Mashan became the capital of Iran in 1587, following Tabriz and Qazvin. Mashan is the scene of a counterplay between incremental growth and conscious planning. The city grew by accretion over the centuries. When Shah Abbas I (1587–1629) came to power, he introduced grand scale planning by building Mashan-I-Shah as a spectacular display of his power. Years before, probably under Shah Ismail (1502–54), the Maidan was moved from its previous location near the Friday Mosque to its present location as an expression of the physical and symbolic separation between the clergy and the ruler. The “new” Maidan was located tangentially to the old trade route, which ran from the north gate of the city to the river. Under Shah Abbas I (1587–1629), many new buildings were added to the Maidan complex, including a government complex. The Chahar Bagh (a major avenue similar in stature to the Champs Elysées) was planned formally leading from the Maidan area to the river and ultimately to the grand royal garden at the foot of the mountains.

ASPECTS OF FORMAL STRUCTURE:

From left to right: First, the city as a whole, with the ancient trade route leading from the north gate through the bazaar and over the river, contrasted with the formal gardens along Chahar Bagh, ending in the Great Royal Gardens. Second, the relationship between the old Maidan and the beginning of the bazaar. Third, expansion of the city by an act of will by “latching” the royal district (a new Friday Mosque—the Shah Mosque—and the Shah’s Bazaar) onto the old trade route. Fourth, the conceptual expansion of the previous move to incorporate it into the Avenue of Gardens. Acreation and intervention are the hallmark of Mashan planning.
Plan of the Maidan-i-Shah and surrounding buildings. The Ali Kapa Gate (c. 1760) is the most prominent feature of the complex, serving as a viewing stand, an open porch, and the entrance gate into the lower part of government buildings. Directly opposite the Ali Kapa Gate, the Shiklalshah Mosque (1815) is attached to the edge of the complex, along the long axis of the Maidan. The Shiklalshah Mosque is on axis with the entrance of the Shah Mosque to the south, the minarets of which are turned from the maidan by 45 degrees, thus directed towards Mecca.

ISFAHAN
Ishâh, looking toward the southwest across the city with the Mâdân-i-Shâh embedded within its texture. Three principal monuments are attached to the Mâdân’s walls: The Shâh Mosque at the southern end of the confined space; Sheikh Ludabbânih’s tomb to the eastern perimeter; and, directly facing it to the west, the Ali Qâpu Palace.

Axonometric reconstruction of the Mâdân and the surrounding buildings (government and royal district mainly after Kaempfer, 1712). This drawing does what only a drawing can do: It combines different sizes of existence into one perception—showing a palace long burned down, fields still farmed in the 1930s, a traffic artery sliced through in the 1940s, and the rest as it has been since the 17th century, and still is. The point is to demonstrate the organizational strength of a built open space on an urban scale (510 ft. × 1785 ft.) The walls of the Mâdân have a strong identity. Anything could happen outside these walls, but the city would always have the same center. New York’s Central Park is an illustration of the same principle in a Western context, and on a larger scale.
ABOVE: Central Court of the Shah Mosque, with Maidan and city beyond, looking northeast at Prayer Porch (iwan). The two side porches mark entries into the two domed, chapel-like spaces. The axial organization of the Shah Mosque courtyard works according to the relationships found in the Maidan on a larger scale.

ABOVE: The western mihrab of the entrance porch (iwan).

ASPECTS OF FORMAL STRUCTURE:
Shah Mosque with Maidan and Persian miniature, both Safavid period, 17th century. There is a possible exchange of similar formal structures between an architectural ensemble (Maidan/Shah Mosque in Isfahan, 1597–1630) and a painting composition (Persian miniature, 1520s). The comparison is compelling in that it suggests a similar mind-set for two different forms of art, resulting in an interplay between two-dimensional surface and three-dimensional mass and volume. The illusionistic possibilities are obvious, not only in this example but in much Iranian and Turkistan architecture.
LEFT: Different perceptions of the Maidan by people of various positions: royalty, clergy, civil servants, citizens, and visitors. The meaning of the Maidan varies according to one's life in the city.

RIGHT: Maidan (above) looking south, in 1840 (from Coste) Maidan (below) looking north towards the bazaar, in the 18th century (from Le Brun). These views show the confined public space when it is empty and when it is filled. The use of the Maidan varied from polo games to accommodation of entire caravans.

ASPECTS OF FORMAL STRUCTURE:
From top to bottom: First, public buildings impinging on the Maidan as experienced by a government official. Second, the Maidan as the focal space of the entire city as experienced by all (unme). Third, the Maidan as forecourt to the royal precincts as experienced by the nobility and citizens having business with the government.
Top left: The Maidan with the Shah Mosque in the evening. In this light, the thin screen wall which defines the container is revealed. The profile of the mountains beyond is reflected in the agitated skyline of domes, mansions (monumental entry, porch, niche, etc.), and minarets.

Below: The Maidan at 6:00 a.m. (left). As the morning light washes over all surfaces, the city fabric and the Maidan cannot be distinguished from one another. This is in contrast to the same view at 5:00 p.m. when the afternoon shadow is held in the container—the Maidan—making a plastic distinction between city fabric and open space. The experience is affected by temporal conditions, from time of day to time of year.

Above: The public view of the Shah Mosque from pedestrian level on the Maidan looking south past the Ali Kapu gate.

East-west section of the Maidan and its adjacent bazars, looking at the Shah Mosque.

Below: Approach through the narrow streets of the city fabric to a minor entrance of the Shah Mosque’s western courtyard. When “weaving” through the fabric, even a building as large as the Shah Mosque is experienced as part of the fabric. Just like the corridors of a house lead to a room, the streets of the city fabric lead to the public courtyard.

Above: The privileged view of the Shah Mosque from the Ali Kapu porch looking south. An impression of response is reinforced through the axial stability of the domes. The datum of the screen wall sees a visual base for the volumes of the domes rising behind it.
MOSQUE AL-HAKIM

ISFAHAN

Mosque Al-Hakim, located near the bazaar, was built in 1654 during the reign of Shah Abbas II (1648–66) by Doctor (Hakim) Davud, who fled from Bahman to India after making his fortune there under the grand Moghul, Hakim Davud financed this mosque in Isfahan in his name.

A mosque is not only a house of worship, but also a public building serving a multiplicity of uses. It is a gathering place for prayers five times a day, an Islamic college, a community center for functions with present-day Western associations, and an emergency shelter for travelers. A mosque contains antechambers, such as wash rooms and rosters, for public use. It is the first civic symbol one encounters after coming out of a secluded house at the end of an obscure alley. As much as it is a container of space, it is also contained within the city fabric. The Mosque Al-Hakim has no monumental entry, but five different minor entries. Frequently, a mosque is also used as a short-cut for another destination beyond the mosque. Although the penetration of the mosque walls may take many forms, the primary destination is always the same: it is a courtyard which can be called a monumental space.

ASPECTS OF FORMAL STRUCTURE:

The internal organization of the Masjan courtyard, the Mosque Al-Hakim courtyard, a typical house courtyard and a single room is similar. The same longitudinal axe dominates each space. One or several cross axes organize spaces behind the subordinate walls. The relationship of spaces off the courtyard is carried through in all examples: the niche in the wall of the room to the room, the room (sala) to the house courtyard, the prayer hall to the mosque courtyard and the mosque entry portal to the Masjan.

A rooftop view reveals the kinship between the double-story wall of the Masjan and its counterpart in the Mosque Al-Hakim. The upper story wall of the Masjan gives the illusion of balconies with rooms behind. The upper story wall of the mosque is perforated. In both cases, the exaggerated treatment of the wall brings its height into proportion with the width of its court.
Axonometric of the mosque and surrounding buildings
Note the differences in roof structures according to what the roof covers.
Axonometric cutting through northeast to southwest
from prayer porch (omn) to main walls, leading to main
domed prayer hall with prayer niche (masba) facing to-
ward Mecca. A large congregation would overflow from
the prayer hall and fill the courtyard as necessary

ASPECTS OF FORMAL STRUCTURE.

From left to right: First, from the street, the mosque
is not distinguished from any other building in the city
fabri. Second, once inside, the monumental courtyard
space becomes the “piazza” of the neighborhood be-
cause of its intrinsic geometric order. Third, below the
screen wall there is an implied spatial “latter” grid.
Fourth, mosque related spaces depend on the coher-
ence of the courtyard
Figure/ground plan showing interlocking of mosque with neighborhood buildings. The mosque incorporates the older Seljuk structures to the north. An interlocking device is the tomb of a saint, the entry of which faces one of the five entrances to the mosque at the southeast. The relationship is a small-scale application of the same principle which governs the Jami' mosque-fountain dialogue.
The main entrance to Madrasa Madr-i-Shah from Cha-
har Bagh. Main entrances to both private and public Ira-
nian buildings of this time are often octagonal and thus
are called hezari (hazir meaning eight).
Madrasa Madr-i-Shah ("Mother of the Shah") is located among the many gardens along the Chahar Bagh in Isfahan. The Madrasa Madr-i-Shah was built 1706–1714 by Shah Sultan Husayn (1694–1732) in honor of his mother. This was the last of the Safavid buildings before the Afghans sacked the city in 1731.

A madrasa is an Islamic college, primarily for the training of holy men (mu'allas). The only school available at that time, it was the main center for dispensing all forms of learning. The income-generating stalls (known as the Baazar-i-Bozand) and caravansarai provided the funds for upkeep of the madrasa—an example of the Waqf in operation. The caravansarai has since been converted into the Shah Abbas I Hotel.

There are only two entrances to the madrasa. The four corners contain octagonal service courts which provide access to service rooms and the upper level of cells.

Right: Roofscape of madrasa looking south from an octagonal service/access court.

Right: A typical teaching/learning situation in a madrasa in Kerman. Note the relationship of those seated to the architectural elements which surround them, such as the scale of the seated human figure on the porch to the weathercoating behind. This scale relationship is the same as that of the figures seated on the ground to the lower porch wall behind.

Left: Reading from bottom to top, the entry sequence to a typical upper floor cell on the western side of the court.
RIGHT: Ninety degree axonometrics of court and octagonal service court showing western part of courtyard.

Left: Typical upper cell porch.

**ASPECTS OF FORMAL STRUCTURE:**
From Top to Bottom: Top and middle, spatial analysis of the privileged cell facing the courtyard and its neighbor facing the Chahar Bagh. Bottom, the care with which privilege is indicated can be seen in the floor pattern of tiles. Just after the entry to the privileged cell a band of tiles in different patterns indicate a special condition (in this case the sleeping loft above).

**LEFT:** Plan and sections of upper floor cells showing a rare occurrence of the double-loaded corridor. The cell on the courtyard side is given more privilege. Its major axis connects the entry with the porch, while its minor axis runs through the fireplace. A special sleeping loft is formed by the space over the corridor. The cell's orientation is toward the courtyard and it has a deeper balcony than the cells facing outside.

In the recurrence and the rejection of the form of a "court" (from the Meder to the courtyard to the cell) the idea of a fabric that is made of one cloth is reinforced.
A caravansarai is a hostel for caravans and individual travelers, with provisions for trade. The warehouse merchandise from outside the city is sold here to the retailers in the bazaar, thus the caravansarai acts as a "filter." Caravansarai-i-Gulshan is located on the Isfahan Bazaar and was built in the 17th century by Jamihi-Bashi, a courtier of Shah Abbas I (1587–1629).

ASPECTS OF FORMAL STRUCTURE:
FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: First, the typical position of a caravansarai (such as Gulshan) is to the bazaar. The caravansarai has a pure courtyard against the winding bazaar. Second, the connecting corridors between the caravansarai and the bazaar are usually parallel to the sides of the court and function as "mini-bazaars." Third, alternative connections. The presence of small mediating spaces off the corners of the courtyard enable shifts in orientation. These spaces are placed at 45 degrees to the two axes of the courtyard.

ASPECTS OF FORMAL STRUCTURE:
FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: A typical "ad-hoc" bazaar and a typical "planned" bazaar. While the space of the first bazaar is irregular in all directions, the second is characterized by domed structural bays which are rhythmically organized.
Stairs descending from bazaar (right) and keeper's apartment (left) into courtyard in front of Mosque-ib-Jarchi.
BAZAAR: AMENITY

ISFEHNAN

The dividing bazaar is the commercial 'backbone' of the city, echoing the social and religious aspect of the bazaar's history. The bazaar acts as a transition between the 'street' and the 'market', meeting people, buying and selling goods.

The upper level of the bazaar is the main trading area, with a large number of shops and stalls. The lower level is the residential area, with houses and workshops. The bazaar is a social and economic hub of the city.

The bazaar is divided into several sections, each with its own unique character. The main section is the 'Bazaar Square', which is surrounded by shops and stalls. The square is usually the busiest part of the bazaar.

ASPECTS OF NORMAL STRUCTURE:

The main entrance to the bazaar is through a archway that leads into a large, open space, which is surrounded by a number of shops and stalls. The archway is supported by a series of columns, which add to the overall architectural interest of the bazaar.

Although the bazaar is open to the public, it is still divided into several sections, each with its own unique character. The bazaar is a busy place, with people walking and shopping, and it is a social and economic hub of the city.

The bazaar is also a cultural hub, with a number of cultural events taking place throughout the year. These events include music and dance performances, as well as food and drink stalls.

The bazaar is an important part of the city's history, and it has been A

The original floor-to-floor relationship means while the floor-to-floor relationship is maintained in the lower-level shops, the higher-level shops are more open and airy, creating a unique atmosphere for the shoppers.

The bazaar is an important part of the city's economy, and it is a popular destination for tourists. The bazaar is a unique and special place, and it is a must-see for anyone visiting the city.