

Rab-e Rahishi: Historical review, Architectural style, structure and function

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Abstract:

Rab-e Rahishi (Rashidi District) was a university campus established by the efforts of Rashid al-Din Fazlullah Hamedanii, sophisticated minister of the Ilkhanid dynasty in the fourteenth century AD in the city of Tabriz. This academic center, which was an exemplary of a comprehensive and international university, was looted and destroyed after the death of Rashid al-Din and only its ruins remained in the Sorkhab neighborhood of Tabriz. Therefore, in order to be aware of the approach and performance of this university campus, alongside studying archeological excavations, the researcher has to refer to the detailed endowment letter that he left in this regard. The endowment letter, which is the oldest and most authoritative document about Rashidi district, is a handwritten by Rashid al-Din and fortunately survived over the events and is kept in the National Library of Tabriz. By studying this endowment letter, one can hypothetically reconstruct and identify the plan, the built areas and dimensions, university campus and its buildings including: school, library, monastery, canteen, hospital, mosque, bazaar, administrative organization and components of each of them such as entrance, finial, the dome, cells, classrooms, entrances and corridors. This research aims to introduce the architectural style, structure, sections and functions of Rab-e Rashidi using descriptive-analytical method. First, the endowment letter and results of archeologists' excavations, historical sources and travelogues are scrutinized, then the plan and impact of this university campus in the development of knowledge and higher education centers in Iran are explained. Findings showed that Rab-e Rashidi was a part of a larger complex called Rashidi city, which consisted of three parts: the town, barrier, district and each of them has a specific function. The article addresses and explains the common goal of these parts.

Key words: Rab- Rashidi, Rashid al-Din Fazlullah Hamedani, Tabriz, Iran`s Higher Education, Rashidi Endowment Letter.