar, Sanjoy. 2001. Rethinking Public and Private Space: Religion and Women in Muslim Society. *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research*, Vol18. 302. Chicago: Locke Science Publishing Co. Inc.
- Mernissi, Fatima. 1987. *Beyond the Veil: Male-Female Dynamics in Modern Muslim Society*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Milani, Farzaneh. 1992. *Veils and Words: the Emerging Voices of Iranian Women*. New York: Syracuse University Press.
- Mule, Pat, and Barthel, Diane. 1992. The Return to the Veil: Individual Autonomy vs. Social Esteem. In *Sociological Forum*, Vol 7, Netherlands: Springer Science+Business Media B.V.
- Nashat, Guity. 1999. *Women in the Middle East and North Africa: restoring women to history*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Neshat, Shirin. 2002. *Shirin Neshat*, Italy: Castello di Rivoli
- Owen-Crocker, Gayle R. 2005. *Dress in Anglo-Saxon England*. Woodbridge: The Boydell Press.
- Pallasmaa, Juhani. 2005. *The eye of the skin: Architecture and the senses*. West Sussex, England: John Wiley & Sons Ltd.
- Rendell, Jane. 2002. *The pursuit of pleasure*. New Brunswick, United States: Rutgers University Press.
- Rabinowitz, Nancy Sorkin. 1993. *Anxiety Veiled: Euripides and the Traffic in Women*. New York: Cornell University Press.
- Read, Jen'Nan Ghazal, and Bartkowski, John P., Jun. 2000. To Veil or Not to Veil? A Case Study of Identity Negotiation among Muslim Women in Austin, Texas. In *Gender and Society*, Vol. 14, No. 3. 395-417. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Rugh, Andrea B. 1986. *Reveal and Conceal: Dress in contemporary Egypt*. New York: Syracuse University Press.
- Spacks, Patricia Meyer. 2003. *Privacy: Concealing the Eighteenth Century Self*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Spacks, Patricia Meyer. 1975. *The Female Imagination*. New York: Knopf, Alfred A.

Schmidt, Alvin J. 1989. *Veiled and silenced: How culture shaped sexist theology*. Macon, GA: Mercer University Press.

Schumacher, Thomas L. 1993. *The Danteum, Architecture, poetics, and politics under Italian Fascism*, New York: Princeton Architectural Press.

Sindona, Enio. 1961. *Persian Miniatures*, Milan, Italy: Arti Grafiche Ricordi.

Stierlin, Henri. 2002. *Islamic Art and Architecture*. London: Thames & Hudson Ltd.

Tschumi, Bernard. 1996. *Architecture and Disjunction*, United States, DEKR Corporation.

Vorbehalten, Alle Rechte. 1980. *Persepolis*, Germany, Wurzburg: Verlag Ernst Wasmuth Tubingen.

Welsh, Anthony. 1973. *Shah Abbas and the Arts of Isfahan*, New York: Asia House Gallery.

Woolf, Virginia. 1989. *A Room of One's Own*. New York: Harcourt Brace & Co.

Zenie-Ziegler, Wedad. 1998. *In Search of Shadows: Conversations with Egyptian Women* London: Zed Books Ltd.