

Original Research Article

The effect of laws and regulations on the durability of architecture and urban planning of the Safavid era

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Abstract

The research that has been conducted so far in the field of Iranian architectural studies mostly examines the body of the works and occasionally investigates the side factors and social and cultural issues affecting the administration and use of a building. Among these factors, we can mention the attitude of the kings in the field of architectural constructions in different historical periods, and the control and management of cities.

It seems that Iranian architecture has principles based on which architects have acted in relation to durability and long useful life of buildings. The creation of desirable and high-quality architectural works that have can last and adapt to life and the passage of time has been happening in Iran for a long time. Meanwhile, today's societies constantly witness that buildings are destroyed, which disturbs the face of the city. Therefore, it is worth finding the factors that cause the permanence of Iranian architecture. Over time, various factors have positively affected the useful life of architectural works.

The purpose of this article is to first read the texts and documents and extract the existing regulations in the Safavid period and then measure their effect in increasing the useful life of the architectural works in that period. First, the regulations of the Safavid era related to architectural constructions or urban spaces are summarized, and then the relationship between these factors and the useful life of the building is examined. After this stage, the related factors in four general categories including economic factors, cultural and social factors, security and military factors, and architecture and urban planning factors are classified and introduced as influential factors.

This study seeks to answer the question of whether the regulations related to architecture and the orders of the Safavid Shah were able to affect the durability and longevity of the works? In this research, a background theory derived from the data that were systematically collected and analyzed during the research process has been used. Based on this method, first open coding is done up to the stage of theoretical saturation, and then the classification and analysis of the codes is done up to the stage of selective codes.

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Extended Abstract

1. Introduction

To investigate the history of Iranian architecture, special attention has been paid to the physical aspects of architectural works. However, in the construction and completion of an architectural building, other factors are involved. Among them, we can mention the context of creating a plan, the type of thinking of those in power during the construction of a building, social, cultural, economic, political factors, and the work of artists and supporters and founders of the building. On the other hand, an indirect, contextual and guiding factor such as the regulations and laws of the city is also one of the topics in the field of architecture that has caused some kind of change in the minds of architects. These regulations, which can take different forms and types, have an effective role in the way a building or office is formed as well as how a city is developed, changed or founded. This factor is derived from many other factors such as the intentions of the kings or religious issues (especially in the field of administration and use of buildings), and cultural and customary factors.

During the Safavid era and at the time of the relative stabilization of the government, i.e. at the beginning of the 11th century AH, many urban spaces and architectural buildings were added to the Safavid city, which is the center of the Shah's government. So the major changes in this period can be considered from the beginning of the rule of the Great Shah Abbas. The various instructions and decrees given by the king, courtiers, and clerics for the construction of buildings mainly contain information on how to build it, even sometimes in the smallest details related to the design of the building. According to the studies in this field, some of these guidelines were established only in the government centers that were associated with more changes in this era and were applicable for specific spaces.

2. Research Methodology

The method of this research in the first stage is qualitative with the Grounded Theory. Since the research depends on the time, place, cultural and social background of its field, the required data are extracted through the study of historical texts and other related studies. Due to the novelty of the subject, the theory of context, which is derived from the data systematically collected and analyzed during the research process, seems very appropriate. After numerous data have been extracted, the researcher tries to categorize and evaluate them and finally narrates each category of factors with qualitative expressions.

3. Results and discussion

Examining the evidence and clues in the sources shows that the increase in the useful life of the buildings in each period, and especially in the Safavid period as the historical period, is subject to certain factors. The obtained factors are the result of the classification of regulations and laws in

the Safavid era. These factors include cultural and social factors, economic factors, security and military factors, and architectural and urban planning factors. It should be noted that, due to the unparalleled role of the Shah, especially in the second half of the Safavid era, his opinions were implemented in all affairs of the country. Also, in the absence of a coherent and separate institution to review construction matters, repetition when not avoided.

4. Conclusion

Architecture and urban planning have been done in different eras under the influence of many factors, which include very broad issues, from climate conditions to religious and cultural issues, and even the personal taste of builders and employers. Over time, such issues have led to the creation of laws in the field of architecture and urban planning, some of which are subject to the customs of the ruling society, some follow the taste and discretion of the rulers, and some are formed in accordance with Sharia standards and beliefs among the people. By studying the historical buildings and the written sources of each period, one finds that some of these rules were unwritten and the masters implemented them according to their experience. Indeed, the laws of architecture and urban planning have affected different stages of creating a city.

This research started with reading texts and documents and extracting existing regulations in the Safavid period and then measuring their effect on increasing the useful life of architectural works. In the next step, the regulations of the Safavid era related to architectural constructions or urban spaces were summarized, and then the relationship between these factors and the useful life of the building was investigated. After this stage, the effective and relevant factors are classified into four general categories of economic factors, cultural and social factors, security and military factors, and architectural and urban planning factors.

The rules and regulations of the Safavid era, which have made the architecture and the city of this period, have lasted for some centuries and are the important message of the wise architects of this land for the architects of today's generation. It is hoped that the insight provided by this article, which is based on the experience and knowledge of the predecessors, will benefit the successors.

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