

Dear Christopher,

At last I could find you in a different alphabet. Persian writing has its own patterns and if you look carefully you may find the spirit of this land's architecture in its letters. The poetry of Hafiz and the sufism of Mulana and the songs of the shepherds are all immortalized in its curves. Have I taken you to a place where the architecture is older than the writing? To a place where the tunes of its living spaces are manifested in the notes of its early architecture. In this old land tunes of true architecture and in the bodies of the people, pieces of true living, still exist.

Have I trapped you in struggle with a foreign language? I hope that you have stepped into a trap from which you may not escape too easily. Perhaps a Persian speaking person will give you a hand out of this predicament. I am not even sure that you will ever see this letter; maybe it is not as important as I think; but establishing an inner connection, which I already have with you, that truly matters. The physical, the pen and the paper are not that significant. However, I must confess that it was at the height a spiritual connection with you that I picked up the pen to write.

There was another time, about four years ago, when I wrote to you in broken English but I could never mail the letter. I feared that I had failed to capture the enthusiasm I felt for architecture and that the letter would put an end to my imaginary conversations with you. I also wished to have completed some of my work, so I could have more than just a letter to share with you. Early this morning I started reading "The Timeless..." and I had to write, so here I am writing in Persian.

Greetings to you, who speaks in such a simple manner from the heart of the delicate existence of architecture.

Maybe it is best that I first begin by telling you who I am, then we can talk about what I am not. My childhood and youth was spent in my home land, then I spent few years in United States, studying Architecture, but I could not feel a deep connection to it, nor to the way it was taught. A long architectural journey across the country, to Canada and to Mexico gave me a new joy about the field and brought me to Sci-Arc in Santa Monica.

In the summer of 1977 some crisis were escalating in Iran which was tempting me to witness a historical storm in my home land. So I returned to hear my mother's tongue and see my fathers' architecture and experience the turning of the pages of history with my body and my soul. My presence here availed many of wonders for my sight; it was as though the changes of many centuries were all forced into one explosive year.

So fifteen years ago I flew to a thousand year old tree with passion in my heart and a vague understanding of architecture, so that maybe I can be a "pajush" (when a branch of a different tree gets its roots from an old tree). I found my country full of strange events missing the one I wanted to join, fundamental research in Architecture. I was placed among the people and breathed with them in the midst of social, economical, cultural and political tides, while maintaining my own professional platform.

1978 till 80 I went to different areas to choose architecture and Urban development subjects.

1980 till present research trips and preparing findings for publication.

1981 till 86 was spent designing and building.

1983 till 86 teaching different subjects in architectural school.

Every night I steal the moon's silvery light to light up my heart, every day I follow my destiny's sun from the east to the west so that maybe a brighter road would open itself up in the attempt to record the values of the past before their complete annihilation. Let me tell you more about what we do: about five years ago I stopped teaching and closed my architectural office in order to attend to the research and its related work on a full time basis. We had entered a more orderly time and our interest in research had turned to love, so we organized our effort more carefully. At first seeing and observing was our focus then it was finding, which gradually opened the way to us. We began by exploring the meaning of the word "essence" in architectural space. We were not feeling our loneliness in the friendship with the pleasant spaces. Researching the architectural living spaces of these ancient people was showing me the way to understanding. But this required a mass madness, perhaps a madness wiser than wisdom.

I am satisfied with the search for the hidden essence of space. I am awaiting the day when I can show you the work, so that you can see how your "quality without a name" appears in thousand ways and how masterfully, they have implemented your words thousand years ago. You must come and see how far the architects of today are from these treasures. Philosophizing at this stage is perhaps a first step for crossing the swamp of today. They suck the black gold from underneath my feet, so why do they ruin the pure gold on my ground? Did they have to ruin the value of architectural culture in such away?

Few years ago, one early morning, in a small room in smoggy southern Tehran my team and I gathered as we normally did to discuss sections of your book, the discussion got deeper than usual my tears did not allow me to continue and the most of the people joined me; we never read your works in a group again.

After long years of research I still take you with me and test your concepts with the works of the past. You speak of what our architects of the past did and that is incredible! You look for man in his balanced space and that is why you have found your way in our heart. You have valued our simple living spaces, the unpretentious spaces where only the pure hearted like yourself can find the way to. The extensive crisis in the veins of the environment and the necessity to have an on going effort to look back at the overall movement of the last century, brought me back to my old home land. You can not imagine how much I would have liked to sit and talk with you.

Dear Alexy, our work in this part of the world is more like plowing hard and rocky ground and your work in that part of the world is like baking the bread. Even though I know that you also are not safe from the burning ovens of business oriented ways and the money motivated pressures. In the face of all delays and slowness here we try to turn the earth and plant it, till the day of harvesting would arrive and we, as well, will be able to take our flour to the baker. Perhaps people have starved by then, but do we have a way out ?

I will tell you some about our research projects: There are about twenty research subjects spread

from north to south of Iran. To do so, has been most difficult but also most needed in order to be able to stare at light, water, wood, house, street, city, human nature and his spatial arrangements. From a primitive, unique, thousand years old, rocky village to the poetic reflections of light on the statuesque parts of architecture, from the mud brick masterpieces to the pigeons nests had to be looked at carefully and recorded so that the higher thoughts behind them could be made visible to the best of our abilities. If this has resulted in us being in pieces it has been with the hope that one day we would be able to find the essence of spatial architecture made by the hands of the eastern man and bring it to light.

In these past few years which have passed very quickly, we have collected about fifty thousand slides and we are on the way to complete twenty five manuscripts of plans, designs and analysis. For example in a village alone we have recorded about five hundred wooden windows, which will be in one volume; twenty seven houses, the villages historical and unique bazaar in the second volume; the wooden doors and other works will appear in the third volume. There are also two desert gardens in which different aspects of water, has kept us involved for years; we like to understand many things in these gardens from the smallest detail to the different state of spirit reflected in them. Natural light in a bath house and a mosque are another subject; so that we can study the quality of the natural light reflection as carefully as their namelessness. You just have to be in that space to see "the quality without a name" and to see how the passage of light through a stone could fly the thoughts of a stone architect. Another subject is, architecture of deduction against addition which displays incredible spaces and brings to mind what Michael Angelo said about his statues. Every moment we are buried in tons of valuable work and don't know which we should complete first. Most of our energy had been spent on recording rather than publishing, which has created it's own set of problems.

Your center has done some fundamental work with a few remarkable books as a result. We have established a center in this part of the world which can not go on without plenty of energy and optimism . The need for such centers in the world should bring them to a common understanding which could unite them. We would like to know centers like ourselves and find out about each other work. Your presence in this world movement is perhaps similar and complementary to our organic growth in our land. I can not perceive the details but I would like a together and deeper connection, perhaps one day you would visit us here and we will go on architectural trips and use each others' facilities.

We are like a mountain goat that is looking down from a high cliff and can only see death so we move further up, so that if we fall at least we had seen life from higher up; how beautiful it is creating memories from high above death and experiencing life in the midst of death. You see how you belong to this world and I live in a vague shadow land.

This letter is smoking with the mixture of subjects, I hope that next time I will talk to you from a more clear place.

Mohamad Reza Javadi

M R Javadi

نقطه بتی در نفا با سواد بستی کیفیت بر این نواح می چو دگرگون نذر از نشت بگری کنز و انزوم سهار نش

که به پرواز در را آورد
سپار کاش در صف مقابل افزدیس سهار کاشن به سهار افزدیس در سخن نفا صا بود ایمن فر دیو یا نزل کرده

در عرصت ما در این ای دنیا کار پر بندش دین سده ام در این ای دنیا کار پر بندش دین سده ام در این ای دنیا کار پر بندش دین سده ام

دگر چه عجز نرود ما صرف نیت زده است و نه آفت را اما صیغ خود شکا تر از ادم آورده است
روزگی عجز نرود ما صرف نیت زده است و نه آفت را اما صیغ خود شکا تر از ادم آورده است

اما ما در بته تادم کنی مرکز را با این بخشیم
و از دروغ مطالعه کنن منغ به دزدخانه اسیریم

مرکز کو چیک با هم محدودیت ما تکلیف
اما ضرورت بوجه آمدن این نوع مرکز خود چو در سواد صیغ نفع عجز در شکل نرود است

ما در یک درایع متعاضد خفا را در جیب کیناسیم و از کار بگری با خبر شویم
چون حضور ما هر جا می بینند نذر سفید نده کاشن در دار و در گنجی بسیار

هنوزم در این وقتا چه چیز نترسیم
دانشی از زمین دلیلی داشته و بلیس و طرفی سهار نام بود

گذرد صحر در این ایطوار در کربلایت با یزیدیم
سپه بیا که سواران اگر بزمین فرود آفتند نذر از بلا سردر چه با کرد چه زیباتر است

نیتا و زیبا کاشن در دستا سهار رجبی نترس! مینوی تو دهن اینغ دنیا در سن ده نام اهاج نترس
نذر حرکت اموزده نترس برکت
اینغ با نرود که نرود نترس! (سهار دران) بناید و در ان فرود سجا با در در سهار با نرود نترس نرود نترس نرود نترس