

Investigation of The relationship between Iranian Café literature and culture, in Safavid Era

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Abstract

The arrival of the coffeehouse to Iran was probably during the reign of Shah Tahmasp I (920-970 AH), by the Ottomans. This place was in its best popularity during Shah Abbas I era (996-1038 AH); this king frequented coffeehouses accompanied by diplomatic representatives from other countries. Here at outset of the discussion it is necessary to bear in mind that coffeehouse is treated in a general definition which is widely more comprehensive than what is nowadays known as a coffeehouse, a definition which denotes places either no longer extant or known to be coffeehouse proper. Coffee house in this era had many different functions. Its first function was the role, it had in communication. In this way, coffee house is a free place without any formal rules that people disregarding of the current strict norms, talking about everything, which got back to their occupations whenever they willed. Among the most important functions of coffee house is its help to the cultivation and prosperity of art and literature. A great number of artists frequented the coffeehouses. Mir Emaad, the famous calligrapher is a notable example. Also poets were highly involved in this place. In a sense, these poets can be divided into three groups: the ones who worked in the café, ones who were occupied with jobs other than working in the café, and ones who were scientists or related to them. Most poems of this period were composed in coffee houses and also were debated there. Storytelling which has a long history in Iran was one of the common arts in coffee houses.

Key words: safavid Era, Urban Coffeehouses, Nasr Abadi Tazkareh, rendezvous, guild

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Introduction

The opening of the discussion about cultural-literal features of the coffee house in Safavid era Iran is surely the subject of place and space. The very soul of Persian coffee houses is embedded and defined by place. Becoming accustomed to the cultural features of the coffee house without having any information about its environmental functions, as a place of gathering for people from different social classes, will be impossible. The concept of place has been in the center of attention for various fields of science including sociology, anthropology, and human geography from a long time ago. Among Persian Sages and ancient Greek Philosophers, place was the same as space and has been defined by it. They considered concepts, place and space, as the same and used the characteristics and features of one in defining the other. (Sadaat jayebi, 1378: 24) If we look at the space of coffee houses by the definition provided by this group, this space consists of all the intellectual, ideological and practical aspects, which gives it its identity. To put it in clearer terms; the common space which is formed by a specific group is considered to be the same as the place where the group is formed. But the concept of place enters a new level in the 20th century and the surveys related to place begins by differentiating between place and space. Experts in sociology and human geography believe that space is made up of the man-made material world plus the natural world and when it is converted into a set of meaningful systems it becomes a place (ibid. 25). In a public place like coffee houses, building and constructions come to mind first, so a place should first be defined physically, and then according to its cultural and social functions, it enters a new stage which contains the very spirit of the building. This new stage is called space. From one of the celebrated European architectures' point of view (Edward Relph, born in 1910 AD) the spirit of a place depends on the deep understanding of the space due to the occurrence of events and formation of memories during the passage of time. In this way, the identity and spirit of a public place is something completely more than the physical structure and people understand the spirit of a place by intellectual images, individual and group memories and mental environmental associations.(Rahmani,1389;71)The existence of man in this theory is the most important factor which gives meaning to place. Place, becomes meaningful when an emotional understanding is derived from it and it is made into a mental image (ibid. 72). So when we start the discussion about cultural-literal functions of Persian coffee houses in the Safavid era, we have something completely beyond the empty building and naked body of a public place during a specific period in mind. Constructive instruments of

coffee houses only demonstrate its naked body, this naked body regardless of its spirit, i.e. set of activities done in this social institution is not valuable.

Iranian coffee house as a cultural assembly template

It should be said that coffee houses do not only belong to Iran. The thing that makes Iranian coffee houses different is its special cultural template. A European researcher describes Arabian coffee houses' atmosphere as completely nude, and continues: there is too many coffee houses in Arabian countries, but in these coffee houses except for fescues, coffee cups and reedy hookahs there is nothing else. (Lubone 1334, 469) Iranian traditional architectural atmosphere are humanitarian in feature and always consider human beings as its originality, it builds, develops and forms for humanity plus sometimes this architecture bows humbly for the physical aspect of Man. So a shelter will be made for him and sometimes this architecture will reach glory for responding to the spiritual and religious aspect of Man and uses its whole facilities. (Ardalan 1379:24) One spiritual aspect of this discussion is the need to gather and establish social relations. The goal of Iranian architecture is more than just to offer ultra-mundane subjects; it tries to make a space in which human relationships can be forged. So traditional architecture, before the appearance of technology and new materials, in any form and quality was considered to be an architecture with identity which in sequential years and centuries had its own special and technical methods and materials. This kind of native construction was timely, valuable, logical and sometimes so glorious that to this day the architecture is still considered to be noble, full of human spirit, and containing the same value and credit it once possessed. (Mozaiey 1380:71)

Types of Persian coffee houses

Persian coffee houses can be divided from different aspects. In terms of location, it can be divided into three groups. Coffee houses located in cities, coffee houses located out of the cities, and coffee houses formed in the court for the usage of Shah and courtiers. The most important one in terms of the cultural-literal aspect, among these, is coffee houses located in cities. Some of these coffee houses were mentioned in texts related to the Safavid era. Among these is the coffee house next to Darulshafa. This cultural center was among the most important coffee houses located in cities and its existence had extreme social importance for Isfahan. This place was the stamping ground of scholars and intellectuals in Safavid period and even Shah Abbas I went there frequently. This coffee house was located in an area close to Gheysarie Darulshafa, the hospital located in Gheysarie bazaar, which poets, literati, theosophists and their fellows gathered and discussed and debated with each other. (Rafiee Mehrabadi, 1352:99) One of the other coffee houses in the cities was Shams Tishi's coffee house. This coffee house was built in Chahar Bagh Street by the order of Shah Abbas II for Shams-E-Tishi, who was a middle-class person from Shiraz and was sophisticated in the science of music, which a Winehouse was adjacent to it. Shah Abbas II ordered to assign a special mark on the palms of those who drank wine there, so that the sheriff's attendants would not pose them any trouble, nowadays there is no sign of these coffee houses anymore. (ibid. 100) It seems that this order of Shah Abbas II was relevant to his own interest in poetry and music. The other coffee house in Isfahan, which was located around Naghshe-e Jahan Square, was Baba Farrash coffee house, which was popular among poets. This coffee house was also built by the order of Shah Abbas II; no signs remain of this coffee house. (ibid.) One of the literary favorites of those days was mentioning the name of male beloved; these people were mostly demonstrated as pupils working in the coffee houses. A coffee house around Naghshe-e Jahan Square established during Shah Abbas I reign is one of them. This place was known by the name Tufan coffee house. The reason of choosing this name was probably because a handsome boy named Tufan worked there as a pupil, which Shah Abbas II visited occasionally. Among Shah Abbas II favorite coffee houses was Arab coffee house, which was active until the late 11th century AD. (ibid. 101) After Shah Abbas I's era, coffee houses became highly popular in Iran, e.g. during the reign of Shah Suleiman Safavid, there are lots of coffee houses by Naghshe-e Jahan Square. Kaempfer whom along with a Swedish team visited Iran during Shah Suleiman Safavid era, talks about popularity of coffee houses: "the part of the square, which is open towards the entrance of the Bazaar, is in public use, here, retailers, second hand dealers, candy sellers, tailors and weapon makers are gathered together. Moreover, artists, clowns and wrestlers, poets and wandering people like these are gathered, that stay in these coffee houses and wine houses, in these coffee houses there are many ponds and streams made up of polished stones and formed with artistry. Coffee house owners have furnished around these ponds with carpets and fescues, unoccupied people leisurely sit on these carpets, so that they can watch the play and the art of poets, announcers and storytellers, while they're drinking and smoking hookah. Only when the weather gets too hot, do these people go to the opposite cool coffee houses." (ibid. 134) The important point understood from this travelogue is putting the space of coffee houses next to everyday life of people. In fact when the poet or artist of Safavid era goes to a coffee house for visiting other

artists, he doesn't enter a specific and liberal-like environment, but the relationship between him and the simple structure of society is preserved. From another perspective, coffee houses of Safavid era not only provide the poetical form of art, it seems that poetry of this era is closer to the ordinary people's understanding. Although coffee houses, regardless of this aspect of art, represent a more general and popular form of art as well; referring to clowns and actors within the text of Kaempfer's travelogue represent a completely general aspect of art which is common in Persian coffee houses of this era. One of the other remaining works of this period is García de Silva Figueroa's travelogue, a Spanish diplomat traveler, who had visited the court of Shah Abbas I. He talks about the internal view of a coffee house in this way: "A chamber with a waterfront amid some fountains. One part of the coffee house was filled with lamps, candles, lights and mirrors, which caused extreme brightness of that part. The other parts were completely empty and bare and without any decoration. In one side of the main chamber there was a stony platform as long as a little boy, on which Shah Abbas I along with poets and greats sat. Also in the other parts of the coffee house there were platforms, on which people sat and watched the dance of the Gerches and Georgian boys." (Figueira, 1363: 342). What is culturally understood from this travelogue is the mention of the boys' races and existence of the youth within the coffee houses of this era, in addition, it can also be concluded that one of Shah Abbas I's favorite conventions was going to coffee houses along with grandees and nobles.

Persian coffee house among literal contexts of Safavid era (case study of Hussein Kurd Shabestari)

Ever renewed struggles between Safavid Dynasty and its neighboring states (The Ottoman Empire and Uzbeks) cause the existence of literary war-centered texts, which generally refer to the military-cultural encounters of Iran with these dynasties (Hajian pour, 1378: 36). It might be said that the most important one of these literary texts is the story of Hussein Kurd Shabestari. This text is valuable not only for its literary values, but also because it refers to a very great part of the Persian social life of the era. These points can be deduced about these public areas from the presence of heroes especially Hussein Kurd Shabestari in coffee houses: First that coffee house is one of the vigil places of Persians in Safavid era, stories of Hussein Kurd Shabestari occurs at nights, so his attendance in coffee houses should also be at nights. Second, coffee houses included backyards, in which clients could stay if they wanted to. As Hussein Kurd was always sitting in the backyard to smoke hookah (Iraj Afshar, Mehran Afshari, 1386: 323). Third, the convention of adoring coffee house pupils was common among the middle-classes of the Safavid society, as it was between Yusof Ghahvechi and Hussein Kurd Shabestari. Fourth, most coffee houses contained a main chamber, in which dances of dancers, poetry recitals, and storytelling occurred, fans would circle them and others who did not want to spectate could stay in different rooms. (ibid 134) The other point to mention is that other than coffee houses, there were places which people went to just for smoking hookah. Revelers were fond of such places rather than artists, the interest of heroes and their followers to these places can be highlighted by the story of Hussein Kurd Shabestari in which this phenomena is represented (ibid.323).

Coffee House as a cultural forum of Safavid period

At first it is necessary to look at the term "forum" in terms of sociology. In terms of sociology forum is considered as a circle of gathering individuals, critics, literati and intellectuals that regardless of any regulations, rules and officials forming communities in the borderlines of official life within society. (Armaki, 1384:27) In forums free contact is approved, because the attendance of individual is without any obligation or imposing of ideas and is free from dos and don'ts of other groups. There is less availability of rules and conventions. The one thing which rules here is the rules of discussion and contact, people come to debate on public interests in a free space and out of the daily commitments. (Modarresi, 1375: 22) The most important feature of forums is that there is no certain behavioral pattern in any of them, but the patterns and social behaviors of a forum results from the work and actions of people involved in the forum. (Armaki, 1384: 22) One of the best types of forum which exists in different shapes all around the world is coffee houses. Coffee houses are sometimes formed in order for the gathering of ordinary people; in this case, every coffee house is the forum of a few workers gathered there who are answering their own needs (Modarresi, 1375: 25). But sometimes we see coffee houses, which are the place of the gathering of especial and elite individuals. In this case we will find out the formation of various literal and artistic circles in this gathering place. Therefore every coffee house has two social functions, one is the general function, which answers to the need of social communication and the other is the specific function, which covers the artistic and literal aspects of society. (ibid. 26) One of the important texts, which refers to the general role of coffee houses in Iran, is Kaempfer's Travelogue, within this text we find out that coffee house in the Safavid era, had met the most

important function of a forum, which was social communication: "Coffee house owners filled around these pond by carpet, unoccupied people leisurely would sit on these carpets, so that they can watch the play and the art of poets, announcers and storytellers, while they're drinking and smoking hookah and spending their time in the best way possible (Campfer 1363:195)." In this part, the writer unconsciously refers to one of the important parts of cultural functions of coffee house. Existence of poets in this social forum, not only meets the general need of environmental communication, but also meets the specific need of a forum as a place for the communication of elites. One of the other tourists, who mentioned the specific functions of Persian coffee houses, is Sir John Chardin:" People talk to each other in coffee house, because it is in these places, that the most recent news comes to discussion and people interested in political discussions criticize government freely and without any anxiety. The government also has no fear about people's discussions. Chess also is played here, in addition Mullahs and dervishes and poets read their prose or poetic works and stories in turn. Sayings of mullahs and dervishes are mostly over ethics and ethical lessons. The surprising point of it is that no one is bound to listen to them. No one is stopped from his reading. A mullah stands in the center or corner of the coffee house and gives advice in a loud voice or a dervish enters suddenly and tell people about the mortality of the world. Most of the time it occurs that three different lecturer stand on different corners of the coffee house and do the talk. Sometimes one of them is a preacher, while the other is a storyteller. In short, in these forums the ne plus of complete freedom in the world exists. A serious person cannot make trouble for a humorous one. Lectures usually end in this way: It is only enough to take your actions for the sake of God. Then lecturer wills something from the audience in a kind and calm manner, unless the owner of coffee house wouldn't permit them to enter. In this way, every one gives whatever they want."(Sharden, 1335:227)

Cultural alterations of Isfahan in the Safavid era

The main development of Persian coffee houses in Safavid era definitely occurred in Isfahan. This issue was due to the importance given to Isfahan in Safavid kingdom after Shah Tahmasp I. Before transforming the centralization of art to Isfahan, we see two important literal-artistic centers, in the ninth and tenth centuries AH. Herat during the reign of Timur and especially Sultan Husayn Mirza Bayqara was endowed by a special development in art, this issue was owed to the intelligence of the wise minister of this period, Mir 'Ali-Shir Nava'i. (Hajian Pour, 1378:37) the city of Tabriz in Il-khanate period and after that was always under the attention of rulers. This importance during the reign of Al-e Chupan and after that in The White Sheep Turkomans and the Black Sheep Turkomans periods reached its peak and caused Tabriz to become a center for gathering of artists (Homayi, 1375:42). In 952 AH during the reign of Soltan Suleiman the Magnificent, Azerbaijan was occupied by the Ottoman forces, as its result, artists of Tabriz were obliged to emigrate to Qazvin and Isfahan. Some of these important artists were: the calligrapher, Alireza Abbasi, Mir Yahya Mazhab, and Qasem Beik, the bookbinder (ibid.). After the death of Mir 'Ali-Shir Nava'i in 906 AH, and after that the death of Soltan Hosain Bayaghra in 911 AH Herat lost its position. Also the result of Muhamad Khan Uzbek Sheybani's invasion in 913 AH, and Obeyd Khan Uzbek's savage attack in 935 AH. That made great artists like Behzad painter move to Isfahan. And the Safavid system gave them a warm welcome to the city of Esfahan (ibid. 42).

Art and Literature in Persian coffee houses of Safavid era

One of the greatest artists of Safavid era, who accepted the coffee house as his favorite cultural forum, was Mir Emad Hassani Qazvini (961-1024AH). He is the most celebrated Persian calligrapher and Nasta'liq style reached its highest elegance in his works. His works not only in Persian court, but also in the court of Mughal Empire of India had its own numerous fans. During his life, his calligraphy was exchanged with gold, during death he was one of the richest men in Iran, in a way that even the minister didn't have the money to buy his house (Monshi Ghomi, 1352:121). His most important professor in the art of calligraphy was Mullah Muhamad Hassan Tabrizi. Mir Emad practiced from previous masters' (e.g. Baba Shah Isfahani, Sultan Ali Mashhadi and Mir Ali Heravi) works for a long time and became the best among thousands of calligraphers (Ahsant, 1386: 17-32). Attendance of him in the heart of coffee house, is a bold one. He and his students spent a lot of time in coffee houses, a circle of new poets and calligraphers would gather around him there. Even he found some of his talented students there. Among them is calligrapher and poet of Safavid era Mirza Toraba Isfahani, whose path of life changed after meeting with Mir Emad in a coffee house (Nasr Abadi, 1387:298) and after that went to Mir Emad's house and practiced calligraphy for twelve years there. Nasr Abadi mentions Mirza Toraba as the best calligrapher of Safavid era and in terms of art counts his poetry as a powerful and meaningful one (ibid. 298). Among other poets and calligraphers that went to coffee houses is Molla Shokuhi Hamedani. The story of his meeting with Shah Abbas II was the center of attention of poets of this period. Shah Abbas

II, who was a poet and accustomed with art (his pseudonym was Sani), One day went to Arab coffee house, which was one of the important forums of artists in Isfahan of Safavid era. On that day Mola Shokuhi Suddenly was reading poem in the coffee house, Shah Abbas II asks him about his occupation, and Shokuhi introduces himself as a poet, Shah wills him a poem and Shokuhi reads for him one his poems:

Shah criticizes his poem that comparing lover to petal is a little bit unpleasant (ibid. 343). Of course this saying of Shah is not that much professional and complicated according to modern literal criticism standards. But it demonstrates the deep roots of literal criticism convention in Safavid period. The other calligrapher, who was a fan of coffee houses, was Mir Hamam. However his calligraphy was not as well as Mir Emad and Mirza Toraba. He was a dervish-like person and his home town was Yazd and he spent most of his time in coffee house writing calligraphy and saying poetry (ibid. 210). In this period, sometimes painters gathered together in coffee houses, such as Agha Zaman Zarkesh. He lived during the reign of Shah Suliman Safavid and he reached the peak in the fields of painting and goldsmithery (Homayi, 1375: 331). In this era, most of the poets and artists would head to the court of Mughal Empire of India which had a sufficient market for developing and presenting different types of artistic works. Agha Zaman Zarkesh other than the art of painting and goldsmithery was a poet as well and like many other artists, he immigrated to India and passed away there (Nasr Abadi, 1378: 472). One of the most celebrated artists during Safavid and among the attendants of Isfahan coffee houses was Sadegh Beik Afshar (death on 1018AH). His father was one of the greatest people of Khoda bande Lu tribe (one of the central tribes of Ghzelbash) and he was living in Gilan. But Sadegh Beig, himself was born in Tabriz. Because of his relationship with a noble family, Ghezelbash from the early age of youth joined the Safavid court and spent his time doing artistic-literary activities, along with common studies of that time, he was extremely interested in poetry and calligraphy (Monshi Ghomi, 1352:152). One of his masters in art was Reza Abbasi, the most celebrated painter of Iran in Safavid era. He took great use of Alireza Abbasi and Emami in the field of calligraphy. His area of strength was mostly in mixture of the colors, he tried to set specific Persian painting rules as a base for teaching immature painters (ibid.). He was also the librarian of Shah Tahmasp I court. Alireza Abbasi was in charge of the library in Shah Abbas I era, but Sadegh Beik still received money as the librarian. (Homayi, 1375: 299) What is clear about him in the biography written by Nasr Abadi, is his extreme interest in attending coffee houses. Holding sessions of criticism was one of the important artistic functions of coffee houses in this period. Poets tested their poems in front of the other literature lovers in coffee houses. Since most of the poets in Safavid era was among ordinary people, sometimes even big struggles happened in the process of criticism of a poem between poets. But these struggles would reach to an end by the help of the elders that among them was Nasr Abadi, celebrated poet and biography writer of Safavid era (Nasr Abadi, 1378: 51). One of these sessions was held because of the poem, Mola Ghoruri's worth hearing in the admiration of Sadegh Beik. Sadegh Beik's strange reaction toward this is worth hearing: "It is heard from Mola Ghoruri, when he said an ode in praise of Sadegh Beik in coffee house, Sadegh Beik took the piece of poem from him and said I can't stand hearing anymore, stood up and returned after a second, hold five tomans in a turban, gave some of his painting papers to me and said: Merchants buy per page of my work by three tomans to bring it to India, don't sell it cheaply and excused a lot" (ibid. 56). One of the other coffee attendant artists of this era was Ghesmat-e Mashhadi. He was famous for his goldbeating. But poetry and being a poet prevented him from his job. He spent his last years of life in studying and composing poems in coffee houses (ibid. 445). Rashidaye Zargare Isfahani was one of the artists, who spent most of his time contemplating in poetry and literature in the coffee house. He was a professional in goldsmithery and Minakari, but he was not a mature poet (ibid.). Among coffee house attendant artists one can name Shams-e Tishi. The story of his attendance in coffee house is worth hearing. He was originally from Shiraz, Tish is his title, which was because of abundance of louse in his clothes. Perhaps louse was called tish in those times in Shiraz. But as a result of his skill in science and music, he travels to Isfahan and becomes in service of Shah Abbas II. Shah Abbas II orders to launch a coffee house in Chahar Bagh street for him, along with this coffee house was a wine house. Shah Abbas II ordered to assign a special mark on the hands of those who drank wine there, so that none of the sheriff attendants could question them. In the field of music, he was a sophisticated master and he was a professional in using bayat song (Homai'I 1375:266). About poets conventions in Persian coffee houses of Safavid era, Adam Olearius mentions interesting points: "Poets with special clothes, open white coats with wide sleeves, with a bag in which they put their books and papers, enter the coffee house. They don't wear socks and their pants get narrow close to their ankle and instead of turbans, they wear skullcaps (Olearius, 1363: 307). Most of poets fell in love with the boys who worked in coffee houses and for being next to them, they spent most of their time in coffee houses, among them we can name a poet called Ziae from Qazvin. << He fell in love with a Feqani name person and spends lots of time in coffee house. >> (Nasr

Abadi 1378: 23). Mirza Hassan was also a poet, who fell in love with a boy called Zaghi and as a result he stayed in a coffee house all day to be with Zaghi (ibid. 156). According to those days convention of love, he wrote a lot of poems for his beloved, which are recorded in the biography written by Nasr Abadi, as an example of his verse:

One of the other coffee attendant poets is Molla Mohammad Taghi and he was from Mashhad, his importance is not because of his poems, but because of his honor to be the disciple of Mir Fendereski, a renowned Iranian philosopher, poet and mystic of the Safavid era. He went to different coffee houses in Isfahan and he wrote most of his poems in the coffee house. (ibid. 231) Mozaffar Hussein Kashi, despite other poets, had chosen a specific coffee house to stay which was named Tufan. Coffee attendant poets in that era were not limited in workmen, workers and artists. From scientists we can name Qazi Asaad Kashi. He fell in love with a boy who worked in the coffee house, called Qarqash and he spent day and night there. Being in love with Qarqash, he left science and discussion and stuck to coffee house life. Some of the poets, who went to coffee houses in this era, in terms of quality and quantity of their poems, were not in a good situation. But some of them, at least during their life, were not that much unknown or little at work. Among them is a poet named Zolali, Nasr Abadi introduces him as a valid poet of those times. He had a book named Mahmud-e Vayaz. Nasr Abadi mentions his works as 7 poems. Including: Mahmud Vayaz, Azar va Samandar, Shoele divar, Meikhane, Zarre va Khorshid, Soleyman name, Hassan Galu Suz (ibid. 333) the interesting thing about some poets of this era is that they even worked in coffee houses themselves. Mir-Elahi Hamedani is a poet, who has worked in Arab coffee house along with Mola Shokuhi for a long time. Shah Abbas II would meet him and Greet him often (ibid. 363). During Safavid period, as a result of some cases like increase in social anxiety due to the conflicts with The Ottoman Empire and Uzbeks and also becoming familiar with Europeans, who desired to consume their tobacco, using this plant was completely common in persian communities, Some of the poets in their stance came against tobacco trauma like Saeeda. Qesmat Mashhadi was one of those coffee house attendant poets. He was highly short-tempered and impatient. Once he had a conflict with another poet because of a misunderstanding he had in the process of understanding a certain poem. Nasr Abadi that was there, came among them and finished the conflict, after some times as a result of the mental pressure of this event, Ghesmat Mashadi passed away (ibid. 445) Among coffee house attendant poets, the one who was originated from middle-class of society is Nafe' Qomi. He was a chef in general. The interesting point is that, despite of his lack in education; Nasr Abadi introduces him as a powerful poet and believes that his poems have deep meanings. Muhammad Qasem-e Lahiji was a poet, who worked in coffee house inevitably, but he hated that job. Finally he left his work and returned to Lahijan.

Conclusion

Becoming familiar with cultural features of Persian coffee house in Safavid era without having any information regarding its environmental functions is impossible, sociology and human geography experts believe that space is made of material and man-made world and also natural world and when it's converted to a set of meaningful systems it becomes a place. Having enough knowledge of these theoretical features, makes the study of gathering places in Iran through history more easy. The existence of man in this theory is the most important factor that makes place meaningful. Place, becomes meaningful when an emotional understanding derived from it and it made an intellectual image. Persian architecture is looking for a space to make relationship between humans more than being after offering ultramundane subjects. In terms of location, Persian coffee houses can be divided into three groups, coffee houses located in cities, coffee houses located out of the cities, and coffee houses formed in the court. Coffee houses are the center of attention within the texts of literary works in Safavid era, especially Hussein Kurd Shabestari. This case indicates the importance of this place on Persians social life in Safavid era. Coffee house is one of the important social forums in Safavid period. One of the important features of forums is that there is no certain behavioral pattern in any of them, but the result of works and actions of people involved in forum form its pattern and social behaviors occurs in it. In Safavid era Isfahan became the center of urban development and art in Iran. This was the result of fading the role of two important centers, Tabriz and Herat and due to the aggregation of many poets and artists in this city, who definitely needed a cultural forum for their gathering. One of the greatest artists of Safavid era, who was in communication with the coffee houses in Isfahan, was Mir Emad Hassani Qazvini, he attracted most of his disciples from this place. Sadeq Beik Afshar, special librarian of Shah Tahmasp I, was one of the most important artists in Safavid era and was also one of those coffee house attendants. Coffee house attendant poets of this era were from different classes of society, including famous artists or religious scholars and even sometimes people who worked in these coffee houses were poets. Therefore we can divide poets of Safavid period in terms of different factors. We can categorize poets of this era in terms of occupation, into three different groups, first ones who worked in coffee house (for a short or long time) like Mir Elahi and Mola Shokuhi, second ones that have jobs other than working in coffee houses (like Rashidaye Zargar Isfahani) and third, ones who were scientists or were in close relationship with them (like Mola Mohammad Taqi, who was a pupil of Mir Fendereski). In the other hand most of the coffee house attendant poets did not have a fixed forum, but some like Mozafar Hussein Kashi stuck to just one coffee house. Safavid kings like Shah Abbas II were interested in coffee houses. Different social and cultural functions of coffee house in Safavid period, made this place an active element in society, which tried to play an effective role in case of social communication of this period. Of course it is extremely optimistic evaluating all of these social communications positively. Male's love issue is one of the negative points in this social place. Coffee house by attracting the nobles and intellectuals of literature and art other than attracting ordinary people of society, by holding poetry reading sessions and even more important by literary criticism- which was unique by itself- could make itself as a culture-made element of this period.

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