

**International Journal of Biology, Pharmacy  
and Allied Sciences (IJBPAS)**

*'A Bridge Between Laboratory and Reader'*

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## IMPACT OF WESTERN URBANISM PATTERNS ON IRANIAN-ISLAMIC CITIES

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### ABSTRACT

Islamic city or society is focused on principles, basics and a specific approach towards universe, humans, other world, and God. This basics and principles mainly explain features and characteristics of Islamic city. The city which relies on such attitudes and principles that is an Islamic city; also the city that its social order and relations are not based on these principles is not an Islamic one. The aim of current research is to study the impact of western urbanism patterns on Iranian-Islamic cities (district 3 of Kermanshah municipality). Using descriptive-analytic method, first it identifies architectural patterns and Iranian-Islamic urbanism, and then checks identity features and parameters of Iranian cities. To study the importance and efficiency of each mental factor in district 3 of Kermanshah municipality, the questionnaire was used for 148 experts of architecture and urbanity in the scope of review. The documents and projects, qualitative analysis of the region and spatial organization were also analyzed in order to study the objective parameters in Iranian-Islamic cities. Results of the research indicate that codification of identity goals in that planning can be focused as the main influential factor of mental parameters. Major changes are also performed in the region affected by architectural patterns and modern urbanism that requires the necessity to develop patterns and principles of local and Islamic architecture.

**Keywords:** Pattern, Urbanism, Western Culture, Iranian-Islamic, Local Architecture

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## INTRODUCTION

Along with use of common urbanism methods in defeated civilizations by Islam and also reliance on the new cultural form and pattern in urbanism originated from religion, the Islamic cities have similarities with each other and dissimilarities with other non-Islamic ones. The variation of these values and fundamental changes in Islamic cities that is originated from worldview and beliefs of citizens is one of issues necessary for discussion in urban studies.

Each building or city is alive just to the extent committed to timeless path; a timeless path that represents itself on a cultural and social range to be an identity element in spatial and temporal structure by repeating patterns of events in an specific place. It is no doubt that original Iranian architecture and urbanism is based on values that are yet pleasant after many years; the space that human lives in it poetic, as Holderine says. The city with identity of Iranian-Islamic architecture and urbanism is referred to the city that is realization of civilization and from conceptual viewpoint is originated from principles of Islam religion and in the sense of meaning it has stable values based on Iranian spiritual insights. The goal of creating such urbanism is to provide suitable fields for perfection of humans according to Islamic thoughts;

development of social relations and also aspects of culture and civilization have manifested specially in artistic identical works. In addition, construction due to Islamic style involves a series of principles that change according to requirements of human and environment.

In Islamic urbanism, city is not prior to citizenship since it is due to Muslim citizenships that Islamic city forms; if this relation is not defined between human and city, and then the city would find just physical aspect. City in Iranian culture is a comprehensive concept that is combined of different cultural, social, economic, historical and natural dimensions. The sum of city's specific features with each of these dimensions simultaneously, their mutual impression and their exposure to mind of creator and city audience (human) results in a concept called 'city'. The city is in direct link with culture, values, beliefs and social features of its people; Islamic city with its all basics and concepts is a sample of influence of culture and beliefs on city (e.g. formation of city based on orientation of central mosque and religious buildings). Non-formation of up and down urban neighborhoods and existence of homogenous ones in Islamic city as a parameter of the concepts 'justice' and

'equality' is another example of impact of Islamic principles on the city.

### **Formation hierarchy of Islamic cities**

A) Early centuries of Islam: in early centuries of Islam, the cities established and constructed under influence of urbanism and architectural features were in Sassanid period that had followed previous principles, but due to influence of new factors and conditions like Islam religion, or development of trade the urbanism policies were gradually changed than first years of Islam arrival; and the cities of early centuries of Islam divided into two groups of new cities and modified cities. The new cities were often signs of imperial-political power and unity of Islam. The second category was cities formed gradually by development of military camps or castles. The 3<sup>rd</sup> category included formation of new cities beside pervious one such as Kufa, Qyran, Shiraz and/or new cities like Mashhad and Qom that were built around place of martyrdom or tomb of religious leaders; they were gradually developed and became as big cities. In early centuries of Islam, Qom experienced two significant events namely coming of Arabs to Qom and their rapid development and friendship with people

of Qom, then the battle between them and separation of this city from Isfahan.

- B) Islamic medieval centuries: in middle centuries of Islam, urbanism entered a new phase in the Seljuk's period, so that besides political peace and economic boom we observe efflorescence of Iranian art in Isfahan, Rey and jorjan. In this era, building new towns and/or repairing them was one of the responsibilities of government.
- C) Late Islamic centuries: construction of most cities of Iran was highly changed in this period. Opening communication networks, buildings, and public spaces different from religious locations changed past compact morphology. The main activity of architecture and urbanism must be investigated in period of King Abbas Safavi. The new neighborhoods were built in town of this period, especially in Isfahan as capital; the squares and bazaar formed bedside the central mosque, they formed central bazaar as center of all social activities.

Hence, community of the people ready to corporate with each other became targeted, and is transformed to a society with specific relations; so that each of peoples have a specific role and position in sciences and arts.

### **Akhavan-e Safa**

From Akhavan-e Safa point of view, the upmost human society is the 'city' and it is divided into two categories, namely utopia and unfair; the government also is formed in utopia community (good government) and/or it is formed in an unfair community (evil government). Regarding their thoughts, the city is considered as a social institute for providing natural requirements of humans.

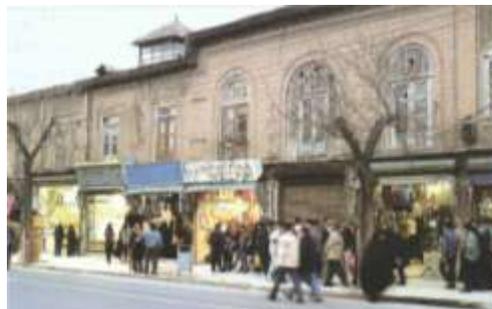
Of main features of these cities that Akhavan-e Safa emphasized is dissimilarity of cities and their people to each other; it is due to difference in climate and other geographical and natural differences and also soil, mines and industries.

### **• Ibn-e Khaldun**

The difference between society of philanthropists with the society of Ibn-e Khaldun based on ethnic covenant is that covenant in government of philanthropists is based on wisdom, but society of Ibn-e Khaldun is based on ethnic nervousness as referred that typically its aim is achieving control of the city; since life of people who live in desert is accompanied with difficulty and they are forced to unity with each other

due to providing needs and life survival. In fact, living in the level of city is considered as one of dreams and values for Bedouins because there is a comfort and opulence in the city that exist not in the desert. Therefore, they tend to the cities in order to achieve their dreams. Nervousness is the factor of their solidarity, staying away from division and enduring difficulty. But government of philanthropists performs in more evolved process of society, since this covenant forms in the city that is evolved form of human community; it means that the covenant based on religion is sign of evolution of social intelligence and plural wisdom of humans.

### **Some case studies**



**Fig (1): The portrait of Modarres street**  
This street is always attractive of crowd in the past and currently

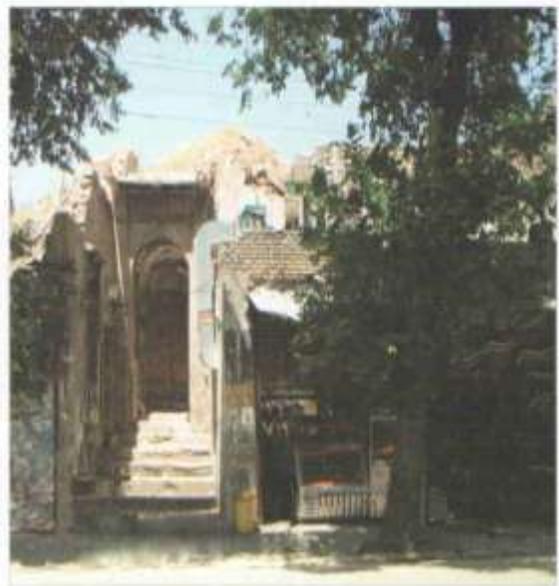
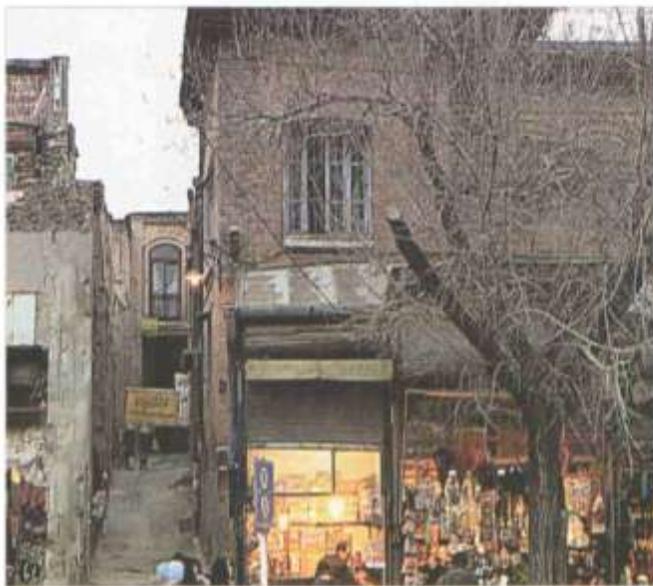
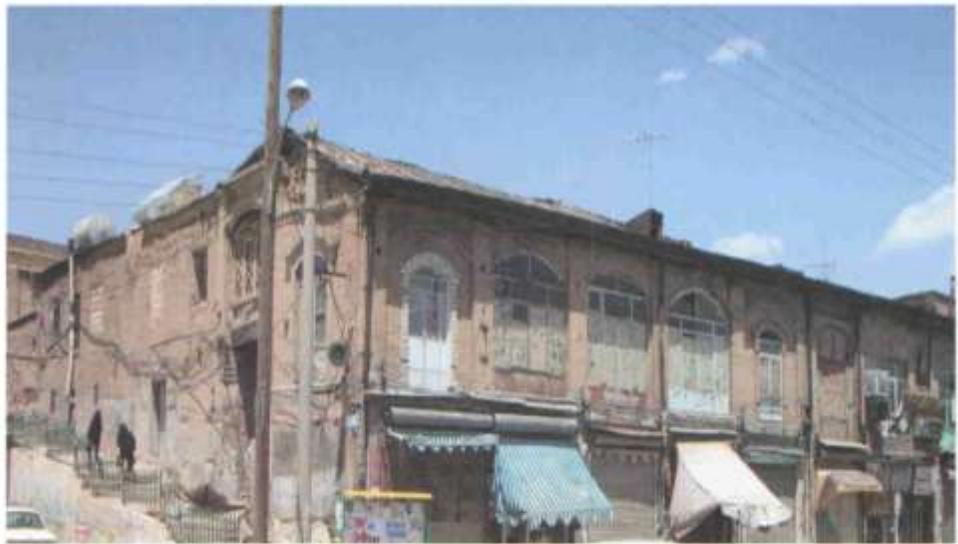
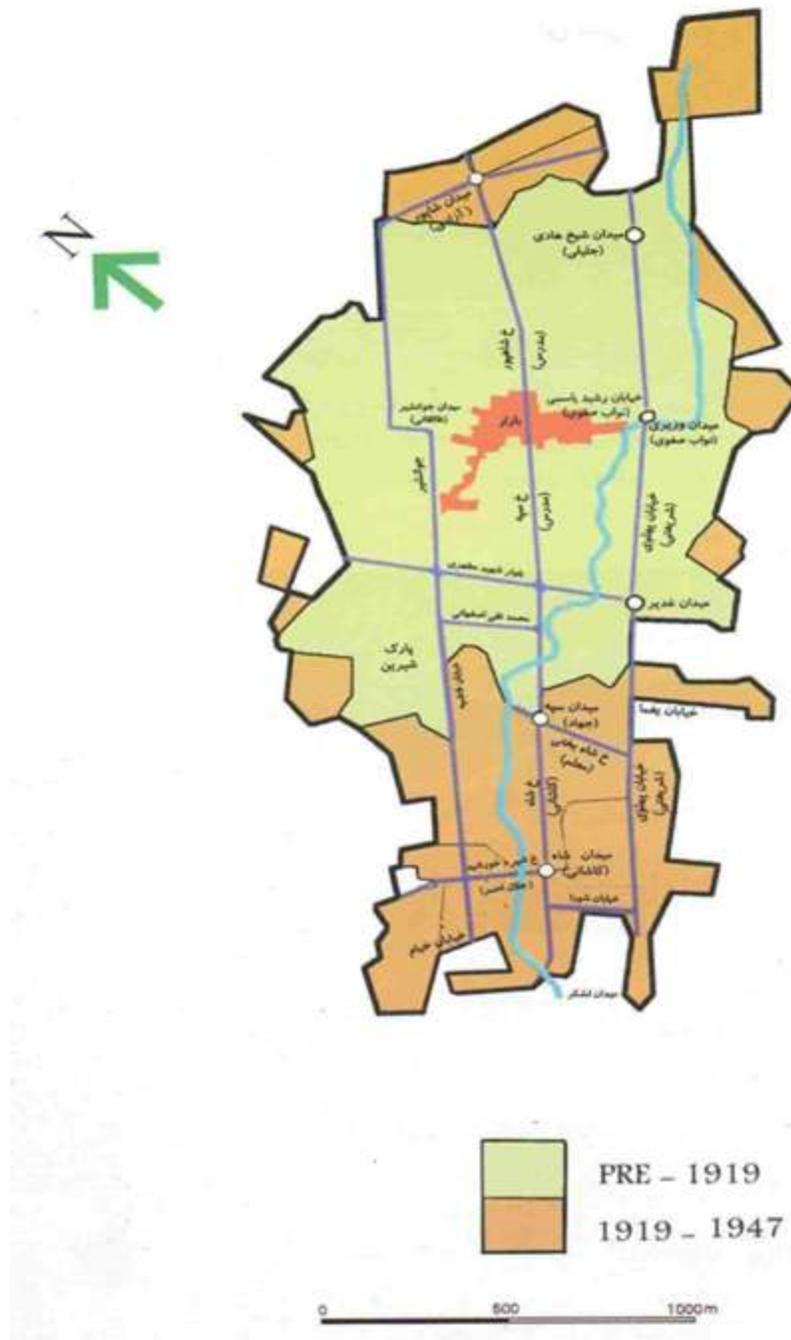


Fig (2) with the construction of Modarres street, the neighborhood and bazaar were separated



**Fig (3) Kermanshah : development between years 1919- 1947**

**Kermanshah in years 1941-1947**

With the onset of World War II, the city was center of nomadic and tribal chaos. The main road of Kermanshah- Sanandaj was blocked and city became a military base. In this condition, construction of new buildings highly decreased.

Residential construction was limited to development of villas; the remarkable sample of development is just construction of huge military bases at the southern end of the city located on top of a hill.

**Kermanshah in years 1947- 1956**

Between the years mentioned above, the city had a main growth and according to the first census, it had a rapid growth in population. The key physical changes of these years are:

- Significant developments to the south, south-west and west
- Small developments along the eastern margin
- Completion of Pahlavi street (currently Shariati) in parallel of Central street including three squares namely Pahlavi, Vaziri square and Agha Sheikh Hadi square.
- Construction of new garages in the northern and western sides of the city.

In the discussed period, there were three cinemas and three cafes all in one street that were considered as significant elements of the city in that time.

### **Kermanshah in the years 1956- 1965**

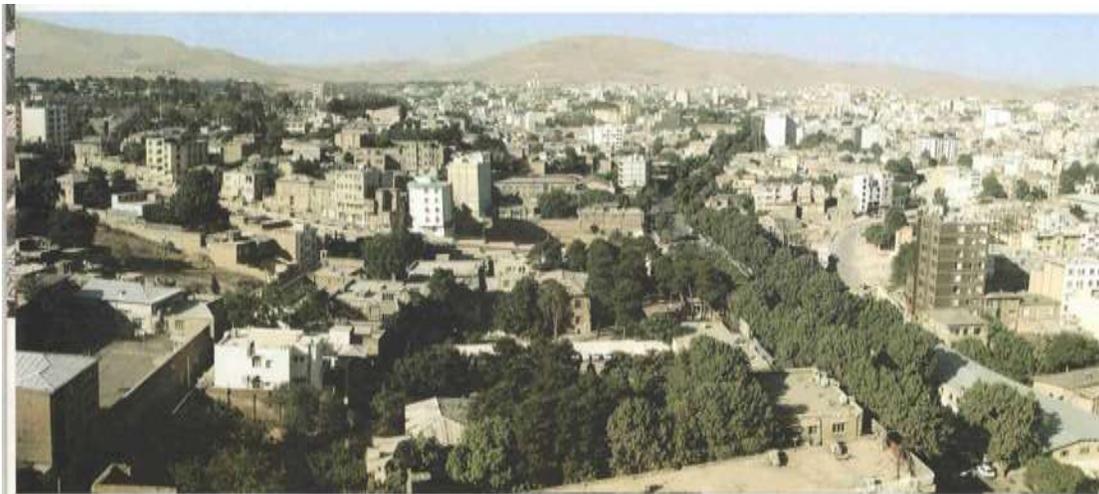
In these years, construction development performed in all directions except directions led to grave yards. The most important constructions were a public residential complex and development of national oil company refinery of Iran in a northern plain of the city and adjacent to Qare-su river. Also of other main changes is significant continued growth of military bases at southern end of the city.



**Fig (4) the overall view of the city from Kashani square to the west**



**Fig (5) portrait of refinery in the 1950s that is located at northern part of the city.**



**Fig (6) the overall portrait of city from Kashani square to the south (district of Ferdowsi street). Shora street is observed in left side of the image.**

### **Analysis and evaluation of city portrait in the middle period**

Urbanism of middle period itself has three historical stages. The first stage started from late Qajar and continued to reign of first Pahlavi. In these years, the style of architecture in Tehran was different from other cities. In Kermanshah, we observe continuation of integrated architecture (traditional-foreign). The architectural features of this period were physical order and maintenance of sky line order. The second stage of middle period is coincided with entry of initial modern

styles and prevalence of foreign architecture. one of the physical elements of portrait in this type of architecture is appearance of open balcony; the prominent example of this architecture is seen in official building and Red Crescent hospital of Kermanshah. The most important architecture features of this period are physical variation used as a new value in enthusiasm parameters of view. In contrast to its contemporary generation, the modern street architecture has valuable characteristics of urban design that some examples of it exist in Kermanshah. The 3<sup>rd</sup> stage

of this period starts from late 1960s related to rein of second Pahlavi and continued until the years after Iran revolution; content of styles and methods are not so much different. This stage of development in architecture and urbanism will be studied in form of identity of modern period.

### **Features of public spaces and neighborhoods of city**

What is certain is that construction of urban and neighborhood spaces changed with arrival of

automobile and streets. Simultaneous with this development, the change in economy, culture and technology changed the construction of physics and city portrait that is defined as urban space; the result and outcome of the mentioned factors changed features of life and identity of city. The developments caused by mentioned changes affected all functional and physical aspects of city. The important dimensions of this event are checkable in city of Kermanshah.



**Fig (7) a view of public buildings of the middle stage**

### **Structure of middle period neighborhood**

In the early of this period, the old neighborhoods maintained their spatial organization, centers and communication network, and newer neighborhoods formed along the new streets. As a result, the central elements of neighborhood such as small square, small bazaar and Chaharsoq have a pale appearance in modern neighborhoods. Consequently, spatial hierarchy does not exist like before and it is replaced by new urban divisions.

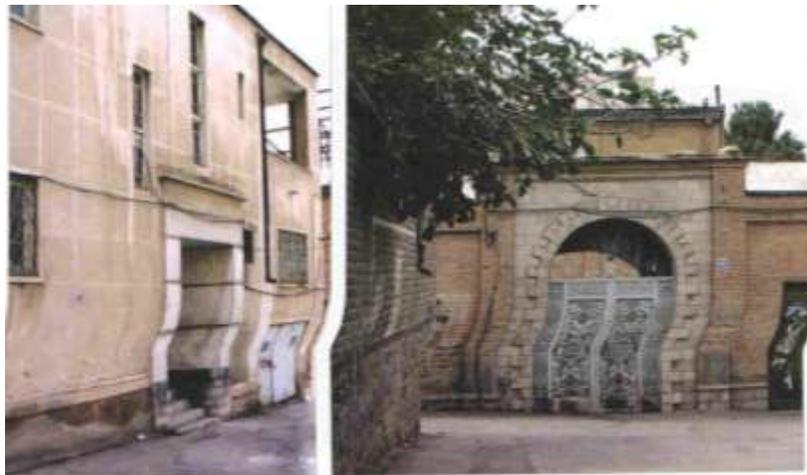
In this stage of city life, physical elements lost their identity and defined city identity in a new form. The neighborhood and urban space of middle period has witnessed the appearance of architecture styles and methods from ancient times to the present. The traditional styles from Qajar period to first Pahlavi, method of integrated architecture and modern architecture of 1950s and 1960s are observed in the images below.



### **Urbanism and architecture of Kermanshah in the modern period**

In this period, the city is combined of three main parts of old texture with a discrete body, functional overloading and semi-ruined houses. The other part of marginal residential of the city is completely without any environmental and health care equipment with the houses with minimum

principles of architecture and construction. Finally, there are modern neighborhoods with unknown style and method of architecture that have textures without any spatial-physical thought. In this type of city, all three parts are devoid of rule and regulation of architecture and urbanism and just based on time.



**Fig (8) Shora street and appearance of architecture in different periods**



**Fig (9): Portrait of modern Kermanshah. Once upon a time, this place was Sabze Meydan with a view completely different**

### **Kermanshah in the modern period**

Simultaneously with the reign of Pahlavi in 1925, the public policy of the country was towards political and bureaucratic focus, transition of traditional agriculture to machinery manufacturing and foundation of industrial and capitalist economy. The programs of renovation and modernization with the above goals and infrastructure development caused change in life and portrait of Iranian cities such as Kermanshah. Development and renovation of cities, construction and communication networks consistent with new conditions and necessities with the presence of ‘machine’ in urban life are considered as most important aspects of these developments.

In the image below, the urban privacy, urban framework, main communication network and also natural and artificial elements forming this main framework are portrayed. As it is obvious in the image, the main communication networks in

spatial organization are located adjacent to significant elements and nodes of urban texture.

### **Public structure of city**

Kermanshah is an old and historical city that is rapidly developed and renovated during years of the recent century; this caused lack of excellence between old and new textures of city. In this gap, the castle like structure of city , its battlements, walls and old suburban changed to new constructions, and old functions of the city also developed. Growth of the city is in such a way that now more development in the region faces with several considerations and limitations from economic, social and environmental viewpoints

The main functions of city are:

- Economic function
- Service function
- Communicative/ international function
- Political/ bureaucratic function
- Tourism/ leisure/ rest function

### **Development of Kermanshah in the contemporary period**

In addition to consequences of a non-developed city, Kermanshah had always a defensive role over western boundaries of the country. In study of growth and development levels of city in the contemporary period, the additional consequences of war between Iran and Iraq like cultural invasions, unemployment, marginalization and political and geographical status must also be considered. The direct relation between security issue and growth of city is completely obvious by studying the process of physical development of contemporary period. Yet, the direction and method of city development had followed geographical conditions. In time of provision the first 'city development master plan', the area around central core and also Taq Bostan in the

north of Qare-Su axis was scattered; the pattern of development master plan was a linear one. Also in the recent developments, the urban portrait of Kermanshah probably has lost its best score due to change in growth of city from southern heights to northern plains. Simultaneously with achieving new equipment, this event has damaged capabilities of city and its surrounding. For example, Sanandaj axis transformed to industrial zone; thus, agricultural lands were occupied and Qare-Su river was endangered by industrial waste waters. Therefore, the finest agricultural lands, the most attractive urban perspectives and most of villages were sacrificed by growth and development.



The situation of old and new textures of the city is shown in the image below:

## DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

The city is symbol of civilization and has specific features; before Islam, the cities of Iran had specifications and features based on historical and ancient principles of urbanism. With the advent of Islam, Iranian urbanism

achieved specific features in terms of cultural and religious texture; they had maintained these features in their historical development and in most cases it caused growth of urban societies from different directions. By review of several definitions and concepts of city in

Islamic society, we observe that purpose of formation of cities was not only for physical framework, but the premier goals were base of forming Islamic city.

This type of architecture and urbanism maintained from the arrival of Islam to Iran and gave a historical and cultural identity to Iranian-Islamic cities. By development of Iranian-Islamic reigns, the Iranian cities had a significant growth with economy and culture. A historical-cultural glance at Iranian cities shows peak of architecture such as Isfahan in the Safavid period; but in the contemporary period urbanism is considered as an engineering construction.

Development of cities and marginalization both caused formation of bazaars alongside the gates of cities and establishment of urban streets network; the alleys leading to bazaar and central mosque shows religious and political unity and these elements are base of traditional-Islamic cities. This setting formed elements of Islamic cities that have grown and maintained during the centuries. By advent of modernism and development of industrial cities, the form and structure of cities changed and formation goals of cities were not religious and cultural unity ;instead easy access to industrial and economic centers were on the top. In traditional cities, the bazaar and mosques were main centers of city

but advent of modernism the factories and industrial centers caused basic changes for cities since the viewpoints for formation of cities and functions of social institutions were different due to western patterns. Policies of governments were also towards western patterns and traditional cities were affected by these factors. One of these basic changes was 'street' that divided neighborhoods to several parts; it removed historical identity of some of them since the appearance of some streets was ignoring old traditional aspects. The developments happened in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries cause formation of new thoughts by some scholars that in some cases they had specific features; some of them were social reformers the presented new solutions to form anti-capitalist society . a group of these idealists were the same initial socialists that had perceived disorders of industrial cities as the result of capitalist society and their solutions were in order to improve the working class. Their approach was called 'development-oriented' pattern so that cities formed based on this approaches had some specific features. Accordingly, the urban spaces were classified and formed with different functions; in this approach, most of ancient heritages were ignored. The cities were pragmatic and constructed based on principle of economic efficiency; the

mechanical tools and live tools (ea. humans) were emphasized. These opinions were mostly similar to suggestive packages for formation of cities. These approaches were completely different with Islamic ones; since formation of Islamic cities is based on intellectual basis, consolidated views and principle of political unity. In Islamic thought, the school and ideology affects the basis of city formation while in socialism viewpoint, the social and economic unity is main approach in formation of cities.

In world of Islam, there were several scholars that willingly or unwillingly had expressed some purposes of formation of cities. The study of these approaches shows that fortune of humans is emphasized and this fortune is possible in Islamic city. These thoughts and theories lead to formation of Iranian cities that its pinnacle of art and architecture is observed in Safavid period, Isfahan.

In the first hypothesis, it was observed that Iranian-Islamic urbanism had accepted much influence in facing with western urbanism. It is observed in this research that some east scholars presented definitions for Islamic cities. According to these definitions, Islamic cities have specific pattern of urbanism models. William Marche was an author that presented concepts related to structure of Islamic city for the first time. According to

his viewpoint, the vital elements of ideal Islamic city include central mosque, the adjacent bazaar and the bath; since these three are elements that provide the condition for praying of Muslims. Although this is a very simple and initial definition, but it is emphasized by many authors. Gustavo Fangrune says that “city has two main focuses: central mosque and bazaars. Central mosque is located along main routs of city or their conjunction as spiritual, political and religious center. Beside central mosques, public and bureaucratic buildings are constructed and bazaars have equal formation and functional hierarchy in all Islamic territory”. According to these definitions, it is specified that Islamic cities have an equal and common specific pattern that had grown with historical developments and caused development of Islamic cities. To improve the conditions of working class, some initial socialists believed that preindustrial patterns should be considered or the poverty must be eliminated; to do this, problems of cities must be handled by thoughtful and logical minds. They had thought that a kind of wisdom, knowledge and logic can solve the relationship of humans with world and among themselves. Some of features of this pattern are emphasis on exact classification of urban space, an exact classification of housing,

work, education and leisure time functions; today, most of these patterns are outstanding in cities of Iran.

Gradually, ignoring some patterns of Islamic architecture and influence of western architecture was begun in the modern period; for example rooms of Shamsol-emare were organized like before, just corridors were added to it but semicircular structures were applied in view of the building. These structures were not used in previous architecture of Iran and ancient architects were disagreed with its application; their reason was instability and western-like pattern of this method that is not applicable in Iran.

The second hypothesis indicates that ‘value of Iranian-Islamic urbanism indicators are far away from desired situation’; study of Iran modern urbanism and some shortcomings in urban spaces indicates appearance of some theories in buildings and urban spaces such as kindergartens in most cities of Iran that are often originated from some western patterns. Robert Owen, the British socialist and reformer established the first kindergarten in England. He believed that education is necessary for a human who wants to rule machine and enjoy equipment of industrial revolution. According to difference in religious approaches of Islamic society, it is

required to consider some cultural and educational approaches in urbanism patterns.

In 3<sup>rd</sup> hypothesis of this research, it is indicated that determining the pattern of Iranian -Islamic urbanism provides the ability to deal with pressure of foreign patterns; in culture-oriented school some of cultural needs of urban societies are emphasized. From their point of view, industrial city ignores spiritual; needs of humans; thus, they think to health of soul rather health of body. The patten of garden-city was introduced in 20th century as a new approach to urbanism while it was applied in architecture and urbanism of Iran in earlier centuries. In describing of Jolfa neighborhood, Sharden says: Jolfa is decided into two new and old residential parts. He says about new neighborhood called Abbas Abad in suburban of Isfahan and west of Chahar Baq street with a raster map: this neighborhood is the most beautiful region of the city, the buildings are magnificent and the alleys are wide; the raceways are passed through the main alleys of this region. He adds that new neighborhoods of Isfahan are located along the city and/or they are separated, formed and developed from Zayande-Rud. Hence, according to successful architecture and urbanism periods in Iran some of these patterns are applicable in cities; and it is concluded that determining them can

restorate national and cultural identity to Iranian -Islamic cities.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

In the current research, three hypotheses were considered; now answer to hypothesis is discussed:

As mentioned before, the first hypothesis ‘ it seems that Iranian -Islamic architecture has highly affected by western patterns of urbanism’. Based on studies conducted in theoretical basics and the differences between values and principles of Islamic patterns and western ones in several historical periods, and finally results of recognition district 3 of Kermanshah municipality, the impact of western urbanism patterns and parameters on Iranian -Islamic cities in the course of urban developments of Iran, especially in district 3 of Kermanshah is confirmed.

According to the second hypothesis it seems that ‘ value of Iranian-Islamic urbanism indicators are far away from desired situation’; with respect to qualitative studies and analysis conducted about situation of the region under study, it was observed that changes and developments performed during recent decades are not consistent with Iranian -Islamic patterns and values of urban societies; thus, it caused much confusion and disorder in the texture and spatial

organization of region. The accuracy of second hypothesis is also confirmed due to qualitative analysis and determining desirable range of urban spaces in the region under study.

According to 3<sup>rd</sup> hypothesis of this research ‘it seems that determining the pattern of Iranian -Islamic urbanism provides the ability to deal with pressure of foreign patterns’; with respect to results of study and analyses of questionnaire about factors and parameters effective for revival of Iranian -Islamic cities, determining the identical purposes in planning is introduced as the main factor .Thus, the last hypothesis with emphasize on the role of Iranian -Islamic pattern indicates that Iranian -Islamic urbanism provides the ability to deal with pressure of foreign patterns.

## **SUGGESTIONS**

In the recent years, field of urbanism is taught in technical-engineering universities. Since it is an interdisciplinary field and some urbanism and development projects are investigated in area of higher education, it is required to attend reform approaches in academic areas. One of the other areas of urbanism is municipalities. Therefore, urban managers must attend to religious principles and national goals in order to preserve national and cultural identity of Iranian-

Islamic cities. Here are some suggestions of these goals and programs:

1. It is observed that scientific approaches of some authors in the field of urbanism is considered and implemented in industrial cities; since field of urbanism is studied in higher education, it is required to revise some of its courses in this domain.
2. More attention to viewpoints of Islamic authors and scholars about philosophy of forming cities due to historical background of Islamic architecture and the need of preserving national and cultural identity.
3. Explaining the nature and essence of humans and continuity of some material and cultural elements in Islamic cities
4. Revision of available patterns and their reform based on Islamic perspectives due to influence of western urbanism patterns on Iranian cities
5. Since the amount of Iranian-Islamic patterns is far away from desirable situation, it is necessary to lower or even remove the distance; also urbanism pattern of Iran must be under influence of previous magnificent periods of architecture and urbanism.
6. Since determining indicators of Iranian-Islamic urbanism provides the possibility to confront with pressure of foreign

patterns, it is necessary to investigate and determine these indicators in academic environments and area of urban management.

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