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The Relationship between Gender and Space in the Public and Private Realms in the Qajar Era

Hosna Varmaghani*
Hossein Soltanzadeh**
Mozayan Dehbashi Sharif***

Abstract

Gender is a social and cultural concept that changes in different times and places. Various factors such as beliefs, religious teachings and customs are involved in shaping it. The present paper, applying historical approach and relying on an interpretation of historical texts and travelogues and focusing on the culture and religion in Iranian society, investigates changes in the gender realms of urban, rural and tribal communities in the Qajar period. Considering this pre-hypothesis that there is a positive relationship between “gender identity” and “spatial identity”, this paper response to a main question: Which factors have influenced in shaping of gender realms and their transformation in various situations? In this respect, we first find gender realms in the public and private places in the Qajar period. Then, we explain and analyze the comments of travel writers. The findings of the study indicate that cultural factors such as ritual beliefs, dressing way, women’s education and cultural influence of the West in the late Qajar era, social factors, including the structure of power, class, and social norms, and also economic factors including livelihood and geographic region have changed the relationship between gender and space. This paper discusses that how these factors influence on gender and space. Study of the Safavid and Qajar history and comparison of travelogues written during this period; give us the conclusion that the position of women in this period was similar in many aspects. The formation of movements and organization of women just after the constitutional revolution have changed this situation. Thus, in the present study, 6 travelogues of the Qajar dynasty, 6 travelogues of the Safavids, 8 memoirs and biographies have been investigated. In this paper, determining the influence of gender identity on spatial identity and the confounding factors in the relationship between gender and space are considered. Identifying domains as the basis of social and relative relations in public and private spaces have particular importance to detect possible changes in the gendered spaces. This research is based on historical texts, travelogues and biographies to explain the changes in spatial organization and classification of public and private realms according to changes in gender definition. This paper investigated these matters during the Qajar era. The main research question is that how features of space and the use of private and public realms affected of gender identity, social and cultural position, and status of women and men during the Qajar era.

Keywords

Gender, Space, Culture, livelihood, Qajar era.

*. Ph. D. Candidate in Architecture, Faculty of Architecture, Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch. hosnavarmaghani@yahoo.com

** Ph. D. in Architecture, Associate Professor, Faculty of Architecture, Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch. H72soltanzadeh@gmail.com

*** Ph. D. in Architecture, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Architecture, Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch.

Moz.Dehbashi_Sharif@iauctb.ac.ir

Introduction

Gender is a social phenomenon. The dominant culture of society persuade all individuals to follow of certain patterns of behavior, clothes and other markings gender by promoting certain paradigms of “characteristics of masculinity and femininity”. Of course, different attitudes to gender affected on behavior, activities, and also use the space at different times and places. This leads to the formation of areas of men and women in the public and private sphere. We consider to the effectiveness of “gender identity” on “spatial identity” and confounding factors in the relationship “Gender and Space”. We must identify territories of social and kinship relationships in private and public spaces. Consequently, we can identify possible changes in gender realms. This study, based on historical texts, travelogues and biographies, explain variations in spatial organization of public and private sectors in relation to differences in issue of gender and review this issue in the Qajar era.

Materials and Methods

In the present study, we are trying to find data on the subject by means of the remaining traces of the past time, documents, books and articles and travelogues and memoirs. So the methodology should be historical interpretation. Researcher in historical research “finds” existing data.

While in other research methods, a researcher “produces” required data. The purpose of historical research is using of data that is related to past events and their interpretation. Researcher, in historical interpretation, collects “work” and “Footprint” of past events for data collection. He searches resources by which he finds evidence of past events. The sources used in this study are Travelogue of foreigners who have come to Iran during the Safavid and Qajar era, especially those travelogues are written and described women’s pastime by women with their accuracy. And the books of memoirs and biographies and travelogues that were current during Naser al Shah Qajar.

The Theoretical Framework of Research

Gender is a subject that has a direct relationship with behaviors and social interactions that dominant culture of any society entrusts to both sexes (men and women). So, gender was always considered a part of social life and affected all aspects of life and everyday activities even on the smallest scale. Sex is the natural difference between men and women, but gender is cultural and social values

and representation system. Thus, some actions are inherently “masculine” and are sign of courage and strength that are associated with the male sex. In contrast, some acts are intrinsically “feminine” that are considered proportionate for women.

Each person’s gender identity is the result of the internalization of cultural normative expectations about men and women. Goffman (1959: 531) believes that differences in behavior and actions of men and women does not occur based on fundamental biological differences between them, but many of the social practices are always present as a result of natural differences between the sexes and are considered, in practice, a tool that respects those differences and produces them. People must accept certain attitudes and behaviors for acceptance of society and participation in it (Schaefer & Lamn, 1992: 173).

Socialization is a process that people tend to certain attitude, values and appropriate behavior as part of a culture. The process of training values, attitudes and learning expected behaviors consistent with the norms of honor formed a community is called socialization. In this regard, the role of gender could defined as expected behaviors, attitudes, responsibility and excellence that society gives to each sex (Keller et al, 1994: 41). In this research, indices and constituents of Gender, based on analysis of the literature and the views of theorists that are introduced in the framework of the study, are identified and classified by means of the Graph. Conceptual model is illustrated in Figure 1 consists of 9 indicators as components of Gender. This graph is the result of study of literature and the investigation of indicators. The effects of each of the nine indicators on social spaces during the Qajar era are important in this research. In fact, the relationship between gender and space is examined in the present study.

Historical texts and travelogues by foreign tourists in the Qajar era will be rereading to assess these 9 indicators as factors that influence the relationship between gender and space in the private and public spheres in Qajar era (Fig. 1).

The proper behavior and role of men and women, partly goes back to lessons during their socialization (South & Spitze, 1994: 213).

Gender roles specify a set of behaviors that have been defined on the basis of gender. Gender role ideology is related to the value judgments about the appropriate role of women and men, or signs and Features that each of the two sexes should exhibit (Gibbons, et al, 1997:153). Goffman believes the

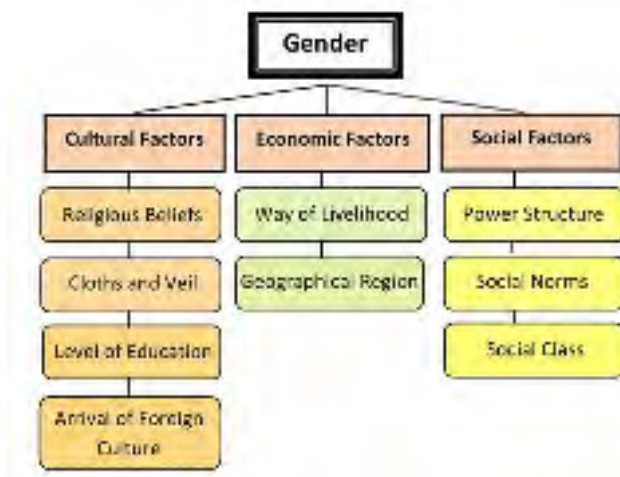


Fig.1. A conceptual model of gender. Source: authors.

social identity that is born and occurs during social interactions. People identity is marked and formed by culture of community. These roles can occur in the field of rules that Goffman called them “Frame”. It is clear that social factors affect way of socialization of men and women, and have a main role in determining gender identity in the field of social life. Another team of researchers know the family structure an effective factor in determining gender identity. They mentioned sources of power, patriarchy or matriarchy and extended or nuclear family in this area. A part of the decision-making power in the family is in

authority of the traditional role of men and women (Ritzer, et al, 1979: 27). According to Ritzer (ibid: 31), in traditional society, women are expected to play a subordinate role. He also adds that today, this role is changing. In Millett’s view, family has an important role in foundation and internalization the ideology of patriarchy by means of education and giving value to roles for each sex. Chafitz illustrated social definitions role in the production and reproduction of gender identity (Turner, 1999:237). Bourdieu shows that social phenomena such as the categories of gender, symbolic violence and gender language form gender identity (Jarvenin, 1999: 7). Chafitz believes that if labor division at large scale of society is gendered and tasks are defined and distributed according to sex, men gain more resources than women (Turner, 1999:238);(Table 5).

The Relationship between Gender and Space in the Qajar Era

It can be discerned three types of territory in spaces and life places in this period by studying historical texts: the field of women’s space, men’s areas and common areas without segregation. The research findings show that two important factors have been transformed public spaces into merely men’s areas and women were forbidden from entering there: First, lack of social security and second, national laws. Brugsch described Kashan city and distinguished it from other cities of Iran. He was

Table1. Key concepts and definitions of experts on the relationship between gender and space. Source: authors.

Gender and Space	Key Notions	Theorizing
Explaining the relationship between Gender and Space and power	Power	Dafni Spain
Clarifying the role of space in constructing symbol and the structure and the strengthening of gender relations	Gendered Space	Sherli Ardner
Space is a social production. Ability to challenge or change the dominant spatial arrangement of the space users	Life Space	Hanri Lefbvere
Space is the base of each of power. Distribution and classification of people in places and segregation of the gender is one of the first techniques that disciplinary technology enjoy for presenting people and what is going into space.	Power	Michael Focus
Gender is not a former concept and essence and universal, but also is created during social practices.	Social Notion of Gender	Judith Butler
The structure of social relations leads to gender division of urban space.	Social Structure	Mac du Vel

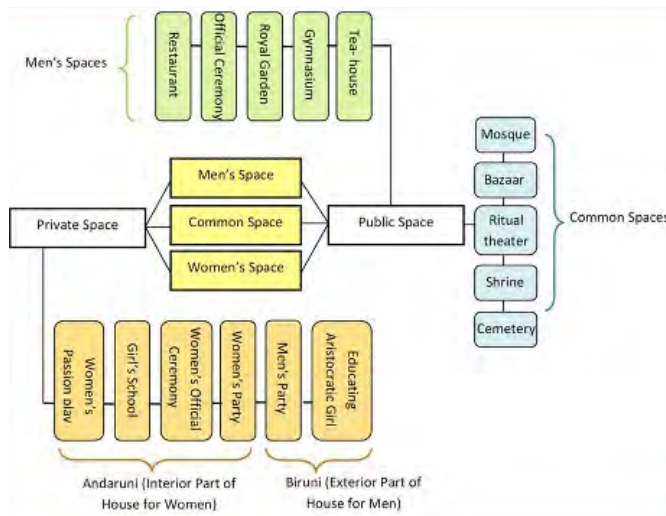


Fig.2. Various gendered spaces of traditional city in Qajar era. Source: authors.

written: we are glad that we've entered a clean and unique city. Wanderer groups and idle people, who are seen in streets of Iranian cities, did not much seen in Kashan city. People were busy in their work. Dallemagne, French explorer, during Mozafar-el Din Shah wrote about Iranian women's recreations: "one of the main entertainments of women is going to the bathroom or to the cemetery. In fact, these two places are social clubs for recreation and meeting their self. They spend much time for talking, smoking shisha and eating nuts and sweets at these places (Mehrabadi, 2000: 438);(Fig. 2).

Effective Cultural Factors on the Relationship between Gender and Space

Qajar era, because of the changes of social conditions and the impacts of international community on Iran, was a turbulent period that all the characteristics and people of society affected by these changes and receipt them. These changes included Factors such as the press, the educational system and its popularity, and the revolution of constitution. Therefore, the Qajar era can be divided into two periods: the first period that follows the cultural tradition of Safavid era and the second period that confrontation with the West was the beginning of developments such as change the concept and gender identity (Fig. 3) .

Religious beliefs

It was very important to keep limits of gender spaces in public places and even recreation areas in the Safavid and Qajar cities. But neither men nor women

were forbidden from recreational activities. Falsafi writes in his book "Life of Shah Abbas I": "One of entertainments of the royal harem women and other women was walking for pleasure in Chahar-Bagh and Si-o-Se-Pol Esfahan with no veil and mask from morning to night of every Wednesday. On this day, Chahar-Bagh and Si-o-Se-Pol were belonged to women. They were rejoicing and eating and drinking. Was grazed around Bagh. The guards were prevented from passing men in the area on this special day of week.

Women's Education

Olearius, a European tourist, illustrated about Iranian's education that "almost all of Iranians in every social class know reading and writing. Because the Iranians send their children to school even earlier than usual. Their mosques were places of both worship space and school. Every town had many mosques. The above sentences indicate the importance of education as a part of the instructions of the religion. Other sources suggest that the education was not equal for men and women in all classes of society. Women and girls of the upper classes were not allowed to enter into the communal spaces for education but they enjoy of broader education in the private space of house: Children of the upper classes are educated in their father's house by special persons who receive remuneration for this job. Girls are taught to read and write and sew, and sometimes they learn Iranian music"(Grant Watson, 1977: 21)

The Influence of the West Culture in the Late Qajar Era

In the Qajar era, women lived mainly based on the paradigm of tradition. There was an important common point for all women called equal identity, integrity and homogeneity. Arrival of manifestations of the modernity in the late Qajar era caused former female identity to be questioned. For example, changing viewpoint to spaces of housing is observed in memoirs book of Satare Farmanfarmaeyan and Taje-Saltaneh. The private sector of traditional house (Andaruni) in which women lived and its separation from the outer area (Biruni) in which men lived, has been contested in this book.

Effective Social Factors on the Relationship between Gender and Space

Structure of Power

In this period, men presented in public spaces more than women. They have played a more prominent

role in the field of construction of culture. Thus, values and social norms were also made by them. Benjamin (2012: 171) explained prohibition of women to participate in some communities: “This garden like other royal gardens in the way of Tehran to villages of Alborz Mountain is open for all men to enter and recreate especially after noon pray. But women are not allowed.

Social Class

Some travelogues emphasized on decisive separation of public and private areas with high walls, towers, long corridors and layered private spaces of houses in which women were eternal prisoners and were not allowed to participate in public areas. Other travelogues described active presence of women and girls in the markets and public spaces. This conflict leads us to the other variables that shape their gender identity (Fig. 4).

Benjamin describes aristocratic houses of Shemiran region: “All the villas and bungalows of Shamiran were good and habitable. There were two common specifications about all of them: the first point is that all the villas include buildings and pretty big garden that are surrounded by high walls.

The other point about this villa is that all villas have separate sections for men and women. In the other words, they have a building called Andaruni for women and Biruni for men with separate yards. Brugsch describes an aristocratic house that he visited it: “Colonel’s house seemed as a military fort. It was surrounded by high walls. We entered from the big door of house into a long corridor and then we guided into the colonel’s outer courtyard. Reception hall

was in this yard” (Brugsch, 2010: 344). Kaempfer, German traveler and doctor, writes about the palace-gardens of Shah Soleiman Safavid era: “The gardens were divided in two parts by a wall.

One part in which foreigners and guests were entertained was called Ivan and the other part in which women lived called Harem. It was closed to the outside world so that even the most loyal and closest friends did not allow entering this part of garden” (Kaempfer, 1971: 199). Other sources have reported of women’s participation in public area and their relationship with men. Of course, different views on women of different classes are affected on the formation of house spaces and the rate of separation of the inner and outer spaces of houses.

Figuroa writes about the difference between the statuses of women in various classes: “Women and girls of craftsmen and lower classes families spent part of the day walking for pleasure and recreation in groups. But dignified and aristocratic women never left the house. They were always controlled and had a private bathroom in their own homes. So, variables such as social class and the level of separatism or sociability in accordance with the social status of the head of the family affected the gender variable and differs the relationship between gender and space even in one era and place (Fig. 5).

Social Norms

In public belief, what is normally considered natural is social norm. “The rule of men and obedience of women is almost common throughout the world. So, any change is unusual and abnormal (Mill, 1998: 25).

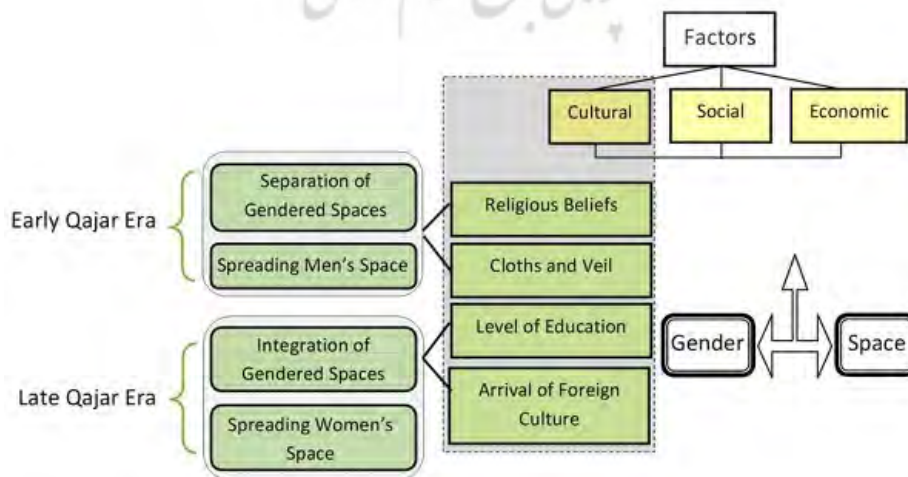


Fig.3. The role of cultural factors among effective indicators on the relationship between gender- space. Source: authors.

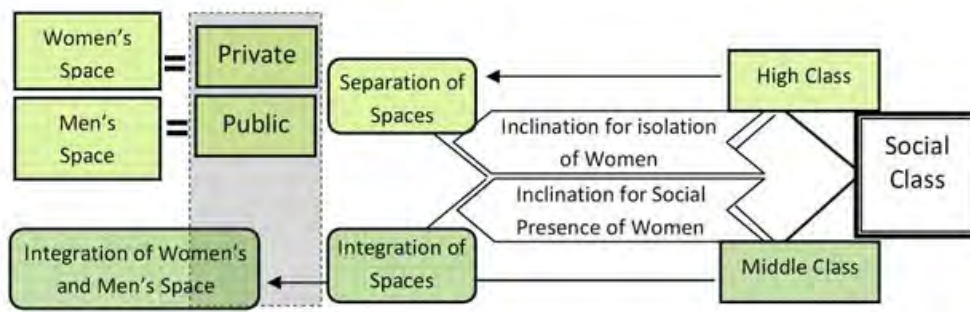


Fig.4. The effect of social class on the public and private spaces in the Qajar era. Source: authors.

<p>Independent identity of gendered space in aristocratic houses</p>	<p>The complete separation of gendered spaces of men and women in royal harem</p>
<p>Sani-al-dawleh house. Tehran. Qajar era</p>	<p>Shahrestanak castle. Tehran. Qajar era</p>
<p>No gendered spaces in houses of beg families</p>	<p>Soft gendered boundaries in houses of middle families</p>

Fig.5. the impact of social class on the gendered spaces in four types of housing belonging to four different social classes.

Source: a. Ghobadian, 2013: 231; b. Armaghani et al, 2014b: 45; c & d. authors.

In Qajar community, women’s presence in some areas was known the abnormal phenomenon that was in conflict with the norms and consequently was prevented. Pollock described women’s official

ceremony and mocking attitude of society toward the discordant event: “During the New Year, the Queen mother celebrates a ladies greetings ceremony in which princess and her relatives and European

women participate. This event called Friday market with ridicule.

Effective Economical Factors on the Relationship between Gender and Space Way of Livelihood

When women undertook a part of livelihood, their presence in public areas were more than the condition that men were charged with the livelihood role and servants were charged with responsibility of home affairs (in the aristocratic family).

Two important variables involved in this field: social class and type of community (urban, rural, tribal). In urban family, women are an important member of it, but their duties were limited to the private domestic space and they did not have many contacts with the outside. Rural women, due to their tasks, spent more time in the public domain than urban women.

“There was not Andaruni in the houses of villages and tribes” (Mahdi, 1970:20); (Fig. 6).

Sir John Malcolm, in the book of “History of Iran”, explains the differences between urban and rural women’s position as follows: “The difference was that urban women were always imprisoned in domestic space. But in the villages and tribes such tradition was not common. Women were charged with the most agricultural work and weaving knitwear and animal husbandry.

They were nursing wounded soldiers during the war and also fought the enemy on horseback accompanied by men” (Malcolm, 1983: 636). The second variable that is associated with the mode of livelihood and affects gender identity is social class. In the Qajar era, patriarchy could be seen with more intensity in the wealthy and upper classes family because men (the head of family) have wealth

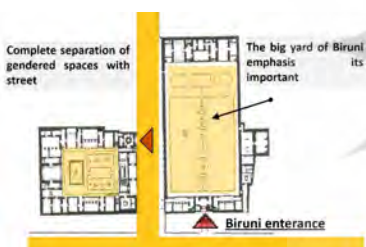



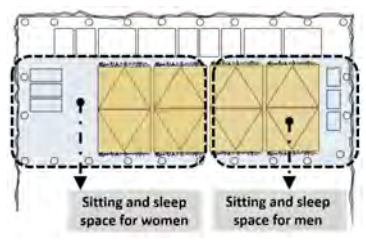

Gender and architectural space	Gender and social space	
 <p>Zinat-almolk house. Shiraz. Qajar era</p>	 <p>Urban women in safe social places</p>	Urban society
 <p>Inflection of gendered spaces in rural houses of Garmish</p>		Rural society
 <p>Separation of activities in one space: black tent of Qashqae tribe. Shiraz</p>		Tribal society

Fig.6. Comparison of the relationship between gender and space in three communities (urban, rural, tribal) located in the region of Shiraz Source: authors.

and consequently power. In non-leisured classes, the continuous collaboration between women and men caused women to obtain superior position in the family. Benjamin explains less presence of women of leisured class families in the market: “Bazaars and shops of Tehran city are full of various home-made and foreign-made products.

However, Europeans, aristocratic and nobles purchase their necessary goods mostly from vendors who carry different kinds of goods from house to house for sale.

Geographical Region

The results show that the impact of “gender identity” on “spatial identity” could be intensified or weakened with respect to climate and environmental conditions of each region.

This could be studied of particular interest of travelers to the lifestyle of women in different

regions of the country. So that in the hot and dry climate of desert, the houses had introverted spaces, more porches and wider middle spaces than houses of other regions of Iran. Conversely, in the wet weather of the northern cities of Iran, there are invisible boundaries of gender instead of the middle spaces that separate rooms and portions with different functions in the houses of this region. An interesting point in all travelogues is paying special attention to the different social and economic role of northern women of Iran. Lady Sheil writes: “I realized that northern women had earned a lot of respect of family members like most tribal women due to play an important role in the life. I heard that Kurdish women are very wisd and enlightened persons like tribal women. It is perhaps because of the importance of their role and interference in the internal affairs of family and tribal issues” (Sheil, 1983: 242-244);(Fig. 7).



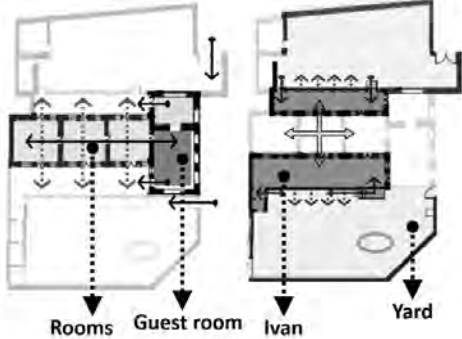

Gender and architectural space	Gender and social space	
 <p>An aristocratic house. Kazorgh quarter. Yazd. Qajar era</p>		<p>Central region</p>
 <p>A Qajar house in Rasht. Sagharisazan Quarter</p>		<p>Northern region</p>

Fig.7. Comparison of the concept of gender and the house shape in two different regions of Yazd and Guilan. Source: a. Soltanzadeh, 1372; c. Institute of Contemporary History Studies; b & d. authors.

Conclusion

All males and females during the process of socialization learn that a particular groups of activities are considered manly and the other groups are considered women’s activities. Consequently, women and men are limited or encourage to enter in some areas due to being considered as manly or women’s place. So, some places are known as “female areas” and some are “areas for men”. Woman’s position has been always faced with a bilateral conflict of dissipation and excessiveness. She, sometimes, was valuable and admired and sometimes was known as a void thing. Change of “gender identity” throughout history of Iran is clearly traceable. Of course, different attitudes to gender affected on behavior, activities, and also use the space at different times and places. This leads to the formation of areas of men and women in the public and private sphere. We consider to the effectiveness of “gender identity” on “spatial identity” and confounding factors in the relationship “Gender and Space”. The findings suggest that cultural factors such as religion, kind of dress, and education of women and the influence of European culture in the late Qajar era affected the relationship between gender and space. Based on cultural and religious patterns, leisure and recreation was only limited to religious beliefs and essential practices and objectives such as worship, bathing or daily shopping from the market. The findings suggest that women’s presence in some public areas had been prohibited because of social factors such as the structure of power, social class and social norms. Patriarchal laws caused many official ceremonies to be allocated to men. As a result, some domains such as tea-houses, canteens and fast food cook center, the royal gardens, official greeting ceremony and gymnasiums was the men’s space according to social norms. Thus, women did not desire to participate in this ceremonies and places. On the other hand, the entry of men into exclusively women spaces was very limiter than women’s entry into men areas. In addition, the influence of European culture in the late Qajar era led to rethinking about traditional norms and transformation of many men’s areas to communal spaces. The findings indicate that economic factors including livelihood and geographic region determine social space. So that, accepting agriculture and

Table2. the relationship between gender and space in the public and private spaces in the Qajar era. Source: authors.

Social and Architectural Space		Secondary Indicators	Main Indicators
Andaruni-Biruni	Privacy	Religious Beliefs	Cultural Factors
Separation of Realms			
Limit of Activities			
Protection of family		Cloths and Veil	
Separated Porch			
Vestibule			
Middle Yards	Spatial Veils	State and Level of Education	
Isolation, layering and Spatial Hierarchy			
Religious Women’s School	Religious Education		
Women’s Passion Play and Sermon meeting	Scientific Education	Arrival of Foreign Culture	
Modern Schools of Girls			
The Formation of Women’s freedom Movement			
Spreading Communal Spaces		Power Structure	
Deleting Andaruni and Biruni			
Absolute Men’s Power	Patriarchy		
Expanded Family	Women’s Power	Social Norms	
Partnership Deciding			
Nuclear Family			
Gender Separation of Spaces		Social Class	
Social Dignity	Aristocratic Women		
Tending to Separation	Middle Class Women		
Living in Harem			
Sociality and Freedom	Tribal Family	Way of Livelihood	
Separation of Activities			
Separation of Spaces			
Separation of Andaruni and Biruni	Rural Family	Economic Factors	
Special Unity	Urban Family		
Equality of Realms	Northern Region		
Invisible Limits			
Introverted Spaces for Women			
	Central Region		

ranching responsibilities by women caused to delete the necessity for restriction on private domestic space. The influence of “gender identity” on “spatial identity” was been intensified or weakened according to the ways of living and environmental conditions in each region. Table 2 illustrates the effective factors on the relationship between gender and space according to changes in the main (cultural-social-economic) indicators of research and secondary indicators that have been obtained in the present study.

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