

An Overview on Islamic Architecture, Case Study; Iranian Mosques



Architecture

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ABSTRACT

Islamic architecture includes a vast range of buildings with different and special elements that which of them can be evaluated uniquely. There are some bright styles that are effective while evolution of Islamic architecture in middle-east such as Arabic, Azeri and Persian architecture. In this topic Iran has stand in a unique stage because Iranian architecture shows a multi-style of the architecture of mentioned cultures that happened in Iranian history. In this paper some of the Iranian mosques have been investigated to show their relations. For example; Juma Mosque of Fahraj city, Juma Mosque of Isfahan city and Juma Mosque of Yazd city in Iran show the evolution of Iranian Islamic architecture and their imitation, effect and relation with other Islamic styles. Firstly, Juma Mosque of Fahraj city is the oldest mosque that has constructed in Iran. It shows how the Persian-Sasanid architecture mixed with Arabic architecture in the first centuries of Islamic Iran eras. Then, it demonstrates mixing Persian architecture with Turkish-Seljuqs between 10th and 11th centuries when they added a minaret beside the mosque. Secondly, the Juma mosque of Isfahan city represents as a condensed history of Iranian architecture as well because it has a lot of elements that have signed with different dynasties which were ruling in Iran. Finally, the juma Mosque of Yazd city with the tallest minarets illustrates mixing Persian architecture with Azeri architecture. This paper investigated about Islamic architecture specially focusing on Iranian mosques to show the features of different styles in the frame of Islamic architecture.

Introduction

There are some bright styles that are effective while evolution of Islamic architecture Iran [1]. For example, Arabic, Azeri and Persian architectures are three main styles in Iran [2]. It stands in an excellent stage because Iranian architecture demonstrates a multi-style of the architecture in its history. In this paper some of the Iranian mosques have represented to display their relations.

For example; Juma Mosque of Fahraj city, Juma Mosque of Isfahan city and Juma Mosque of Yazd city in Iran show the evolution of Iranian Islamic architecture and their imitation, effect and relation with other Islamic styles.

Juma Mosque of Fahraj city is the oldest mosque that has constructed in Fahraj-Iran. It demonstrates the relation of Sasanid architecture with Arabic architecture in the first centuries of Islamic eras of Iran. Then, it demonstrates mixing Persian architecture with Turkish-Seljuqs between 10th and 11th centuries when they added a minaret beside the mosque by Seljuqs dynasty [3]. In other word its plan has constructed following Arabic forms and Seljuqs added a minaret beside it according to their own style.

On the other hand, the Juma mosque of Isfahan city represents as a condensed history of Iranian architecture as well because it has a lot of elements that have signed with different dynasties which were ruling in Iran. For example its basic form, ivans and Mihrab have added on it gradually.

Also, the juma Mosque of Yazd city with the tallest minarets illustrates mixing Persian architecture with Azeri architecture [4].

Juma Mosque of Fahraj City

The congregational mosque of Fahraj city is among the oldest mosques in Iran. it represent the simple architectural features of the early Islamic centuries. Its fundamental construction material includes large sun-dried bricks [5]. Its façade is coated with mixture of clay, sand and chopped straw, and plaster bracing.

It has a minaret that was built in 10th or 11th century. Its minaret is made of small raw bricks. The picturesque chalk reliefs on its east wall and also other decorative elements contain Sasan-

ian art characteristics [6]. There has been a places for hiding in the mosque that people could hide during anarchical times [7].

Also, there is a tomb stone of Sayyed Fa r-al-Din Abu Ja far osayn al- Ari i that is another historical monument of Fahraj. It has made by Abd-All h b. A mad Mara in the 12th century [8].

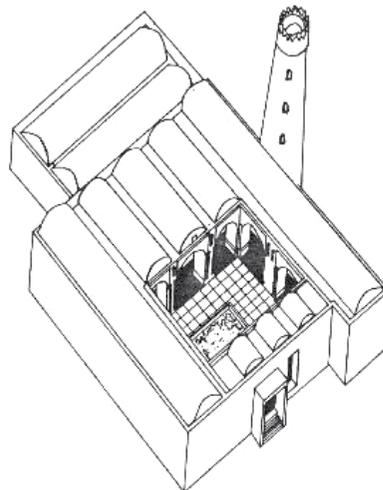


Figure1: 3D modeling of Juma Mosque of Fahraj City [http://morarchitect.blogfa.com]

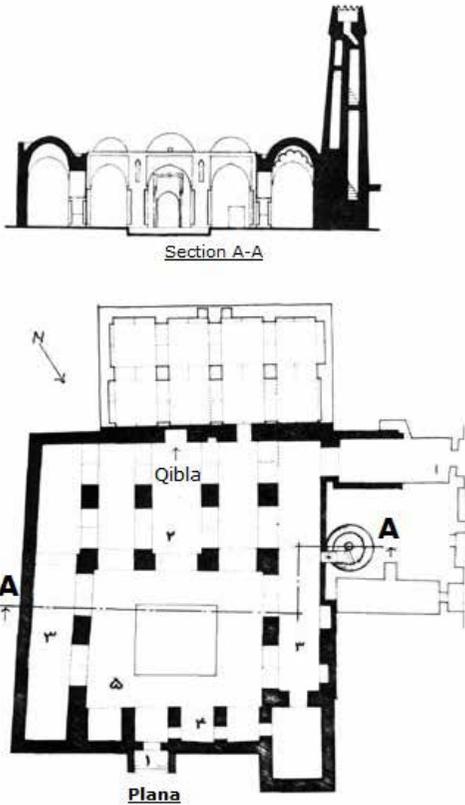


Figure2: Plan and Section of Juma Mosque of Fahraj City [<http://morarchitect.blogfa.com/post/36>]

Juma Mosque of Isfahan City

The Juma Mosque of Isfahan is the grand congregational mosque in Isfahan city. The mosque is the result of continual construction while different dynasties. It has reconstructed and renovated on the site from 8th century to the 20th century. It has constructed northeast of the Grand Bazaar of Isfahan that is a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2012.[9]

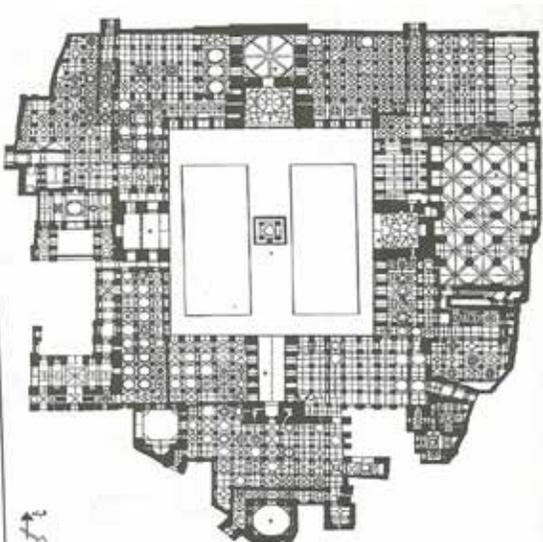


Figure3: Plan of Juma Mosque of Isfahan City [<http://morarchitect.blogfa.com/post/36>]

Characteristics of Juma Mosque in Isfahan City

The Juma Mosque of Isfahan was built with the form of four-ivans that its gates organized face to face. it is one of the an-

cient mosques that is still standing in Iran. An ivan is a semi-open room. Its southern ivan is called Qibla ivan. It adorned with Muqarnas during the 13th century. Its muqarnas formed niche-like cells.[2] There are two brick domed chambers that constructed under the Turkish dynasty of Seljuqs. Nizam al-Mulk who was pri-minister of Seljuq-Shah has constructed its southern dome to house the mihrab in 1086-87. It has constructed as a larger dome than others known at its time to vizier of Malik Shah [10].

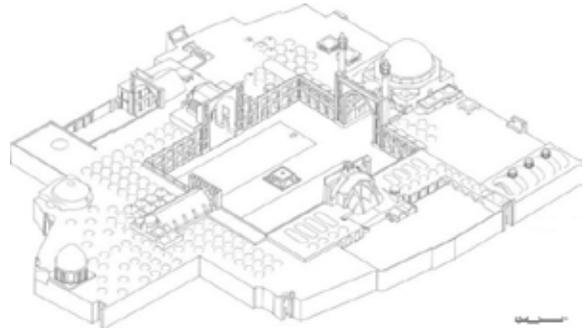


Figure4: 3d Model of Juma Mosque of Isfahan City [National Archives of IRI]

On the other hand, the northern dome constructed a year later than southern one by Nizam al-Mulk’s rival Taj-al Mulk. It orientated along the north-south axis but its function is uncertain and also, it situated outside of the mosque. It should be mentioned that the dome has certainly built as a direct riposte to the south dome successfully [11]. It is a masterpiece of Turkish Seljuq style`s in Iranian architecture for its structure and geometry.



Figure5: Naqshi Jihan Square of Isfahan City [khuif.ac, 2012]

Its ivans were added in steps under the Seljuqs that present the mosque as its current four-ivan formed shape. This type of Seljuq`s unique style which formed mosques with four-ivans became a prevalent style in Iran and also in the Islamic world.[12]



Figure6: Oljaytu Mihrab

Functions of the spaces of the Juma mosque of Isfahan were currently changing according to the religious, political, developments needs. Also, it changes in the favor of Turkish kings while different dynasties after Seljuqs such as; Mongols, Timurids and Safavids. Because after event of depriving Arabs from Iran by Turkish-tribe kings of Iran they tried to construct a lot of mosques to make people more satisfactory than the past as the follow;

Oljaytu the Mongol ruler has elaborately carved a stucco Mihrab in the side of the prayer hall that is built within the western arcade in 1310. Also, the decorations, glazed tilework, minarets flanking the south ivan and muqarnas adorning of the mosque have happened while Safavid kings` intervention.

There is an area between the ivans where is undated, varied in style and ongoing modified with repairs and additions.[13]

The mosque had originally built in the 8th century. Then, it burnt down. So, it has rebuilt again in the 11th century by the Seljuk dynasty.

It should not be forgotten that it went remodeling many times.

It has a lot of cells, rooms and other spaces built in different styles. For example, its piers that form the hypostyle presents mixing the Persian-Arabic architecture with Azeri architecture as well. Subsequently, the Juma mosque of Isfahan represents a condensed history of Iranian architecture as well.

History of Juma Mosque in Yazd City

Juma Mosque of Yazd is the grand congregational mosque in Yazd city. The mosque has pictured on the obverse of some Iranian currency. The mosque has still in use since 12th-century. It had built under *Ala'oddoleh Garshasb* of the Al-e Bouya dynasty for first time, then largely rebuilt between 1324 and 1365. Also it is one of the privileged 14th century buildings of Iran [14].



Figure7: Plan of Juma Mosque of Yazd City [Heritage organization of Yazd, 2000]

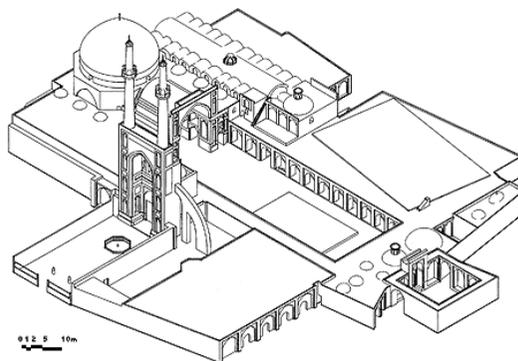


Figure8: 3D model of Juma Mosque of Yazd City [khuisf.ac, 2012]

Characteristics of Juma Mosque in Yazd City

The mosque is one of the best examples of the Azari architecture. The mosque is ornate by a pair of minarets above its ivan that are the highest in Iran. The façade of entrance is decorated from top to bottom. Its decoration includes of attractive tile work [15]. Blue tiles are predominantly includes its decoration materials [16]. Also, it has a long arcaded courtyard behind a deep-set south-east of ivan. and a sanctuary, and a chamber. The chamber is located under a short and thick tiled dome. Its decoration is complexed with faience mosaic [17].



Figure7: Minaret of Juma Mosque of Yazd City

Conclusion

Iran is a unique country because of its religious, national and cultural verity. Whereas Islam has some distinctive features that make it an independent style, we observe different elements from different dynasties and nations but they present just a collective space. Every single mosque from any style has its own special features but it presents a place with religious function.

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