



## The Relationship between Privacy and Introversion in Traditional Houses

Maryam MOHAMMADI GHAYEGHCHI

*MSc in Architecture, Science and Research branch, Islamic Azad University, Kermanshah, Iran*

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**Abstract.** Spiritual principles governing Iran's traditional architecture have deep roots in the country's culture and thoughts. The principle of privacy and introversion as the most important principles governing all aspects of life has been beautifully rooted in the traditional architecture of Iran and had deep consequences in spatial organizing and the way of placing various functions. Involvement of Iranian elements with currents Islamic thought, culture and art have given a new face to Iranian arts. Iranian architecture after Islam has unique design, elegance and accuracy and Islamic outlook has left undeniable effects on its identity and shaping. The main issue being concerned in this study was privacy and introversion as one of the most significant features mentioned in the architectures alleged to Islam. This article aimed at providing a definition of privacy and introversion, and introducing their relations and influences in the organization of spatial- physical architecture of traditional houses.

**Keywords:** Privacy, introversion, traditional houses, traditional architecture

### 1. INTRODUCTION

When the culture of a community is introduced in the form of a body, the civilization of the community is shaped (The civilization of a community is the body of the community). Therefore, one of the duties of architecture is making civilization. Of course, it is clear that the relationship between culture and architecture is a mutual relationship. Architecture and culture throughout history have always been closely related to each other and have experienced mutual interaction in this regard. Respecting the human status on the one hand and the role of culture and beliefs on the other hand have had significant effects on the privacy of Iran's traditional architecture and maintaining certain privacy leading to a particular kind of architecture, especially in residential areas of Iran. Iranian architects by organizing buildings around one or more centers separated the building from the outside world and only a porch connected them together. Introverted homes especially in warm and dry climate are like a paradise in the desert. Introverted space is like a closed warm embrace facing to the inside from all sides. There were two platforms at the entrance of the homes and the doors had two Koba for men and women; two corridors end to the porch, one from the exterior and the other from interior of the house. The interior part was dedicated to the family but strangers were not allowed to get there. The exterior part was dedicated to the family and strangers who were separately hospitalized. And, sometimes guests were hospitalized in the upstairs (room on the porch) that were close to the interior part. Females were safe in the interior part and privacy between family members and strangers was completely tangible by special architecture. In the areas of behavior, designing space was done in Iranian architecture so that different and specific sectors in terms of privacy and the veil were completely separated. It seems that the principles of privacy and introversion in Islamic architecture and urbanism affected the largest urban spaces to the smallest architectural spaces especially traditional houses and the two principles are closely related to each other. In this study, after defining and clarifying the meaning of privacy and introversion the conditions and reasons of its formation in Iran's traditional architecture were studied and then how to be involved in traditional Iranian architecture and traditional houses parts were evaluated. So, the main question is "what is the relationship between privacy and introversion in Iran's traditional houses?"

\* Corresponding author. Email: maryam\_mgh@yahoo.com

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### Concepts and principles in the architecture of traditional houses

#### The principle of privacy

Privacy is rooted in Arabic and is defined in Dehkhoda dictionary as follows:

Privacy is confidentiality; anyone who has permission to enter the shrine and private homes; relatives, trusted [1] Privacy literally means around, around and where it is necessary to protect and defend. In order to follow with the law of God and securing home, in terms of privacy and the veil, the houses were made so that no strangers would not see inside the houses [2] In Moein Persian dictionary, privacy means confidentiality: (1) improper; Forbidden. 2 close relatives who are not allowed to marry each other; (3) Women; wife. 4. Relatives [3]

According the root and what was mentioned, spaces can be called private where physically there is privacy, safety and security for the residents and its spatial properties provides people peace and comfort. In fact, when a person is someone's intimate, apart from the religious point of view, a special relationship with trust, reliability, comfort and security is established between them. It is important to recognize intimates because it is necessary for proper design along with following the principles and rules of values. Privacy should be considered for all people living in specific areas at home or when speaking with parents God says it is the duty of children not to offend fathers and mothers when they get old. This shows that even in a living space devoted to parents privacy should also be regarded in this respect. It is clear that all orders, rules and regulations that Islam has been introduced, apart from their moral consequences, proposed guidelines for all people from all professions, to find solutions match their business for better and happier life.

Privacy as a key principle in Islamic architecture has different aspects. The purpose of the privacy is creating borders not inducing separation. Privacy creates aura preventing the invasion of others and connects two sides without blending. Privacy does not apply only to social relations, but it can be found in regulating the home spaces, dividing urban spaces and gardening. Eastern religious life in the past, such as prayer, charity, pilgrimage, worship, ancestors and etc. cause the world of unaware human, the reservoir of destructive forces, being fresh and getting out through the channels of the religious ceremony, and to be shown as the manifestations of the inner world with the veil of allegory and mystery. Iran's past architecture was combined with the privacy and introversion

#### The principle of introversion

Introversion literally means tendency to inside; founding our insides; inward-looking; introspective mode. Attention and tend to mind and heart. It is against extroversion [1] Different meanings can be deduced from introversion. Before it was applied in architecture, in term of moral and spiritual point of view, privacy involves meanings and concepts including being quiet, tending to inner states and avoidance, showing it like manifestation states. Introversion is a concept that has existed as a principle in Iran's architecture and can be seen in various forms which can be considered the fruit of privacy. One of the undeniable characteristics of architecture and old buildings such as houses, mosques, schools, caravanserai, baths, etc. is their introspective characters seeking privacy in an environment in which the physical condition with thinking, meditation and prayer in order to achieve peace of mind and its origin and finding calm have reached a rhythmic and excellent order. One of its characteristics is to respect private life and consider its privacy. Self-esteem is another feature of Iranians influenced the space of an introverted house [4]

Some believe that Islam along with the instructions brought made Iranians introverted. Of course, the history of introverted houses in Iran after the advent of Islam has changed and its peak of development should be regarded in architecture after Islam. But the history of the introverted houses is oriented to the pre-Islamic era. One of the first buildings in Persepolis, built in the treasury, was a house with a small central courtyard surrounded by the rooms and

porch [5]. In architectural discussion the term of introversion apparently means refusing, in turn, more attention to the inside of the people and places as far as in the whole of Iranian architecture some homes can be found that are pure and simple in terms of exterior face and in contrast interior parts are eye-catching with fine and beautiful arrays and introversion was a concept present as a principle in Iran's architecture and with clear presence, can be seen and understandable in different forms. Safety and protection of the family against some predators, met by creating a closed environment, tall walls, can be considered as one of introversion factors. This issue, however, played an important role in the initial formation of introverted houses, but over time has been exacerbated by other factors. Keeping the sacred privacy of the family away from strangers is an issue that has changed Iran's introverted houses after the advent of Islam. Islam with aspects of respecting family has penetrated it deep into the thinking of the Iranian manufacturers. Hence, the manufacturer with respect to geographical issues, created safety for the family done with different forms and elements in various spaces mentioned as follow:

### **Privacy and introversion in some parts of traditional houses**

#### **Entrance**

Entrance space in traditional Iranian architecture is so important that an important part of the evolution and development of traditional architecture of the country can be found in it. Entrance space is not used only as a communication space, but it has social and cultural functions. To create a link and connection between a large building adjacent to the road or field as well as to give importance to the entrance space a courtyard frontage was often built in front of the entrance arch so that it had a common space with passage or square or was placed next to them to create enough attraction and beauty to get into the building. Non-decorated facades reveal the importance of the interiors from Islam point of view in contrast with the appearance which indicates in the life of a Muslim, greater emphasis is on the spiritual and internal aspects than external and material aspects [6] The entrance of traditional houses had almost unique elements such as: the arch, platform, closet, and with components such as threshold, Kobe, clone, and sometimes Rosen which not only provided the possibility of meeting, chatting, stopping, waiting and arrival, but led the people entering the houses based on sex (male or female), the quality of presence (presence in day or night, at work or rest, alone or with group, in winter or summer, in nature or away from nature) and their relationship with family (individual or group relationship, personal or social, long term or short term) to different spaces [7]

#### **Vestibule**

Vestibule is a space designed and built in different spaces of the entrance. This space was placed immediately after the entrance space and one of its functions was to divide the entrance route into two or more directions. In designing the space, some measures have been considered as the pre entrance of the space. In terms of religious aspect (confidentiality) there was no direct view into the private space with the opening of the door. It also creates space for future mental preparation to enter the main room. In some public buildings there were two or more corridors to house from the vestibule that each of them led to specific space such as the interior of the building, the courtyard. In buildings with one corridor from the vestibule, the space of vestibule does not have a divider space, but was used as a space for waiting and making majestic routes.

#### **Hallway, corridor**

Hallway or corridor is the easiest part of the entrance that providing communication and access between the two places is its most important function. Usually at home, changing the route has been done in the corridor. In this way, the issue of privacy was solved by a corridor led indirectly to the courtyard. Corridor in terms of physical space is slim and narrow. However, the width of corridors was determined based on their function of and the number of users. The corridor of small houses is an average of about one meter wide. Corridor as an architectural

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space is something that in terms of spatial and perceptual can be regarded as passing and movement space. Corridor and courtyard formed communication artery of the houses.

### **Yard**

In traditional houses, the courtyard was used in different concepts. Yard as the unity of the house elements connects spaces to create a green and joyful environment as artificial ventilation for proper wind flow and is considered as an important element in the organization of the different spaces, as well as the safety and comfort for family. According to the material and spiritual needs and following the hierarchy of private and public sectors inside and outside of the traditional yards were formed.

Outside: a small square or rectangle yard with a circle pond in the center; it is an octagon or star that is special to guests and non-relatives.

Inside: a big and wide yard in harmony with the rooms surrounding the yard; it is a private space and special to family members.

### **Rooms**

The doors of Iranian homes were made in different forms with especial features and different rooms were formed based on organizing the whole spaces and dividing them into summer and winter space. Corridors to achieve the directions of ideal winds caused most summer rooms made in upper floors and winter rooms in ground floor or lower than the level of the yard. Overall, in studying various traditional houses it can be seen that the dimensions and functions of each room was determined by some factors: first the number of openings including doors and windows; second their position in compare to the yard; third the Paymun system of house such as big Paymun, small Paymun and very small Paymun.

### **Shahneshin**

A part of the room made similar to Ivan without a door to the yard and it is slightly above the room. The room where Shahneshin is usually located is in the form of a five-door. The room was dedicated for parties, and its entrance was the side entrance or one of the rooms next to it.

Takhtgah: big corridors next to the hall and the end of it stairs to the basement and upstairs were located.

Balakhaneh: was built over the hall; cozy and comfortable atmosphere with a low height and a three-door used for sleeping and fasting.

Tehrani: in the north of house there was a winter room or Tehrani; with the greatest space in front of the sun it was the biggest winter room. Two small rooms with sash windows were built next to it.

Badgir: was built next to the hall to receive the wind sent to the inside of the house

Gooshvar: it is the Balkhanehs next to the hall; space with low height and three doors used for sleeping, rest, and reading.

Farvar: kind of Balakhaneh used as the guest room and was built in the front of the house and its way was in the corner of vestibule.

TaremeH: it is the Ivan or Safeh which is popular in the architecture of most parts of Iran. It is a space which is open from one side and used as contemporary and season living room connecting some spaces which is its main function.

Matbakh: usually consist of water, pantry, storage and a well. It is in square and rectangular shapes in the horizontal level, and its map was changeable according to the general plan.

Hozkhaneh: summer space with octagonal shape. In addition to the above application, and beauty it has a very important role in the design of spaces. In some houses it connects the inside and outside sections of homes.

Basement: Space few steps lower than the yard and were used as part of a relaxing atmosphere during the warm summer days and partly used as storehouse.

Paymun: in the system of designing Iranian houses three sizes were used as follow:

Big Paymun: there were two hallways from vestibule, one to the inside space and the other to outside space. There were Sofrehkhaneh, gust room and yard in outside space and three doors rooms, hall, bathroom and kitchen in inside space.

Small Paymun: the house with small Paymun was comfortable and inexpensive. Its yard was great and its combination was similar to the house with big Paymun in which there were two-door, three-door, and five-door were in its center.

Very small Paymun: in this system, the houses were small with two or three rooms as well as inside and outside spaces.

### **Windows**

Providing the use of synthetic and natural landscape or scene in the closed spaces can be considered as one of the important functions of a window. Living in artificial closed space in which the problem of light and ventilation were solved but lack of view and appropriate view were unpleasant and living there for a long time was very difficult and problematic. Therefore, in introverted houses in which yards stand for the building were built and decorated carefully to work as a proper perspective as well. In extroverted buildings, the most important parts of free space which stand for the buildings in the architectural units were decorated beautifully. The importance of perspective in some architectural spaces especially in gardens is high and affects the way of designing the space completely, so an extroverted building named "Kushk" was constructed in residential gardens that provides the best perspective around it and for better use of the nature the level of the ground floor was little higher than the ground level so that the residents have a good view to the nature. In addition to the issue, in most cases Kushks were built in two floors to provide a good and wide view from the upstairs.

### **Sash window**

Sash window is a wooden lattice window that moves upward in a context rather than moving on its round support. The windows were built in a way that involved all exterior surfaces of a room. Each sash window in addition to forming network of the network, utilized two fixed surfaces worked as a separating element such as wall and the moving surface was used for a better view of the outdoor landscape and air conditioning. The lattice surface of sash windows had various functions: first provided the light of the inner space as well as exposed the outer view and landscape to the people in inner space and also reduced the intensity of sunlight and its heat on interior spaces in summer. One of the major benefits of this type of windows were privacy and confidentiality of the internal space of the rooms and halls to outdoor spaces because the beneath network of the windows often prevented people simply see the inner space from outside. Due to this feature, sash windows were used in the parts of house facing public passage in some houses in cities including the ones in the north of the country, because in addition to great light and view the privacy was maintained as well. This feature led to using the sash windows in inner spaces over Balakaneh and Gushvar in one or two sides of the big and high halls because when especial parties or male parties held in the halls or five-door or seven-door big rooms, the women sat in the Balakhaneh or Gushvar rooms located in two sides of the hall and could observe the space of the hall behind the sash windows without being seen.

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### Shabak

The lattice surface made up of two fill and empty space so that one side can be seen from the other side is called Shabak or network. Shabak was built for various reasons such as limiting the view from the outside into the inside of the space, providing shade for the space in the sun, providing visibility from one space to outside in a limited way, creating a confining surface but lattice that do not prevent the passage of air. For this reason, its use is fairly widespread and in some parts of the building, Shabak as a lattice surface made the air passage possible in various forms as well as maintaining the confidentiality and privacy in a space.

### Conclusion

Iranian architecture has always mixed with a structure in its product that can be firmly stated that it is rarely seen in other architecture of the civilizations in the world. Nativist and tends to create a public space like the preservation of human dignity and privacy, have always been in the Persian architecture. Heavenly concepts and value can be seen in the architecture (Ardalan & Bakhtiari, 2001). The historical background of I privacy and introversion in Iran's residential architecture indicates the high level of attention to this important principle. Separation between private life and public life in introverted houses is beautifully implemented by simple elements, as a sign of the importance of privacy. Confidentiality is one of the basic principles that govern the universe and its phenomena that its impacts on the physical structure of the traditional architecture of the space are not deniable. Architecture as a body of thought has always been a tool for the development of thinking, attitudes, ideas of people and nation. Introversion and systematic hierarchy to maintain the privacy and publicity, ultimately leads to the privacy and applying proportion, order and geometry form unity and originates from the same roots and traditional principles. It seems that knowing exactly what we have in the past and recognizing the principles and standards of our traditional architecture and changing them into the present language, pave the way to achieve what is intended, and it is the duty of all architects to move ahead by referring to the authentic references and values. The principles of privacy, introversion, harmony and proportion, geometry etc. are all of those which have been truly neglected. Therefore, knowing and applying them would be certainly helpful. Since the confusion and lack of Iran's architectural identity is being discussed today, perhaps the biggest problems are West-oriented, as well as the lack of program, the lack of strong ideas and lack of understanding of contemporary architecture in a break with the past architecture. The principles, values and approaches based on cultural beliefs and our thoughts are abandoned and followed blindly. Finally, it should be noted that today's Iranian architectural is resulted in neglecting cultural and civilization values and tradition concepts in a deep-rooted and dynamic architecture and unfortunately it should be noted that today's houses are far from what regarded to relieve people from emotional and physical problems. By keeping the regions with traditional context and to prevent issuing the permission of constructing towers along with residential villas may approach us to the correct criteria of old architecture so remove social and family crisis.

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