Comparative Study of Privacy Notion in Houses in Qajar Era up to First Pahlavi in Tabriz

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Abstract

Privacy has always been considered as one of the desirability of housing in various cultures and eras, and frequently it has been a significant indicator to evaluate a house. Furthermore, it seems to be a frequent concept in housing architecture which provides symbolic forms or spaces in houses. The present research is to address this notion in the houses in Qajar and first Pahlavi eras through a comparative study; both to focus on significance of this issue in Qajar and Pahlavi periods by exploring the subject and to identify identical or different architectural elements which are resulted to this notion. Hence, types and degrees of privacy are considered in these two cultures, then entrance stages to the house in Qajar and Pahlavi eras have been analyzed and studied that how privacy as an inherent concept has been resulted in providing special architectural symbols in houses, and made different or similar forms of one notion in various cultures.

Keywords: Privacy, House, Qajar, First Pahlavi, Tabriz.
Introduction

Human being inherently requires a secure and quiet environment in which he can experience physical and spiritual serenity, and it has been detected in an environment called house over the years. House should be place free from environmental disturbances where man can seek shelter and refresh his tranquility. Privacy is the most significant specifications of a desired house, which no border could be imagined in terms of time and place for it in thoughts of architectures and designers, and sanctity of house privacy and its specialty have been regarded in proportionate with the existing culture of each period and location.

Iranian culture and western culture have developed a way to create such a notion by making use of some elements based on their own special generation and religious interactions, and sometimes with try and error, which these elements will be discussed throughout this article. Hence we consider meaning of privacy term and its status and significance in religious books as well as its association with privacy in Islamic thoughts, then by making use of analytical-comparative methods, architectural elements influenced by this concept in Iranian houses constructed during Qajar and 1st Pahlavi eras will be discussed; and finally this question will be reflected whether privacy as an inherent notion could be considered as an effective element to develop an architectural symbol?

Privacy is regarded as a control for undesirable interactions based on a personal wish … then privacy shall include controlling all information concerning a set of defensive-physical, spatial, time, social and psychological strategies. It seems that the desired and reference environment is a place which allows controlling these information procedures in all tangible dimensions, and simultaneously provides desired time, social interactions and transferring sensory information.

It goes without saying that confidentiality is the first principle in Islamic city and particularly concerning house which is accepted by all researchers. However, on the contrary to this fear from invasion of “stranger” to personal privacy, Islam bring about another approach to the phenomenon of “privacy”.

Evolution of Houses in Tabriz

Considering primary traditional location of houses according to the implemented studies and the existing plans of ancient houses I this city, evolution of houses could be divided into two historical eras:

First era: From beginning up to middle of Qajar dynasty.
Second era: From middle of Qajar dynasty up to the end of first decade of 1st Pahlavi.

Houses in Tabriz demonstrate illumination evolution. The houses at the beginning of Qajar dynasty which follow ancient style of Iranian houses relatively consisted of private quarter and forecourt. This style seems to be gradually diminished reaching first Pahlavi era, in such a way that it is overlooked completely in first Pahlavi era and houses benefit extrovert appearance.
First era: From beginning up to middle of Qajar dynasty
Among the main and significant specifications of this era, we can point out to the following issues: Most of the houses are in compliance with Iranian traditional style of houses, divisions of plan and façade are proportionately and both are in compliance; houses are in one floor with flat marquee on ground floor and vault and arch marquee in underground floor; the main part of the house includes Panj-Dari (a room with five doors), Se-Dari (a room with three doors) in the forms of open-in-middle, cruciform and simple in the name of salon and Tonbi in the main axis of building, together with pond-room and storeroom in the underground; simple façade without any decoration, loyalty of architecture to native and traditional architecture, rectangular court yards and sometimes in square form with a kind of positioning and decoration of plots; small gardens and fountains which are exactly in accordance with geographical pattern of Iranian gardens, and in some cases some changes are occurred; with a space in entrance (door head, porch or a corridor); regarding the external façade of the houses and absence of any window and outlet to street or alley.

Second era: From middle of Qajar dynasty up to the end of first decade of 1st Pahlavi.
The previous era was not terminated by commencement of this era, and some buildings already is constructed based on principles of previous eras. At this period, European elements and decorations are entered into architecture of houses which affected decorations in façade and it gradually was generalized to architecture of internal spaces of houses. At this era, spaces are organized according to Iranian architectural pattern, however, elements such as peristyle, column heads like European architecture style, door and window forms, tympanum and door head forms, mirror mosaic in salon and Tonbi, painting on walls of rooms and motifs used in decoration of building are changes, and they are going to be assimilate European forms and shapes. In this era, plan is still in compliance with façade, and one of the most significant specifications of this period is placement of staircase in the main axis of building. Gradually, privacy spaces are lessened and it is replaced by European postal card architecture.

Requirement of Privacy in Houses in Islamic Rules
House in Holy Quran is introduced as a place for residence and sanctum for human being and it is a place for seeking shelter from outdoor disturbances; and a place for internal serenity and meditation and praying of man with God.
In another word, privacy in this study refers to a form of evacuation of soul from anything except God and to be free from any environmental mundane restrain. It is a state through which individual is capable to reach his deep inside and the right in his inner existence, the one which is near but is neglected due to glittering world surrounded him.
Physical Privacy, Spiritual Privacy

Physical privacy means the one where a person finds peace and escapes from world restrains and position himself in a physical private room. Spiritual privacy could be reached by a more exalted soul and could be less affected by environment, in which human being could be simultaneously interact and communicate with a group and be in peace and serenity with his inner right physically and spiritually. Hence, man should have privacy concerning his mundane dimension and sink in his privacy in terms of his divine soul. (Aliabadi, 2005)

Separation of Privacy Degrees in House:

Westin pointed out of degrees of privacy and classified and analyzed it in four types and four functions. According to Westin, the first type of privacy is loneliness which means personal privacy, the second type is confidentiality which could be materialized just by presence of two or more people, which could be called as group privacy; and the last one is the privacy or self-contained. (Nek: Altman 2003, 22-23).

Obtaining privacy in house environment could be classified into three stages which could be gained in a part. Thus, entrance and its parts are the place which describe this notion and it can be described as a stage for determination of privacy. The central spaces of house is the place for separation of privacy and demarcation of having access to other parts of the house. The more personal spaces of house such as rooms are the locations which could be allocated for each member of the house. What seems to be from these separations and its effects on obtaining degrees of privacy is that privacy or loneliness and confidentiality of Westin could be imagined more in the second and third stages, and spiritual privacy or self-contained status could be gained in all three stages, since approaching spiritual privacy is the capability of the souls which is more sublime and is less affected by environment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Houses during Qajar Era</th>
<th>1st Stage</th>
<th>2nd Stage</th>
<th>3rd Stage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entrance + Gate + Porch + Corridor</td>
<td>Central Court + (Central Point: Water and Nature) + Alcove</td>
<td>Public spaces of house (external) + Private spaces of house (internal)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Houses during 1st Pahlavi Era</th>
<th>1st Stage</th>
<th>2nd Stage</th>
<th>3rd Stage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entrance + Stairway + Green Spaces + Consul</td>
<td>Sitting rooms + Central Point</td>
<td>Public Spaces of Home + Communication Spaces + Private Spaces of House</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Classification of Privacy Stages.

Explanation of Privacy: House Entrance

In these parts, how house spaces affect developing concept of privacy and materializing elements which are involved will be discussed. The first element is house entrance space. Then, the architect who thought this area has regarded first method of entering a house and prevented
aspiration to house privacy with architectural introduction, which this point is explanation of house privacy; so entrance of Iranian introvert houses are commenced with entrance part and after passing porch, it reached to a winding and indirect corridor to a central court yard, in such a way that there was no sight to court space up to coming to the end of corridor (Figure 1).

There is a significant point about dimensions of entrance space, i.e. relatively low height of door, in proportionate with head door in Iranian introvert houses which evoke a private space, and it develops a kind of security for house (Figure 2). These door had hammer door knocker which in its simplest form had function of informing. Each door knocker was placed in each part of door; hammer with bass sound was for men and a ring was used for women, and residents of the house could be informed of gender of attending person. (Soltanzadeh, 1993, 92)

Figure 1 – Corridor Porch of two introvert house

Figure 2 – Proportion of door to head door in one introvert house in Tabriz

Reference: (Soltanzadeh 128-1372)

Privacy Classification: Central Space of House

Central space of house is a private space for the ones who enters house realm and it provide a group privacy space. This space is a space for classification of house privacy through which one can approach private spaces of house, for allocated privacies. The central point in Iranian houses was a small pool and natural spaces inside central courtyard.
In such plans, besides lighting to rooms from three directions and allocation of each lever to one part of house, they were constructed in such a way that by opening sliding doors, these rooms could be connected to each other. The private space of family in Iranian introvert houses with central court plan was mostly in entrance section and at the southern side of building and at the end of alcove part, which considering dominance of warm season in the selected samples, the main space of family privacy was naturally located at the southern side, however, there was another part for winter time at the northern side of court yard. In these plans, generally ending points and corners of plan were allocated to private spaces of house.

**Conclusion**

The more precise description of Islam about significance of house and maintaining family privacy has developed more details in Iranian houses that being introvert is one of them. However, scientifically and from western natural view, as well as considering climatic elements changed houses into extrovert status like studying cases in West. Studying the mentioned building, it is inferred that privacy in house and guarding its frontage is an inherent notion which is imbedded in essence of human being. What is found is a respect which man has for his private realm and protects it by making some arrangements which are common in his time-location culture. Since human being retrieve his personality and identity by determining a realm for himself. Elements such as entrance, port and porch are discussed as symbols which have been influenced by inherent notion of privacy. The more significant point is the space which could gain privacy with a number of elements is virtual, and this is man who is the reality in it, because right exists in him. This is materialization of his disorientation in mundane world, and he finds it in a deliberate privacy between his inner right and God. The noteworthy point here is privacy place which could be gained in absence of materials, and the spaces for explanation, separation and allocation of privacy are all to facilitate a spiritual privacy and physical privacy that among these privacy and resting spaces, personal privacy is the most allocated one.
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