Characterizing Historical Houses Constructed during the Periods of Zandieh to Pahlavi in Shiraz with Emphasis on the Place of Natural Components in the Qur’anic Life

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Abstract

Man is considered as a successor to God Almighty on the earth in Islamic teachings. Therefore, man as the Divine Caliph should seek to manifest those qualities that lead to an environment conducive to human life and the development of the earth. When encountering phenomena and his own actions, he must observe some principles, the most important of which such as the observance of justice can be inferred from the nature (as the divine creation). To understand the fundamental of a school of thought that fosters the protection of the nature and natural elements as a strong culture and belief in a given society, one needs to take into account the origins of such a school. When encountering the nature and natural components, the Iranian culture uses the Holy Quran as one of the most important sources whose teaching and doctrines form and direct the Iranian culture.

In Islamic thought, as with many divine attitudes, there is a holistic perspective about the nature and the world, which is rooted in the Quranic teachings and Islamic narratives. The Holy Quran is one of the most important sources affecting the formation of Iranian thought and culture, which in turn has shaped the attitude toward nature as a part of itself in the minds and lifestyle of Iranian people. Following the religious teachings and the words of the infallible imams (AS), Islamic scholars consider the nature as a source of for knowledge and recognition. All this necessitates a close and continuous relationship between man and the nature in order to allow the man to benefit from these divine verses and pondering upon them.

In religious teachings, special attention has been given to the environment and those who are in the process of restoration and maintenance of the environment are believed to be compensated by great material and spiritual rewards.

A particular naturalistic approach to architecture in the Islamic era is noteworthy. Neighborhoods in Iranian cities have a special geographical unity in their structure. The Islamic model of city, while partly separated from nature due to its man-made structure, has consistently been able to balance itself with the natural environment, natural forces, and elements such as water, soil, air and light that support human life. The Islamic architecture and urban planning have never been associated with the struggle with nature and disregard for it. This architecture reflects how human knowledge is used to make the best of existing natural factors to create an architecture that is both beautiful and efficient and at the same time reflects the principles of Islam, and is at a state of harmony with the nature. Despite the development of urbanization in the modern age, the principle of having a purposeful life that indicates the end-centeredness and purposefulness of human living should be considered in all relevant and effective sectors in the field of urbanization. This is reflected in issues such as the choice of location and the geographical orientation of building construction.

Environmental identity is associated with issues such as harmony with the natural environment, the exploitation of indigenous materials and certain natural elements. Each city has its own natural position that distinguishes it from other cities. The characteristics of the natural context of each city depict a part of the city’s identity, which can be defined in the form of its natural identity. In Islamic culture of Iran, the use of natural elements (light, plant, air, water) in houses has been always emphasized and such elements have been employed in an optimal way as represented in our traditional architecture. Accordingly, the design of houses should be commensurate with the proper use of natural elements.

Addressing the components of natural identity affecting architecture and as emphasized in Quranic verses and traditions, this paper explores natural elements as the main variables of “life” and their role in the Islamic-Iranian residential architecture especially “yards”.

Exploring the effects of the elements of the natural identity on architecture and the emphasis of Qur’anic verses and narrations on each of them as the main variables for “life”, this study describes the position of these elements in Iranian residential architecture and especially the “yard” in the historical houses constructed.
during the periods of Zandieh to Pahlavi in Shiraz. It also provides some solutions for the current era, so that the pure Islamic life is considered by the thinkers. To this end, a qualitative research method was employed and the data were collected in the form of library and documentary studies.

In total, Shiraz residential architecture and its houses has been dedicated this city. In general, it can be said that one of the richest examples of residential culture of Iranian architecture is in Shiraz traditional houses.

The main questions:

Are there any climate elements in Shiraz residential architecture of Zand, Qajar and Pahlavi eras?

How climate elements have been effective on identity of architectural form in each period?

So, in this article climatic components and elements effective in Iranian traditional architecture have been studied. These components include wind, sunlight, humidity and plants and some climatic components such as balcony, central courtyard, windows area, height difference between building and courtyard. These parameters have been analyzed in samples case studies.

Research study:

A qualitative research method was used and the data were collected through library sources and documents. In field studies structure of Shiraz residential architecture has been attention in Zand, Qajar and Pahlavi periods. In sample case studies natural components of identity in architecture have been analyzed as the main parameters.

This study also addresses issues such as «life» and «nature» from the perspective of the Quranic verses and hadiths, and the emphasis of ethics professors and scholars on the management of affairs by human beings under reason and revelation, as well as the emphasis of Shiite jurisprudential interpretations on the correct use of the nature as well as the ethical dimensions of the nature. Based on what was mentioned, the importance of its natural elements in the Quranic verses and narratives and the representation of natural elements of housing architectural identity in the Iranian Islamic architecture in the periods of Zandieh, Qajar, and Pahlavi in Shiraz have been taken into account in this study. It is obvious that the traditional Iranian architecture in the three periods has paid attention to the natural elements mentioned in the Quranic verses, and it can be said that the «yard» has been used in the residential architecture of Zandieh, Qajar, and Pahlavi based on «natural components of life». In addition, the architectural comparison of these three historical periods with the contemporary modern architecture shows that the values that exist in traditional Iranian architecture as schemas and the «nature» and «ethical dimension of nature” are important in the traditional Iranian architecture. Also, in the design of modern housing, attention should be paid to the principles of traditional Iranian architecture and those criteria that would consider Iranian insight and identity.

The results indicated that there is a relationship between the Quranic verses and hadiths and the issue of «life» and «the residence in the Iranian-Islamic residential architecture», as characterized by the components of the natural identity of each climate.

Keywords: Identity, Life, Nature, Human Comfort, the Iranian-Islamic Residential Architecture in Shiraz