



The World Zoroastrian Organisation

World Zoroastrian House, 5 Hanworth Road, Feltham. TW13 5AF
Charity No 1023334 Website: <https://www.w-z-o.org>
(Globally supporting Zoroastrianism, its people and traditions)

Fatemeh Rostami will be holding an exhibition on “Yazd in London” followed by her presentation.

Venue: World Zoroastrian House, 5 Hanworth Road, Feltham, London, TW13 5AF.

(WZH is just below the Feltham Railway bridge and between the children’s playground and pond).

Date: 14 September 2019

Time: 3pm to 6pm

Yazd in London

A One Day Exhibition on the City of Yazd from the Perspective of Urban Design Hearing the voices of the people of Yazd talking about their living places

Based on PhD research by Fatemeh Rostami at the University of East London (2015-2019)



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3:00 - 3:20	Welcome, refreshments, and viewing displayed materials
3:20 - 3:30	Introduction by Shahin Bekhradnia (A member of World Zoroastrian Organization's committee).
3:30 - 4:00	The performing of traditional Iranian instruments (Santur, Tar, and Daf) by Hossein Tavan and Hamid Tavan
4:00 - 4:15	A Zoroastrian religious ceremony performed by Jimmy Madon (The centre's priest).
4:15 - 4:30	A talk by Roland Karthaus (Director of Matter Architecture).
4:30 - 5:15	Presentation by Fatemeh Rostami (Researcher and Organiser of the Exhibition).
5:15 - 5:30	Questions and discussion.
5:30 - 6:00	Networking, refreshments, and viewing displayed materials.
6:30 pm	End of exhibition.

About the Exhibition:

The exhibition will present the results of research for a PhD in Urban Design completed by Fatemeh Rostami at the University of East London during the years January 2015 to July 2019.

The research attempted to explore how the notion of an urban place is defined through its inhabitants' memories and everyday activities using Yazd, a traditional Iranian desert city, as a specific case study. The research aimed to propose a new urban methodology, which will help traditional Iranian cities to enhance the quality of living places according to the local cultures and present needs.



Iranian urban designers argue that Iranian cities are losing their identities while facing certain urban problems due to the lack of an appropriate and accepted procedure. Regarding this matter, there is a deficiency in social investigations. This research attempted to fill this gap based on social constructivism and pragmatism frameworks. To do so, a combination of four inductive social methodologies - case study, grounded theory, ethnography, narrative – was applied in order to analyse the city at different levels. In addition, to help visualisation, types of shoes were used to symbolise the physical and social fabrics of the place.

The city of Yazd, a UNESCO heritage site, was chosen for this study because of its extreme contrast of urban development existing amongst the Historic, Old, and New parts of the city.

These areas are still occupied by the locals, which provide opportunities to examine older and modern urban places from their inhabitants' stances. Within each area, a case was selected to be studied in detail: the Fahadan neighbourhood of the Historic city, the Nersi/Nasr-Abad neighbourhood of the Old city, and the Safaieh district of the New city. Because the vast majority of residents of Yazd are Muslim, and the Zoroastrian population though very small nevertheless constitutes the second religious community, their communities were surveyed through mixed methods, accompanied by locally trained architects, professionals, and tourists. Then, in each selected case, through coding and triangulation of the gathered data, the place was defined by its social fabric's significances.

The case study findings show that traditional Iranian cities have, in general, been developed and translated from poetry to prose dwellings; from traditional to modern developments.

Through this urban transformation, what is specific to Yazd is the existence of a poetry-prose dwelling in-between; a combination of traditional and modern developments. This urban transformation can be symbolised through traditional, semi-traditional, and international shoes. Within this diverse urban form, the Historic fabric is dominated by tradition, the Old fabric by community, whereas the New fabric is of modernity-policy-economy, while there exist socio-cultural interrelationships between these areas, which indicate that the locals need the existence of all fabrics. In this respect, the diverse social fabric of Yazd can be symbolised through traditional, national, and international shoes. However, there are certain urban and cultural issues that must be addressed in future urban policies.



To hear the locals' views concerning the findings, a seminar was organized in Yazd in 2018. The result showed that the public, professionals, and authorities, generally, agreed with the findings. Nevertheless, the research findings are the outcome of various procedures applied to the research.

Based on the case study findings, the research then contributed an urban methodology entitled 'narrative-ethnographic-grounded approach' for future urban planning and design of traditional Iranian cities. This is important because a combination of approaches is needed to provide a holistic analysis of a traditional urban place.

In this exhibition, through presenting maps, photos, films, local materials, and gifts received from the people of Yazd, the results of the PhD research will be discussed. In order to experience Zoroastrian and Iranian culture, visitors will be served with Iranian cookies and sweets followed by a performance of traditional Iranian music using traditional Iranian instruments (Santur, Tar, and Daf). Likewise, a Zoroastrian religious ceremony will be performed by the World Zoroastrian House's priest (WZH).

The exhibition will be held in the World Zoroastrian House so that visitors become familiar with the Zoroastrian community, and the ancient predominant Iranian religion Zoroastrianism.

This information has been extracted from the abstract of the thesis.