

Studies

ANCIENT HISTORY

PHENOMENOLOGY OF CHOGHA ZANBI`L ZIGGURAT

Abstract: Phenomenology in archeology is an interpretive method that addresses the existential philosophy of memorial sites as well as rational and better understanding, with regard to their manifestation. In this paper, phenomenology, as a methodology, examines the most prominent site of the historical period of the Middle Elam, which has a world-class value. Chogha Zanbi`l gave the people of Elam a fundamental sense of rootedness. The placement of the Ziggurat at the central point, the core and the heart of Dur Untash, also manifests the significance of religion in the Elamite era. The Ziggurat affected the personal and collective circumstances of the people of Elam and gave objectivity to their religious beliefs. This objectivity met the most basic needs of the Middle Elam's people, and this meaningful experience was the basis for his "being". This essay studies Chogha Zanbi`l Ziggurat using qualitative and phenomenological interpretation methodology, and concludes that the purpose of Untash Napirasha in making this great work was the permanent transfer of the religious center from Mesopotamia to Elam, the subjugation of the people and the sustainable propaganda for religious-political ideologies.

Keywords: *Phenomenology, Archaeology, Chogha Zanbi`l Ziggurat, Middle Elam.*

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INTRODUCTION

Phenomenology in archaeology is an interpretative method developed by British post-processualist archaeologists. Phenomenological anthropology derives its theoretical and inspirational views from the existentialist philosophy of Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger. This approach is based on the assumption that there are global similarities in the human spatial perception since the human bodies have the same configuration and we can assume that all human beings generally have the same spatial perception. So, earlier human beings have created their spaces to reflect their behavioral aspects, as we do. If we accept this presumption, the phenomenological approach can give us insights into the experiences of prehistoric and historic people, and the intuitive perceptions and the life worlds that they have presented. Phenomenological archaeologists understood themselves in that space and understood what people did at that particular time, through the landscapes and architecture¹. Phenomenology is the way in which every object, event, experience and position that human beings can see, hear, touch, recognize, or understand, or can live in, may be a subject for a phenomenological inquiry². Phenomenology is literally the study of phenomena of any kind and their description, with regard to their manifestation, before any valuation, interpretation or value judgment³. Phenomenology is a method for describing the immediate and direct location of things and the environment; a way in which one can hope for a perception without any presupposition and prejudice; and a method for escaping scientific, religious, metaphysical and psychological presumptions

¹ VANDYKEK 2013, 5909.

² PUR JAFAR *et alii* 2011,14 .

³ EMAMI SIGARUDI *et alii* 2012, 57.

snare⁴. Every structure has an expression in its own deep meaning, which affects the semiotics, and these signs must be perceived and interpreted. Phenomenology is in principle a philosophical interpretation, rather than an architectural. In the history of Iranian archeology, the phenomenological approach has not been very relevant. The purpose of this article is to introduce and present a new interpretive method to Iranian archeology with the phenomenology of Chogha Zanbil Ziggurat as one of the sites registered in the World Heritage List of Iran's Historical Period⁵.

RESEARCH METHOD

This article has been prepared in a qualitative way. In fact, it is an interpretive research based on a phenomenological interpretation method conducted as a descriptive-analytic study, with the aim of understanding the reasons for the ancient site of Chogha Zanbil existence. Data collection was performed through historical documents and ancient evidences.

BACKGROUND

The phenomenology has been widely noticed in various disciplines, especially in architecture, but it is not common as a methodology in archeology. Of course, the great men as Mulla Salahi in a paper entitled "Phenomenology of the universality of the good name and its aesthetic aspects" published in the Nygare journal⁶; emphasized the importance of this approach in archeological studies. Qoddusi Far et al. have studied the role of everlasting wisdom and nature in the architecture of the temples of the world⁷. Nothing Particular has been done about Phenomenology of the Chogha Zanbil. The only written text in this regard is that of Lantus, who examined the test of environmental psychology method through a case study on the mid-Elamite city of, *Dur Untash*⁸. Several papers and books have also devoted to the architecture of the Chogha Zanbil Ziggurat memorial, in terms of describing and explaining the structure and application of the decoration, including the works of *Ghirshman*, 1966, 1968; *Charpinet and Joannes*, 1992; *Pottes*, 1999; *Ghirshman*, 1996; *Hinats*, 1992, which have been often referred and used in this research.

UNTASH-NAPIRISHA

Elam is the first Iranian empire that ruled from around 2700 BC to 550 BC in the area, where is now provinces of Khuzestan and Fars. Elam has been the gateway to import materials and resources to the urban centers of the Mesopotamia. About 1850 BC, it changed into great kingdom and reached a political maturity. Less than five generations of the Elamite rulers had Kassite wives or mothers or both of them. One of the most important kings of the *Ighalki* dynasty (1400-1200 BC) was *Untash-Napirisha*, the great king of *Anshan* and *Susa*, the greatest builder of the Elamite history and the maker of the *Chogha Zanbil Ziggurat*, the city of Untash and constructor of a number of religious

buildings⁹. He ruled for about 40 years (1340-1300 BC). He established relationships through the marriage with the *Egyptian Pharaoh of Akhenaten or Amenhotep IV*, the *Hittite King SUPPILULIUMA I*, as well as with the daughter of the *Babylon King of Burna-Buriash II*¹⁰.

CHOGHA ZANBI L ZIGGURAT

In the local dialect, "Chogha" means abnormal hills, and "Zanbil" means the basket, and since this site was in the form of a reverse basket before drilling, they called it Chogha Zanbil; it was also referred as the trash hill¹¹. Some scholars like F. Vallat, believe that the word Chogha Zanbil is equal to the Syrian-KUK, which is mentioned in the inscriptions, and later it was called Kizzum in Susa. Generally it means the altar¹². The Ziggurat (Ziqorat) is an English word for the word "Ziguratou", which has an Akkadian root and means climb to the sky. The word Ziggurat was used to refer to a temple in Babylonia and Ashur civilizations. The temples were made in a staircase pyramid form¹³. In the dictionaries, the word Ziggurat has been meant "height"¹⁴. The people of Elam and Mesopotamia often put their gods in sacred places called Ziggurat, which were multi-story and stair-shaped monuments, and prayed them during special ceremonies. Architecture in "Sumer" served temples and vice versa, the Egyptian architecture was used to serve as the tombs of the Egyptian kings¹⁵. The mountain in the mythological thoughts is the position of the gods. Indeed, the refuge of the gods to the mountains and their reproduction on the mountains and their inhabitation on the mountain from the ancient times represent the significance and sanctity of the mountain; but in the Sumer and Babylon territory in the south of the Mesopotamia, the worship houses were built as mountains, due to lack of significant mountains; so the high multi-story Ziggurats, pyramids and temples were everywhere a symbol of mountain in general, and the symbol of the holy mountains of the Paleolithic mankind in particular¹⁶. The square, rectangular and cornered geometric shapes are reminiscent of human shelter¹⁷. The Chogha Zanbil Ziggurat has unique features in terms of vision, location and centrality. *Untash-Napirisha* says about the construction of Chogha Zanbil: "I built a Ziggurat that had not been made by any of the previous kings, and I gave it to the gods of the Humban and Inshushinak, the guardians of the religious district"¹⁸. Untash-Napirisha got great credit with organizing the religious institutions and the establishment of the holy city of Chogha Zanbil, at 7.5 km south of the his birthplace Deh Nou, and offered them to the gods of the lower and upper territories. The city had a nesting fence with various passages and a Ziggurat inside the central fence, made up of millions of bricks of clay and probably 53 meters high. The strong alliance between the Kassites and the Elamites was a good reason for Elamites to claim Babylonian throne;

⁴ SHIRAZI 2010, 125.

⁵ WHC.UNESCO, 2015.

⁶ MULLA SALEHI 2016, 76-64.

⁷ QODDUSI FAR et alii. 2012.

⁸ LANTOS 2013.

⁹ GHIRSHMAN 1966, 27; LANTOS 2013, 140.

¹⁰ JAVIER ALVARZ 2013, 2349; VALLAT 2013, 2351.

¹¹ GHIRSHMAN 1966, 10; DE MECQUENEM 1953, 1; LANTOS 2013, 140.

¹² LANTOS 2013: 140.

¹³ REED 2010, 56.

¹⁴ ANVARI2002; quoted from MOUSAVI HAJI/KAIKHAEI 2007, 171.

¹⁵ ZAREI 2000, 13.

¹⁶ FAZELI/KAIKHAEI 2006, 107.

¹⁷ ZEINALI ONARI 2015, 13.

¹⁸ SARRAF 2011, 27.



Fig. 1. Reconstructed Image of Chogha Zanbil Ziggurat¹⁹

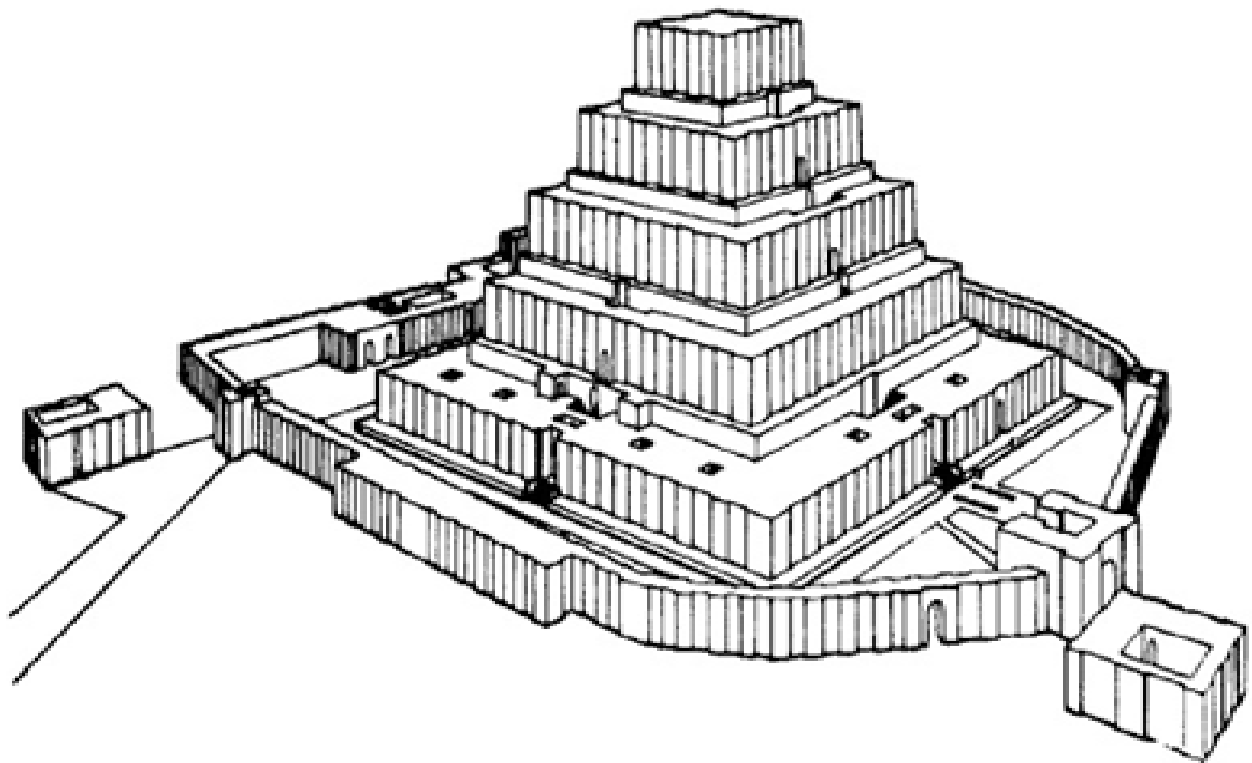


Fig. 2. Reconstructed plan of the Chogha Zanbil Ziggurat²⁰

¹⁹ SHISHEGAR 2010, 87.

²⁰ POTTES 1999, 256.

the collapse of the Kassites in 1155 BC led to the removal and bringing of the trophy, including the Statue of Morduch, Stele and the Hammurabi Rules and famous stele of victory²¹. This Ziggurat has been registered in the UNESCO's World Heritage Sites List in 1979 by assigning World Heritage Convention standards 3 and 4 as a feature of outstanding global and unique character, which represents a unique cultural tradition and a unique example of memorial architecture²².

RELIGION, NATURE AND ARCHITECTURE

Heidegger expresses the initial and basic distinction between the concepts of "the earth" and "the sky", and states: "Earth is a bear of blessings, cultivated with its fruits, preserving water and rock, plant, and animal ..., the sky is the path of the sun, the moon, the place where the stars shine, position of the year's seasons, the rising and the setting of the day, and the darkness of the night, are the mildness and harshness of the air"²³ In the archetype of legends, myths, and the ancient literature of nations, there are themes that hold the concept of between the earth and the sky. Between earth and sky is a concept that man faces in a variety of ways and in different places: on high pillars, elevating palaces and temples, sanctity of the mountain, respect for rainbow, praise of fire smoke²⁴. Nature has been an important element in religions with a distinct position in ideologies. Each religion has an independent ideology associated with metaphysics, which specifies the identity of that religion and defines its dominant worldview in the attitude to different categories. There are also quite different views in various religions, lands and times, which led to differences in how their architecture treated the natural environment²⁵. In the prehistoric era, art had a close bond with magic, but with the advent of the Sumerians and the onset of history, the ancient magic gave way to the religion of the gods and maliciousness as representatives of the forces of nature; thus, religion overcame the life and form of society, and determined the way of its expression and its display in architecture and art²⁶. From Eliade's point of view, when an uplifting tree that binds the earth to the sky was cut off or the mountain to the sky was flattened, then the paradise phase ended, and man entered his current condition. The upper regions, which are not accessible to man took the place of stars, divinely dignity and absolute reality and endurance²⁷. Some natural objects such as sacred rocks and mountains as well as man-made features found symbolic functions. In Shinto's religion, the natural objects such as rocks were commonly referred by living things characters, such as the "wife rocks" in the Futami-ga-ura near Ise, or the standing stones in Carnac in Brittany and Stonehenge in England, which are full of symbolic meanings. Geometric shapes such as circles, triangles and squares have had a symbolic function in all cultures²⁸. There are several approaches concerning the

architecture of the temples and its relationship with nature, including the naturalistic approach with a sacred look on elements of nature and placing the temple in relation to the elements of nature²⁹. In the Elamite religion, we are witness of the worship of the elements of nature as god and the goddess, including the common god of Sumer, Babylon and Elamite, god Ninurta, which means in Sumerian language "god of the earth", he is the son of Enlil, the god of air and the supreme god of the gods. Another god is the god of Hum ban. He is famous as the god of heaven in the mythology of Elam³⁰. Regarding the forces in the nature and considering them as gods, P. Dumir Shiki analyzes the role of the serpent in Elamite's religion as "the god of the snake and the jumbled water, that the great god; the national god of Inshoshinak"³¹. The same naturalistic approach is found in the Chogha Zanbil as a mountain. The horned crown was also one of the most important signs of the divinity of the gods of Elam³². Regarding the religious community, the kings of Elam made great efforts in building temples and Ziggurats and donated them to the gods³³.

OUTLOOK

The nature of phenomena can be achieved not through abstraction but through intuition³⁴. In Mesopotamia, the temples were a sign of the great human efforts. Temple building was a volunteering and cooperative job. Temple was considered as the god residence. Each citizen was dependent on one of the temples of the city. The Ziggurats, as popular and religious bases, enjoyed a special feature and sense of power in the ancient community; and in their structure, generally, the privileged positions were distinguished, because they should be seen from a distance and in this way the gods' spiritual presence, power and glory were exacerbated among pilgrims, and therefore they found special shape and form in every part of the world, given the geographical location and type of material³⁵. To build every house, palace, and temple, it is necessary to lay bricks from the ground and go to heaven. The Mesopotamian Ziggurats, the Egyptian pyramids, the Maya temples, and the Pagodas have risen in the main direction that is the same as the sky. These buildings were considered as links between the earth and the sky. In the construction of holy buildings, there is the thought of being built in the center of the earth, and there is a concept of passing from the earth to the sky. Blending the heaven and the earth is the beginning of more distinctions between "things". Thus, the mountain belongs to the earth, but it transcends the sky³⁶. According to Mircea Eliade, heaven and height are of sanctity, because man has no access and they belong to beings superior to humans³⁷. The pilgrim approaches the center of the world through ascending the temple or Ziggurat, and when he/she reaches the highest floor, separates from all other classes and separates from the

²¹ JAVIER AIVARZ 2013, 2349.

²² WHC, UNESCO: 2015; WAFADARI 2008, 265.

²³ Cited in SCHULTZ 2009, 13.

²⁴ DEGHAN *et alii* 2011, 90.

²⁵ QODDUSI FAR *et alii* 2012, 37-39.

²⁶ GOSHAYESH 2007, 14.

²⁷ ELIADE 2004, 58.

²⁸ GUNG 1970.

²⁹ QODDUSI FAR *et alii* 2012, 41.

³⁰ SARRAF 2011, 20-21.

³¹ CITED IN SARRAF 2011, 8.

³² SARRAF 2011, 7; HINENTS 1992, 65.

³³ SARRAF 2011, 6-11.

³⁴ EMAMI SIGARUDI *et alii* 2012, 58.

³⁵ RAHBAR GANJA 1997, 50.

³⁶ NORBERG SCULZ 2010, 4.

³⁷ ELIADE 2006, 38.

unobtrusive space and enters into a homogeneous and pure land³⁸. At the entrance of any place, what is first shown to the observer is the body and the image of that place, which, in general, depicts the general characteristics of the place for the viewer. Generally, each location has characteristics that reflect the personality of the users in that location. At the entrance to a city, a rebellious figure represents the magnificence and courage of the citizens, and a simple, unpretentious and reclined body on the surrounding environment, reflects the, simplicity and spartanism of the people of that city. In the psychology of the environment founded by Lynch, urban aesthetics, symbiotic and topology have been emphasized. The images produced by the environment, appearance and the unique and immediately distinctive physical elements of the Chogha Zanbil, the following description can be presented: asphalted and oblique roads, canals and temples³⁹. The number of gates, walls, Ziggurat floors, large enclosures and entrance gates sculptures represent the constructive concepts of boldness and rebellion of the building. McMahon states about appearance and the figure; "Specifically, in the ancient Mesopotamia, too large public buildings refer to control of both space and people. Often adjusting the symmetric plans and reflection of controlling on the behavior of the employees is predictable. However, the remaining interpretations are based on simple plans"⁴⁰. Holy places not only represent acceptance, but also provide clear and refined ideas that connect that place to the cosmic arena. This state of affairs is perfect in the church, mosques, temples and Ziggurats. The message of the monuments architectures about power and function are read most readily. They are not just written messages, but they are the views based on the integration of a rare multi-sensory perception or movement that discover users' experiences. In the first and second millennium BC and the historical periods of Iran and Mesopotamia, there were large and important buildings such as the *NEBUCHADNEZZAR* Palace in Babylon and the Chogha Zanbil Ziggurat. In addition, ideological, political, and social information could be transmitted through symmetry or distinct architectural features, such as wall high relief or inlet face. In Mesopotamia and the Elam temples were built on mountains using clay materials. They would be so great that could be seen from afar and emphasize their power in order for a society to live in its support easily⁴¹. The afar read from the architectural temple and analysis of the "appearance and external face"⁴² and human exposure to that building may be perceived for a moment in its entirety and perception if being within it⁴³. In the middle of the natural and vast Khuzestan plain, with the presence of Dez River derivatives⁴⁴. It was the Chogha Zanbil Ziggurat, which gave the Elam people a sense of radicalism. The placement of Ziggurats at the central point, the core and heart of the Dur Untash is a sign of the fundamental importance of the religion during the Elamite period. The transfer of strategic concepts through the symbolic configuration of the Ziggurat

³⁸ ELIADE 2006, 65.

³⁹ LANTOS 2013, 142.

⁴⁰ MCMAHON 2013, 163.

⁴¹ GROUP 1993.

⁴² NORBERG SCULZ 2010, 4.

⁴³ ZEINALI ONARI 2015, 7.

⁴⁴ MOFIDI-NASRABADI 2010, 260.

to the people has taken place. The Ziggurat was indeed an event that bonded the people and the earth and the sky, and in the vast plain of Khuzestan, it revealed the structure of the existence for the people of Elam.

SPACE

Space has the concept of "up and down, before and after" and is used with prepositions like in, out, and above; and the location attribute is accompanied by a "word" (possibly adjective), which can reveal the "nature of place" and a way of "identity and meaning perception" in architecture and habitation⁴⁵. Part of our peripheral space has a lot to do with today's livelihood and is close to our minds and our present life, but there is also a part of life like the ancient environment space and ancient artifacts that have come to us from the past. These spaces exist in modern culture under the title of cultural heritage in the context of the nations and tribes life. Since space is created through the construction of place, the existence of dual space creates dual location. Dual location is the result of formation of the boundary between the two worlds of life belonging to two places, and dual location is the result of presence outside and inside the ancient place⁴⁶. For example, Chogha Zanbil Ziggurat was in a different space in 3250 years ago, which is different from today's space. So, when daily life and its world of life are different from the ancient place and its world of life, the understanding of this world is not possible through the present experience, otherwise any perception would be mythical and vague. The archaeological theory presented by Johansson appears to be the past discovery (often in a personal way), the use of concepts, ideas borrowed from other principles, or philosophical views more or less Related to archeology or even based on personal- sensational experiences⁴⁷. Such as using the intuitive and animism force, with the use of the apparent and structural aspects of the memorial heritage. Phenomenological archeology is based on the assumption that there are global similarities in the humans' perception of space⁴⁸. Space is not, of certain, a new term in theoretical foundations of architecture, and it can have a lot of meanings. In the common literature, we can distinguish between two applications: space such as 3D geometry and space as perception domain. According to Mircea Eliade, water makes the place meaningful and holy. Holy places act as "centers". They act as objects of orientation and harmonization of mankind and form the spatial structure. Thus, concerning the human understanding of the nature, the roots of the space concept are considered as a system of places⁴⁹. Geographic characteristics and, more importantly, the will of Untash Napirsha have made the Khuzestan plain and the Chogha Zanbil Ziggurat a world center for Elamites. The city of Dur Untash was composed of different parts; the Ziggurat is in the middle of the city like a hill, which plays the role of a separator and connector among the people of the middle Elam. Despite the apparent affectability of the Ziggurat from the neighboring Ziggurats, the *Chogha Zanbil* Ziggurat has its own authenticity and

⁴⁵ MAHMUDI NEJAD *et alii* 2008, 289.

⁴⁶ ZEINALI ONARI 2015, 6-7.

⁴⁷ COUDART 2006, 132-138.

⁴⁸ VANDYKE 2013, 5909.

⁴⁹ NORBERG SCULZ 2010, 48.

unique attributes, which proves the power of the people and the spirit of its location. However, during the history of the new and middle Elam, Ziggurat has not remained as a commissure for Elamites, and the kings after Untash Napirsha did not attempt to develop and preserve Chogha Zanbil Ziggurat and Dur Untash city.

PLACE

Place is a space that is meaningful for a person or group of people. This definition is expressed as “place = space + meaning”. Meaning is a special psychological task; therefore, meaning brings the basis of existence. The most fundamental need of human is the meaningful experience of his being⁵⁰.

Rolf argues that without a comprehensive understanding of the place, which encompasses human specification, it is difficult to explain the cause of being particular for some places. So, before we provide a solution, we need to learn how to describe. Place is a part of a space that has possessed its own identity through the factors inside it; so, any object that is located in one place needs space⁵¹. The location of the temples in many religions, were determined based on the geographical characteristics; the selected sacred space and the natural features as well as in relation to some natural elements, such as water, mountain and sun⁵². Berg Schultz's divided light location attributes into three categories: natural attributes, spiritual and immaterial attributes, human attributes, qualities of objects and materials. Human attributes refer to social and behavioral relationships and interactions, and spiritual attributes refer to human values and beliefs, not as abstractions of natural or human phenomena. Since architecture has the language of meaningful shapes, paying attention to the attributes of any building or architecture can make us familiar with the soul and the meaning intermixed with the things possess natural and divinely nature⁵³. The daily experience indicates that different actions require different environments to appear in a persuasive way. Accordingly, towns and houses have been formed from a mass of specific places. Places with different characteristics may have different functions, such as a “protective” club, a “functional” workspace, etc.⁵⁴ given this description, a temple or Ziggurat should be a safe, relaxing, protecting, and magnificent place, and a position for realizing the wishes and connecting to the existence source.

There are several theories about the causes of the creation of the Ziggurats:

1. The role of Ziggurats as a kind of silo that keeps and dry plants on top of these high-rise buildings for the sake of protecting them from spring destructive floods.
2. The Ziggurat is a type of artificial mountain, built as a human habitat, because the Sumerians originally lived on mountains and highlands.
3. The Ziggurat is considered as a ladder to the heaven, which made worshippers closer and closer to God⁵⁵.

⁵⁰ NORBERG SCULZ 2010, 234.

⁵¹ PUR JAFAR *et alii* 2011, 14.

⁵² QODDUSI FAR *et alii* 2012, 47.

⁵³ MAHMUDI NEJAD *et alii* 2008, 293.

⁵⁴ NORBERG SCULZ 2010, 25.

⁵⁵ REED 2010, 56, BERTMAN 2003, 194-198.

Description of this monument in terms of the calendar and the operation of the archaeological astrology is a new category established by Ghiath Abadi. According to him, the three monuments around Chogha Zanbil form on the whole one integrated complex. It is actually a solar observatory or a sunny calendar to measure the sun's rotation, and consequently to keep the count of the years and extracting the calendar and identifying the first and middle days of each season or the equinoxes of spring and autumn as well as the summer and winter revolutions⁵⁶.

However, Schultz has stated that culture is based on objectivity. Man is rooted in reality by culture⁵⁷. The objectivity posed in Ziggurat enriched the beliefs of Elam people. Therefore, its importance is not restricted only to the geography and prospect, but its architectural structure, including the Ziggurat floors and enclosed walls, has shaped the point of significant contrast for the Elamites' perception world. The passages and narrow stairs of the Ziggurat were real “inner worlds” that were linked to external relations in the uppermost floor. To reach the upper story, one must pass from other floors. The number of gates signifies the importance of different Ziggurat directions, and this has given rise to openness to the general public. The Ziggurat is like a figure in a natural plain, whose four directions are similar without any prominent and distinctive positions. The enclosure of the Ziggurat has been affected by the nesting walls, which have been built with bricks as an Elamite tradition. The walls are clear answer to the challenge of Khuzestan plain and make living in a vast and open land possible. The Ziggurat and ultimate platform is a protected world in which life was formed through sacrifice. The use of colored glasses, both green and blue, and ... is a residential pattern that is perfectly the answer to the challenge of the life in desert; therefore, the architecture of the Chogha Zanbil Ziggurat, as the Ur Ziggurat architecture in Mesopotamia, has a single style, with a difference: Foreign and external elements have met the local spirit and created a complex set of meanings. From the point of view of the character, they chose a place to build a Chogha Zanbil Ziggurat, which has different meaningful things, such as the derived water from the Dez River and a vast perspective, which could be an “invitation” by making the Ziggurat. The conditions provided by Untash Napirsha in Dur-Untash were the most important means for objectifying the religion and worshiping the king's protecting gods. The strong quality of the place in the Khuzestan plain affected Elamite people. The horizontal extension of the land, the branch of the Dez River, the endless sky, and the burning Elam Sun, have all created a powerful and unique environment. In the vast plain of Khuzestan, the Ziggurat, like the oasis invited the people of Elam to “gathering”, “living” and “inviting others” and brought forth a dynamic life.

CENTRALITY

Heidegger considers the fence and confinement as an “eternal” and “old construction model” forms⁵⁸. Untash

⁵⁶ MORADI GHIATH ABADI, 2010.

⁵⁷ NORBERG SCULZ 2010, 239.

⁵⁸ MAHMUDI NEJAD *et alii* 2008, 293.

Napirasha commented on the nested walls of the Chogha Zanbil and the construction of the city of Dur Untash; "After I had provided the building materials, I built the town of Untash and its religious district here. I surrounded it with an internal and an external fence"⁵⁹. The Chogha Zanbil Ziggurat is considered to be the central pole of a huge building complex that has three common-centered walls with geometric shapes that act like a gravity force in the center⁶⁰. In general, any confinement appears as a facet in relation to the broad perspective. If this relation is eliminated, the identity of the site will be lost. In a more general sense, any confinement becomes a center that can act as a "focal point" for its surroundings⁶¹. Untash Napirsha has allocated a large territory in Dur Untash to the city and the Ziggurat, and has given this territory to the gods of the Humban and Inshushinak as the religious district guardians. The king's donated territories were physical-religious, which in fact captured the soul and body of the people of Elam. As each viewpoint provides a variety of locations or even structures to the viewer, the location of the human made must also have clear paths, roads and goals. There is a lot of visual clarity in the paths and traces of historical textures that express the sense of movement and tendency toward a specific goal⁶². Reaching the ascension in Chogha Zanbil Temple was made through stairs. The heaven is the universe of meanings, and mankind means himself in it. For example, in the Maya temples, such as Temple Tequila Guatemala, and Pidars Negras, it seems that one climbs up the stairs and reaches the temple's heart; and there is also the same climbing sense in Chogha Zanbil⁶³. In this regard, Ghirshman argued that in the middle of each of the four sides of the Ziggurat there were gates with the same dimensions⁶⁴. The number seven has a specific codenamed concept throughout the city of Chogha Zanbil. Only one gate out of the seven gates, i.e. the southwest gate opened toward a staircase that has passed through all floors and ended to the Supreme Temple⁶⁵. In the way of this staircase and in its midways, there have been places to pauses and stop called footpace. The space with a varying degree of "continuity" extends from the center in different directions. The main directions are horizontal and vertical, which are in fact the same directions of the "earth and the sky", and the need to centrality has led mankind to imagine the world as a concentrated being⁶⁶. Herodotus describes the existence of Ziggurat as the centrality and house of god: "The Ziggurat was designed as a high place to be holy, where god descends from the sky. Even more simply, the Ziggurat could be seen as an altar with some details, so that it could be closer to god's personal realm"⁶⁷. Nurburg Schulz refers to a similar concept; "In many myths, the center of the world, has been described as a tree or pillar, which refers to the vertical axis of the world. The mountains were thought as the connecting points of the sky and earth. Old

Greeks and Romans considered the Delphi and the Capitol as the center of the World; and the Ka'bah is still the center of the universe for Muslims. Accordingly, any place in which "meaning" reveals can be a center. The essential property of artifacts is concentration and fence"⁶⁸. Diodor describes the origin of the Ziggurat as the land, where the gods believed to be in. Although we do not really understand such origins, some poems have given names for Ziggurats. "Mountain Home - Hurricane Mount", which tend to offer conceptual beliefs for Ziggurats"⁶⁹. In other words, person receives the environment and focuses it in the buildings and the objects. Thus, things describe the environment; they characterize it and thus become meaningful themselves⁷⁰. It has happened in the history of the Middle East architecture and in human-made places; for example, the Ur Ziggurat, the Ziggurat of Chogha Zanbil and Assyria. These sites have a "collector" and "focal" function. Placing the sanctuary as center and enclosing it with the nesting walls provide the temple with the role of the gathering, in addition to safeguarding and sustaining the beloved god. It is an inconvenient and clear answer to the probable challenges of the Elamite's god.

CONCLUSION

In this research, phenomenology was used for the first time in the historical archeology of Iran, as a historical archeology methodology, through the recognition of the unique effect of the Chogha Zanbil phenomenon. Using this approach, the cultural heritage of Chogha Zanbil and its stimulation effect and reflection of its common values in the daily life of the people of Elam were discussed as an effective and influential religious institution. Almost all of the Elamologists have spoken about the dramatic nature of the Elamite religiosity, the clamorous religious beliefs of the people of Elam and the authority of Untash Napirsha, as the main factors of creation of the Chogha Zanbil Ziggurat. The Ziggurat floors brought the throne closer and were considered as a means of ascension, and at the same time induct the ordinary people the inaccessibility of the sanctuary or ascension. The Chogha Zanbil Ziggurat has gathered the experienced concepts and created an image of universe or the micro- universe that has realized the world of people of the middle Elam. The representations and symbolism embodied in the Ziggurat architecture provide the real meaning of settling and living, and leaves the meanings to a place, whereby the Ziggurat is transformed into an existential center. There was a kind of alignment between the mental states of people and the Ziggurat. With this companion and intimacy, a meaningful experience was created that affected personal and collective situations and realized the religious beliefs of the Elamites. The goal of Untash Napirsha, the great king of Igehalki dynasty, was to build a Ziggurat, to shift the religious centrality of Mesopotamia to Elam, and to liberate the people of Elam from the dependence on the gods of southern Mesopotamia, and to transfer the religious centrality to Elam and near its birthplace, Deh Nou. This religious-political creative transfer took place through the construction of a Ziggurat. In spite of the Babylonian-Kassi

⁵⁹ SARRAF 2011, 26 .

⁶⁰ TOUROVETS 1997, 71, MOFIDI- NASRABADI 2007.

⁶¹ NORBERG SCULZ 2010, 13.

⁶² PUR JAFAR *et alii* 2011, 14 .

⁶³ ZEINALI ONARI 2015, 7.

⁶⁴ GHIRSHMAN 1966, 70.

⁶⁵ LANTOS 2013, 142.

⁶⁶ MAHMUDI NEJAD *et alii* 2008, 293.

⁶⁷ BERTMAN 2003, 197.

⁶⁸ MAHMUDI NEJAD *et alii* 2008, 293.

⁶⁹ BERTMAN 2003, 197.

⁷⁰ NORBERG SCULZ 2010, 27.

art and the Egyptian pyramids influence on the Ziggurat, the Ziggurat has a special identity. The same features and innovations have been emphasized and acknowledged by Malovan and Ghirshman. These unique features concerning the 3rd and 4th criteria of the World Heritage Convention have led to registration of the Chogha Zanbil Ziggurat in the World Heritage List. In fact, what has been basically local and innovative today is considered global, and what was foreign and borrowed today matches with the place. Now, the Ziggurat is a global phenomenon that the people of the world, regardless of nationality, have the right to visit it to acknowledge the great identity and achievement of humanity in the first half of the 2nd millennium BC, even though its life-world has been lost.

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