



## Extended Abstract

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### Poetry of Buildings: An Introduction and Criticism of a Poetic Genre in Persian

Fatemeh Amiri   
Ali Akbar Ahmadi Darani\* 

#### Introduction

Poetry of buildings is one of the types of poetry in the thousand-year history of Persian literature. The main theme in this type of poetry is the description of buildings. By describing the buildings, poets have preserved the name and image of many Iranian architectural masterpieces in Persian literary texts and have shown their power and skill in poetry. The composition of this type of poetry has been popular in all periods of Persian poetry in the form of ode, Ghat'e, and Masnavi. During the Safavid era, with the encouragement and request of the rulers of this dynasty, independent works describing the Safavid mansions appeared. In the Qajar period, when some kings, such as Fath Ali Shah, paid great attention to the construction, repair, and decoration of religious buildings to gain the legitimacy of their rule, this type of poetry became widespread again in the style of old poets in the form odes and, Ghat'e, along with the praises of the founders and the inclusion of chronogram. The main purpose of the earlier poets in writing these poems was praise; in the Safavid period it was description and in the Qajar period it was mostly to record the date and name of the founder. In addition to describing royal and public buildings, this type of poetry covers a wide range of Iranian historical and social topics.

#### Methodology and Review of Literature

In the present research, to show the evolution of this literary genre in a relatively complete way, the entire range of Persian poetry was considered, because in the research of literary type, limiting the research to a specific period will not lead to an accurate and complete understanding of that literary type. Therefore, at first, a list of verse and prose texts (divans of poetry, Tazkereh, chronicles, etc.) was prepared after searching those sources. More than eight hundred poems of building were found in texts from a thousand years of Persian poetry.

The aim was to answer these questions: what was the purpose of the poets in writing this type of poetry? What form and structure did the poets choose for it in different periods? What is the content of this type of poetry and what special rhetorical aspects have poets used to compose such poetry?

For the first time, in *Types of Persian Poetry* (1993) by Mansour Rastgar Fasai, the poetry of building was presented as a type of poetry. Several architecture and art researchers have also analyzed some building poems from the perspective of Safavid period architecture, including Nazanin Shahidi Marnani, "Sa'adat Abad Garden of Isfahan in the Mirror Masnavis of Golzar Sa'adat" (2015); Mustafa Gudarzi and Behzad Mohebi, "The Documentary Role of Poem Literature in the Representation of Destroyed Safavid Buildings" (2022).

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\* Associate Prof in Persian Language and Literature University of Isfahan, Isfahan, Iran. aa.ahmadi@ltr.ui.ac.ir,  
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### Discussion

In this research, to identify and comprehensively introduce poetry of buildings as a literary type, their purposes, formats, structures, themes, rhetorical aspects, and the relationship of these poems with authentic Iranian architecture have been criticized and analyzed.

Poets have had purposes such as description, eulogy, history and admonition in writing the poems. Eulogy can be considered the most important purpose of poetry in this type of literature. Eulogy is mostly found in the poems of the predecessors and the poems of the return period. In most of the poems of the building, the main purpose is to describe the building. The description is more obvious in the poems of Safavid-era poets. In the poems of the building, sometimes advice and admonition prevail over the description of the building. After describing the building, the poet reminds the impermanence of the world and warns the builder and the audience against attachment to the world.

Most of the poems of building are written in the formats of odes, Ghat'e, and Masnavi. The ode is the most widely used format for writing this type of poetry. In the poems in the form of Ghat'e, the name of the king or period, the name of the founder, the name of the building, and the date are mentioned. Many of them were written for the inscription. The most accurate description of the buildings is written in the form of Masnavi. In the 10th and the 11th centuries of Hijri, Masnavi was used as the main format for writing this type of poetry, and independent works describing Safavid buildings were written in this format.

Poems of building contain a wide and diverse range of topics and themes, the main of which is the description of various types of buildings, including royal buildings like government houses and public buildings like mosques and baths. In these descriptions, all the building components and architectural features are carefully described.

Poets have used surprise, anthropomorphism, and sometimes repetition to draw the audience's attention and focus on to the building's description. For this purpose, emotional pseudo-sentences such as habbaza, rhetorical questions, and addressing have been used. In this type of poetry, poets have welcomed each other in rhythm and rhyme, and creation of literary themes.

In the poems of building, characteristics of historical buildings are described, from the design and texture to many details and subtleties of architecture such as architectural style, design, types of industries and professions related to architecture, names of jobs, related materials, and tools. In architecture, the description of building decorations, such as paintings and murals, has been introduced and described.

### Conclusion

One of the types of Persian poetry is the poetry of buildings. Writing this type of poetry has been popular in all periods of Persian poetry. Although the description of the building is present in most poetry divans from the beginning of Persian poetry, poets from the Safavid period have dealt with it as an independent type. In the Safavid era, independent works were written describing Safavid buildings. In the Qajar period, this type of poetry in the style of the predecessors became widespread again in the form of odes and Ghat'e, along with the praise of the founders. Saba-ye Kashani wrote more than a hundred poems describing the palaces and religious places that were built, repaired, or renovated at that time. Therefore, the Qajar period is considered the peak period of this literary type both in terms of abundance and in terms of describing the types of buildings. There is a wide and diverse volume of subjects and themes in this type of poetry, including a description of royal buildings and public buildings, a description of main organs, and building components.

In this essay, in addition to explaining the artistic and literary features of the poetry of building, including poetic purposes, themes, structures, formats, and rhetorical features that lead to the accurate and comprehensive identification of this literary type, the relationship of these poems with authentic Iranian architecture, such as the architectural style and the types of industries and professions related to architecture, have also been discussed.

**Keywords:** building, poetry of building, mansion, description

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