Research Article

The Role of Culture on Islamic Architecture

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ABSTRACT

Islamic architecture is an ongoing argument for an extended period. Is it Islamic architecture, Muslim architecture, or architecture in Islam? Is it just visual elements or a way to use the inner space? Whatever the answer is, we will use the term Islamic architecture in this paper. To search and dig out the identities of so-called Islamics. This paper is seeking after these identities and their relations with Islamic culture to solve international architecture concepts without modifications or adaptation. The main goal is to extract the sociocultural aspects that define that architecture to be called Islamic Architecture. An analytical research method uses some attempts to interact the environmental conditions and social aspects with cultural and religious values to define Islamic architecture's identity. The study result and summary could be used to evaluate the satisfaction of the built environment of Muslims when and wherever they are. As a comprehensive result, Islamic Design Principles, Islamic Planning Principles, and Islamic Urban Design Principles could be extracted from Islamic sources and used everywhere at any time by anybody. These design principles may be used to upgrade the workability of the existing residential buildings simply by revising the opening's location, heights, and treatments. Architecture with that dynamic, flexible culture gives its identity a chance to compete globally to survive locally.

1. INTRODUCTION

In general, architecture is a product of interacting factors, which differ from time to time, human beings to another and place to place (Bruyns, 2012). Some of these factors are constants, and others are variables. Rapoport and el Sayegh (2005) described a house design as follows: - "It's an institution, not just a structure, create for a complex set of purposes. Because building a house is a cultural phenomenon, its form and organization are greatly influenced by cultural milieu." The term "Islamic" alone is not the determinant of that so-called: Islamic architecture"; definitely, there should be other factors. This paper will focus on driving out the values, notions, and principles from a cultural perspective concerning the Islamic legitimate. The Islamic community is like others, is facing the problem of the imported exotic culture that could weaken the indigenous one (Firzal, 2016). There is no doubt this will cause losing the identity of that specific architecture unless the source is known for its preservation (Grosz, 2001). The concept of modification to keep up with the rapid changes due to globalization may lead to undefined architecture (Ching, 2014).

Moreover, architectural conservation is not enough to resist the expected cultural changes unless we highlight the weight and value of those identities. Therefore, the goals and objectives are; to minimize the negative impacts of the adoption without adaptation by extracting the Islamic concepts and values that affect architecture from legitimate sources and confirm that the architecture called 'Islamic' takes its dye from Islamic references (Babangida & Katsina, 2018; Behrens-Abouseif, 1989). It also aims to define design principles that can be used to obtain an Islamic identity. To fulfill these objectives and goals, the following are the hypotheses; Islamic architecture is dynamic and suites Muslim's environment everywhere at any time. This specific architecture resulted from Islamic values, notions, and concepts extracted from legitimate sources (Petruccioli, & Pirani, 2013). That means Islamic culture is what gave the identity to that specific architecture. According to the hypotheses mentioned above, the following reach methodologies are used.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

The literature review is used to discuss the general meanings and depths of the keywords and concepts used in this manuscript, and the descriptive-analytical methodology is used to extract out the Islamic values and notions from the legitimate sources to be compared with other types of architecture.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Before we start discussing what Islamic architecture is, we will highlight some of the main factors and concepts affecting all types of building environments (Abu-elreish, 1991). Architecture could be taken as an output or a product of many concepts and principles interacted together, such as economic, social, and environmental factors. Other influences like available building materials and topography are contributed to shaping architecture. Many of those interested believe that architecture is a product of sociocultural interaction. As Groat stated, "Architecture engenders negotiating between myriad sociocultural factors." (Moore, 2019). It could be said that; culture is one of the main inputs in architecture production.

3.1. Culture

The way people live depends on their culture and social interaction, which contributes to shaping their architecture. Moore (2019) stated that "Each culture that shares a common set of values and beliefs will develop their meanings and expectations regarding particular environments." This argument means the nature of culture is ideational. What do people need to have their architecture and conduct their activities considering the cultural values and beliefs? Culture contributes to shaping social environments, architectural design as well as landscape planning, and urban design.

It follows that many essential characteristics of people are related to culture. As Rapaport (2005) said to conduct any activity, you need to dismantle it by answering these questions; what is the activity? How could it participate? How many are the participants? And What are the requirements for practicing it? In architecture, if you want to design a church or a mosque, you will never design it unless you know how people are praying, how many are they, and what the needs are to pray? And so on. Unless you study and analyze their religious culture to know their identities, you will not design for them. There is nothing in architecture calls chaotic—everything to be managed by its culture. Either to be managed by environmental culture, social culture, or economic culture. Before studying Islamic identity, we need to know what are the general concepts of identity.

3.2. Identity

Identity is a matter of conceptualization; it could be changeable or unchangeable. On the one hand, Heidegger (1968) in Mugerauer (1993) believes in an existing concept of identity. It is a concept of being which considered as an existing one and deeply rooted. That means identity is static and not changeable and can not be affected by any exotic one. On the other hand, Delenze and Guattari (2004) raised the becoming concept, which completely contrasted with the being concept. In the becoming, identity could be reconstructed and changeable. "Can also be elucidated as transformation practices through the deep complicity of symbolic capital in culture and cultural reproduction, as Dove stated in 2010 (Firzal, 2016). Identity concerning practice is defined as dynamic and reconstruction able. The identity of a place is a product of interrelationships with homogenous dynamical sense. Also, there is another concept called the in-between concept. It is the space between social, cultural, and natural identities a new identity is produced due to their interaction, known as in-between identity, as illustrated in Figure 1. This architecture will not be taken as a form, but it is a function. As long as it is a matter of philosophical concepts, we will consider the Islamic legitimates to define the identities in Islamic concept.
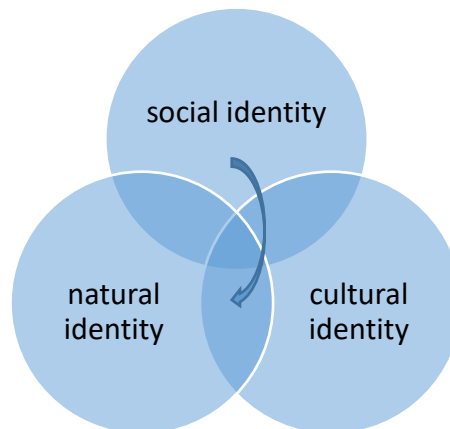

Figure 1. The In-between identity

The identity is not a will of individuals or groups; it is a product of Islamic values and principles derived from legitimate sources. The identification of Islamic architecture is not a matter of unified form but a similar function and internal usage of space. We are seeking after these similar features and concepts to know where they came. We are looking for the juristic rules in the Qur'an, Sunnah, and other legal sources that gave identity to this architecture, to be called Islamic Architecture. These laws and rules certainly exist there because Allah (God) Almighty said in the text of his book, everything is there and nothing had neglected (verse (38) Al-Ana'am.).

((وَمَا مِن دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَائِرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّا أُمَمٌ أَمْثَالُكُم ۚ مَّا فَرَّطْنَا فِي الْكِتَابِ مِن شَيْءٍ ۚ ثُمَّ إِلَىٰ رَبِّهِمْ يُحْشَرُونَ)) الآية (38)

سورة الأنعام

And there is no creature on [or within] the earth or bird that flies with its wings except [that they are] communities like you. We have not neglected in the Register a thing. Then unto their Lord, they will be gathered.

From the meaning of this verse, we understand that everything found in the Holy Qur'an and other resources only needs research.

Some of the values and principles that influence architectural functions will be extracted from these resources. We will focus on the principles and values that affect residential buildings because they are the nucleus of society, influence mosques design and other architectural functions.

3.3. Some Doctrinal Rules of Islamic Architecture

Ibn Khaldoun defined architecture as human sociology in all its dimensions, and this vision has a broad concept that includes economics, politics, geography, and the environment. Also, he said, it is the construction industry. In this part of the research, we will focus on extracting architectural values from doctrinal origins, and in particular, the following; harm or damage and its Impact on architecture, privacy, and social behavior in addition to the neighbor's rights.

3.3.1. No harm, damage, and no hinder of circulation.

In this concerns Abdullahi bin Abas narrated that; Prophet Mohamed (P.B.U.H) said:

"لا ضررَ ولا ضِرارَ۞ وللرجلِ أَنْ يضعَ خشبَهُ فى حائطِ جارِهِ۞ وإذا اختلفتُمْ فى الطريقِ فاجعلوهُ سبعةَ أذرُعٍ" رواه ابن عباس

No harm and no damage, and no hinder of circulation, and one can place his wood on his neighbor's wall, and if you differ in the width of way, let it be seven cubits.

That is an apparent Islamic value that limits the individual's behavior and manages the freedom to act. Everybody has the right to act but not to harm himself or damage others. There are five types of harm considered in architecture; Smoke harm, odor harm, sound or noise harm, visual harm, and vibration damage. The indirect gateway of the houses was used in Islamic architecture to provide visual privacy, as shown in Figures 1-2. That was done so as not to allow visual penetration from the passersby into the housing unit. Also, windows were treated in a way that prevents harm from both sides, as shown in Figure 3 by using "mushrabiah." A parapet wall is constructed higher than a human so others will not see it while at the roof, as shown in Figure 4.
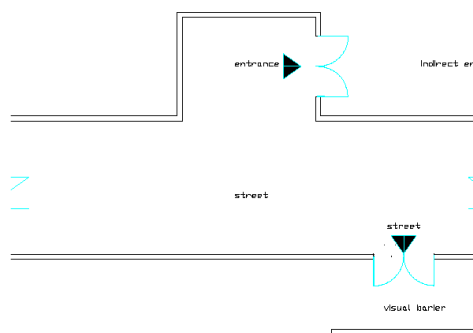

Figure 2. Indirect entrance

Figure 3. Windows treatment

Figure 4. Parapet height

There are many other elements used in architecture to reflect this notion, such as inward orientation. In addition to its environmental Impact, a courtyard system was also used. The buildings and windows heights and others have to preserve this cultural value and give the Islamic architecture identity. The window openings should not require oversight by neighbors and not facing each other and the door placement. In addition to this rule, other concepts and principles could be derived out.

3.3.2. Privacy

Privacy is generally required in all its types represented by the five known senses: the sense of vision, hearing, smelling, touching, and tasting, and each one has its mechanisms and ways of providing them in architecture to the function of the building. Privacy in Islamic architecture in the countryside or urban areas is essential in architectural design. It is a character inspired by the rule of "no harm, no damage" and other rules. Allah (God) Almighty said in Verse 27 of Surat Al-Nur, explaining the relationship between the semi-public zone and a house as a private zone:

((يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَدْخُلُوا بُيُوتًا غَيْرَ بُيُوتِكُمْ حَتَّىٰ تَسْتَأْنِسُوا وَتُسَلِّمُوا عَلَىٰ أَهْلِهَا ۚ ذَٰلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ)) الآية

(27) سورة النور

O you who believe, do not enter homes other than yours until you give peace to you and give salutations to their people.

The family's privacy appears as soon as we think about moving past the semi-public zone represented by the street to the private zone represented by the housing unit. The family has got its privacy at home, and it's not allowed to infringe upon it except after greetings and permission to enter. This design principle leads to dividing the housing unit into internal zones, as shown in Figure 5. Based on these zones' spaces, components, areas, and even furniture to achieve these cultural values.
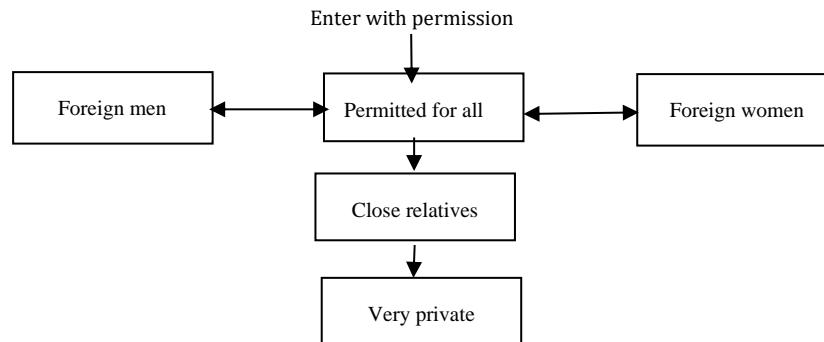
Figure 5. Zones within single-family

Accordingly, the dominancy of privacy led to the segregation between males and females within the housing unit. Due to that, internal zoning was created. There is a zone for foreign men, a zone for foreign women, and a third zone for the family members and very close relatives of both sexes. There is also a very special zone for parents that will not be entered even by children except with permission and at certain times. These requirements can be by walls, as Figure 6 illustrates, or by partitions, curtains, or even by furniture layout. This culture will be implemented anywhere at any time, regardless of the economic potentials of the household.
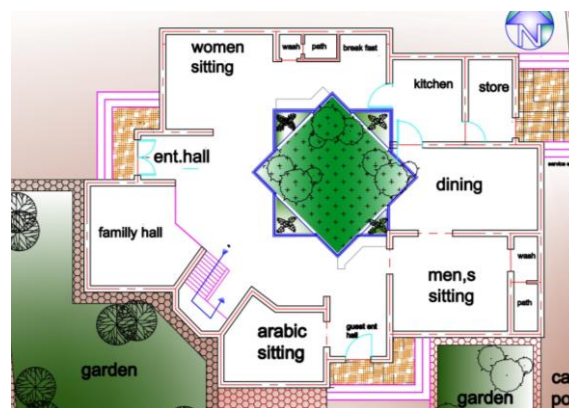
Figure 6. Internal zones of a housing unit

The ways and means of provision of these principles depend on the thinking and creativity of the architect. "The overall relevance of achieving privacy in the Muslim house is, therefore, to help in the preservation of interfamily life from strangers and to conceal information about the family (in the three aspects of "looking" listening and "smelling")" (Sani-Katsina, 2018). These values and principles can be provided in housing in any environment, with the lowest possible cost.

3.3.3. Rights of Neighbor

Individual freedom in Islamic culture is not absolute, especially between neighbors; it has a lot to do concerning their relation, as Prophet Mohamed (P.B.U.H. |) said.

قال رسول الله لى الله عليه وسلم (ما زال جبريل يوصيني على الجار حتى ظننت أنه سيورثه.) رواه بخارى ومسلم

Prophet (P.B.U.H.), said, "Jibril, kept on recommending that I treat neighbors well until I thought that he would order me to treat them as my heirs."

Concerning this Hadith of the Prophet (P.B.U.H.), and the ones mentioned above, there are other rights of the neighbor to be considered, such as non-prevention of air current towards his house due to the height of the building. The distance between the two buildings to be taken into account. Furthermore, windows did not face each other without suitable treatment to provide privacy. The location of services such as toilets and kitchens cannot cause odor or noise harm to a neighbor. We can say legitimate sources are the basis of these rights and others. Some other Islamic concepts and values that influence the architectural design, such as kinship, may lead to rooms or places for guests to sleep within the house.

The phenomenon of showing off and boasting about the building is objectionable in Islamic concepts. The building preferable to reflect the sense of humility and respect for others. One of the concepts to be considered is the equilibration in Islamic architecture. Therefore, the types and cost of the used material should be considered. Similarly, we need to dig in the Islamic references to extract notions and principles affecting the culture to give the Islamic identity to all functions. For designing a mosque, there is some guidance affecting the design such as the orientation to be towards the kiblah (Makkah direction), preference of the

first row manages the length and width of the building, prayers lines to be straight and to mediate the Imam. If we say all architectural functions have rules and principles in jurisprudence references, what about domes and arches?

Domes, arches, muqarnas, and other architectural elements that have been used in Islamic architecture throughout its history are aesthetical or structural elements and environmental solutions. There is no objection from an Islamic point of view to be used as long as they have no extravagance or hypocrisy. Many of these elements were known and used in pre-Islamic civilizations and preserved because they are not contradicting any Islamic values and principles. Whether it is an Arab or Islamic architecture, it can be attributed to the Arabs at the beginning of its era, but it soon became Islamic because of its spread even in non-Arab countries. Therefore, it can be said that its composition was influenced by Islamic culture where ever it is.

4. CONCLUSION

From the legitimate sources, a culture can be derived in various life knowledge such as economic, sociology politics, architecture, and others. This intellectual culture gives the Islamic character and identity to that knowledge. It can be said that Islamic architecture is the one that takes its identity from Islamic culture extracted from legitimate sources. Islamic architecture is not just a heritage to be visited by tourists. It could be taken as a contemporary architecture accepting others. Also, we conclude that all architectural functions have legitimate sources that give them the cultural identity, even the tiny details such as bathroom fixtures and means of decoration managed by legislative references. Islamic Architecture recognizes creativity, innovation, and changeable appearance with keeping the inner usage and core. It was not a chaotic architecture described by some because based on rules and values with deep roots. Moderation of Islamic Architecture expresses the balance in all its characteristics, so it is for all Muslim and non-Muslim, rich and poor, blacks and whites etc. Islamic architecture is characterized by a precise balance between materialistic and spiritual values, so it is not absolute. It is always relative and flexible and suits everybody. As a comprehensive result, Islamic Design Principles, Islamic Planning Principles, and Islamic Urban Design Principles could be extracted from Islamic sources and used everywhere at any time by anybody. These design principles may be used to upgrade the workability of the existing residential buildings simply by revising the opening's location, heights, and treatments. Architecture with that dynamic, flexible culture gives its identity a chance to compete globally to survive locally. To differentiate between the history and identity of Islamic architecture, architectural students and experts should study them. There is no conflict in importing and learning other's experiences but no adoption without adaption.

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