

Original Research Article

An Investigating of the Functions of Iranian Caravanserais with a Landscape Approach

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Abstract | Road development has been one of the requirement for economic development in any historical period. In the old days, caravanserais were built for various reasons because of the vastness of Iran and the need to establish connections between different cities. These construction came in over years for a variety of reasons. These building had other functions rather than providing only a systematic opportunity for travellers and caravans which is taking rest, and also to exchange comes to examine in the possibility of turning it into a historical landscape which is used in tourism, data collection has been done through documentary technique and library studies by examining authentic magazines and books about the caravanserais. In this analysis, through the subject landscape, the functions of the caravanserai are identified and the functions are divided into eleven main categories. By analyzing these functions, it seems that the caravanserais, by their congruent function in different periods of time, have been able to have a special place in the economic, cultural and commercial processes. The narrative of the landscapes functions provides appropriate capacity to create a single tourism aspect and destination.

Keywords | *Caravanserai, Function, Landscape, Iran.*

Introduction | The term landscape is related to complex subjective concepts and the wide physical and non-physical dimensions related to the environment, geography, urban design, architecture and other related disciplines. That's why various definitions and different approaches have been addressed in terms of their perspectives (Mahan & Mansouri, 2017, 17). Landscape is called a vigorous and dynamic being that takes form in the constant interaction of society and nature. Thus, it will be a creature with cultural capabilities following the objectives of the aesthetic, cultural and triple functional

goals simultaneously. Landscape perception is a process based on sense that takes place without intermediaries (Mansouri, 2005, 69).

An important part of the perception of beauty, the perception of meaning, and symbols, as well as having a particular significance in the preferences of aesthetic determine the characteristics of people communicating through physical location. The identity of place is perceived as one ways of communication between man and place through culture, historical background, collective memories, type and nature of construction technology, functions, signs, forms and symbols of urban and visual and physical features (Aminzadeh, 2012, 5).

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The city, which is composed of elements, components, spaces, functions, and laws, including current relationships in the city, as well as all related issues such as history, is the largest collection of human works that have the capacity for human activities and can inspire various manifestations of beauty to human beings (Vaezi, 2018, 133). Elements and components of historical cities and ancient textures contain information that reveals the cultural role of these elements in relation to other roles and determines that the ancients did not build without thinking. For any architecture, there have been economic, social, cultural and even political justifications. Meanwhile, the role of the people and their religious and cultural aspirations have been very significant, while using the experiences of their predecessors, they have not been far from creativity and initiative.

The relationship between urban components and elements in past constructions has received more attention, and no development has been regarded without considering other components (Sajjadi, Jangi & Safamoqaddam, 2010, 80). Each architectural unit is composed of components such as a single, and continuous space. In this sense, the architectural unit can be compared to a human. Extensive communication between man and his living space has enabled a more or less spiritual relationship between man and his environment. For this reason, each architectural space represents the cultural, economic, social, and political characteristics of the society (Tatari & Neyestani, 2014, 109).

Caravanserai is one of the most valuable cultural phenomena of Iranian architecture that can be studied from various landscape. This place has many functions in the society of ancient Iran and was regarded a vital element in the Iranian city. The functions of the caravanserai were not determined by its physical structure, but rather by its semantic aspects. However, its physical structure has also been affected by these various components. It can be claimed that caravanserais have the ability to be regarded as a landscape. If so, the caravanserai can be regarded as one of the concepts of landscape tourism, considering its different functional aspects as well as their physical appearance. Landscape tourism is one of the most important and common types of tourism that aims to determine the secrets hidden in landscapes (Mansouri & Shafia, 2019, 31). To give details of landscape tourism, one must examine the landscape in depth and identify its unique features. In other words, first of all the existence of a landscape must appropedso that the destination of the landscape can be expressed.

When explaining why a phenomenon takes place and how human and social interaction deals with the architectural structure, one can give detail of the tourist destination to tourists and offer them a broader horizon. Therefore,

in this study, in addition to reviewing why caravanserais were created throughout history, their various functions have been studied with a landscape approach in the ancient Iranian urban society and by reviewing the functions, evidence to assume the possibility of the caravanserai has been analyzed.

Research hypothesis

Landscape views of caravanserais appear to represent the functions beyond the accommodation of travelers. Introducing these functions can be used to create Iranian caravanserais for landscape tourism purposes.

Research methodology

The methodology employed in this research was analytical. Data collection was conducted in library in order to review the valid papers related to the functions of the caravanserai. The initial data have been presented descriptively. By examining and analyzing this data, an analytical inference has been carried out to examine the functions of the caravanserai.

Reasons to create a caravanserais

Communicative road plays a vital role in the economic, social and cultural life of human societies. The function of transportation roads in the life of human societies has not only been enlarged in traffic, but also some economic, commercial, political, military, social changes and the transfer of cultural intellectual achievements have been affected by communication channels (Pargari & Jodaki, 2016, 36). The importance of communication channels has been so great that it is regarded as one of the most central keys of development.

The construction of a caravanserai as they made their way along these trade routes has a long history. As stated by historical reports and evidence, Iran has been more advanced in the construction of this building than other civilized nations of ancient times (Sawagheb & Najafi Aliabadi, 2012, 40). As stated by historians, Iran can be considered as the origin of caravanserais (Forouzandeh, Dehkiani, & Heidari Bani, 2014, 2).

In many written books about the history and geography of Iran and in all travelogues, Iranians have paid attention to the roads and buildings attached to it, as well as the regular road and post office of old times (Pirnia, 1991, 4). The history of these safe buildings in Iran dates back to ancient times. Historical sources indicate that the Achaemenids were the founders of the caravanserai. Although there are no examples of these Achaemenid tombstones, it is clear that there was a great need for inter-station and security stations and caravans and special couriers (Farshchi & Haji Zamani, 2019, 5). The history of caravanserai construction in Iran dates back

to the Achaemenid period. With the development of the territory of Iran from the Caucasus to the Persian Gulf and from Central Asia to Asia Minor, Mediterranean and North Africa, the development of roads got concerned (Ghirshman, 1990, 206). Running close to the east-west trade highway, from China to the Mediterranean Sea and the vast expanse of Iran, has been caused this. However, concerning the roads is not essentially economically feasible, and for military reasons (the use of roads for war campaigns), religious (ease of pilgrimage caravans) political and social transportation, and even tourist attractions, have been effective in this matter (Sawagheb & Najafi Aliabadi, 2012, 41). Some of the reasons that have made it essential to establish caravanserais in ancient Iran are:

- Long distance and the remoteness of cities from one another.
- Development, maintenance and prosperity of trade and economy.
- The immediate need of caravans to resting place and protection against bandits and natural obstacles.
- Climate and weather conditions and intervention of natural elements (Rafifar & Lorafshar, 2003, 43; Farshchi & Hajizamani, 2015, 5).

The above reasons were the primary reasons for establishing a caravanserai in different parts of Iran and extending its construction to other countries. In a way, similar structures of the Iranian caravanserai can be seen in other places as well. However, over years, Iranian society had other reasons for the development of these buildings throughout the country. However, these buildings have also had an extraordinary capacity to meet the needs of communities in each period and adapt to the conditions of that period, which is also important. In other words, on the one hand, Iranian society has benefited because of its intelligence and change of view in different eras, it has benefited from a different building which has had a flexible elegance in terms of content.

Concept and structure of caravanserai

In the Dictionary of Dehkhoda, the caravanserai is defined as a mansion in which the caravan resides (*Loghat-Nama*, 1981, s.v. "Caravanserai"). It has been used for caravanserais (Shanvaz & Khaghani, 2015, 18). Of course, in another narration, the term caravan is rooted in Karban, which means someone who takes care of business (Rafifar & Lorafshar, 2003, 40). In a simple sense, the caravanserai was a building that housed the caravan. A kind of guest house or resting place that was established at certain distances and on the caravan routes (Sawagheb & Najafi Aliabadi, 2012, 40).

In Iranian civilization as other civilizations, caravans have always been on the move. Most travelers preferred

to travel in groups. The length of the route, the dangers along the way particularly thieves, the economic savings of freight, have been reasons for mass travel and caravans. The first meaning of the caravan, which also remains in English vocabulary, refers to a group of merchants who united to defend themselves against thieves (Hillenbrand, 1998, 398). Large caravans were not only a number of messengers, camel drivers, and dozens or hundreds of cattle, but might include a number of families, diplomats, scientific, religious dignitaries, pilgrims, merchants, and even the some dead bodies. It was presided over by a man named trainmaster, who usually had a lot of experience in this, with full authority, took all essential decisions.

The caravanserai is a product of Iran's geographical location and because of the land and water scarcity of this land and the distance of settlements from each other, the existence of places for temporary accommodation of travelers was inevitable (Pirnia, 1992, 94). Iran, like other buildings, has been subject to the common style, tradition and style of the time. Thus, it can be assumed that pre-Islamic caravanserais were also subject to the architectural style of the time. It is essential to mention that the architectural style, location and area, building materials and geographical location have played an effective role in creating such a building (Mollaei, 2010, 24).

The plan of the caravanserai is usually square or rectangular, although the central courtyard is the predominant shape of the Iranian caravanserais, but in the case of this type of building, paying attention to the climate of each region of Iran has created small differences in terms of form and type of materials (Moshabaki Isfahani, 2018, 14). In this way, the inner city caravanserai, the plain caravanserai, the foothill and mountainous caravanserai, and the desert and sea shore caravanserai have been built according to the geographical location of each area. As stated by the geographical location of each area (Sawagheb & Najafi Aliabadi, 2012, 53) the design of these caravanserais, the accuracy and comfort of travelers and caravansers have been given more attention by the builders. It has been noticed by the builders (Tatari & Neyestani, 2014, 110). Their orientation of symmetry axes is often along the main axes of the coordinates, and its input sides and parallel at the main route. Access to water, security, and visibility have been among the other factors that have been effective in guiding the caravanserai (Nejad Ebrahimi & Ta'amoli, 2019, 3).

The main elements in the classical form of a caravanserai were entrance, porch, central courtyard, rooms and storage of four-legged animals and other spaces such as bathrooms, water storage, etc. were its sub-elements (Rafifar & Lorafshar, 2003, 44). Caravanserais have different categories. Siroux is one of the famous people

who has divided the Iranian caravanserais into suburban and urban ones and has expressed the characteristics of each in his book. urban inner city caravanserais were divided into two categories: commercial and purely commercial caravans. Overseas caravanserais are also an be divided into two types: plain and mountain. In terms of design, the caravanserais were four-aisled, two-aisled, octagonal and circular, or tower-shaped and flat. Kiani and Kleiss have divided the caravanserais into climates based, based on the fully covered caravanserais of the mountainous region, the lowlands of the Persian Gulf and the courtyards of the central regions of Iran. Using simple formulas, the Ayvazian also divided the caravanserais into complete, incomplete and exceptional cases (Rafifar & Lorafshar, 2003, 46 and Hosseini & Poornadari, 2014, 82 and Piri & Afshari Azad, 2016, 210 & 220 and Takmil Homayoun, 1990, 217 & 218). The caravanserais were also divided into three categories: royal, private, and Waqfi. The revenue of the Imperial Caravanserai has been completely at the disposal of the Shah. Private caravanserais belonged to the private sector, and incaravanserais served as charitable institutions and Waqfi caravanserais, the services were provided common people without receiving any money by the wealthy (Sarikhani, Sharifinia, & Ghanbari, 2013, 163).

The diversity of caravanserais is further explored from the point of view of location and physical or architectural structure or ownership and also how income is consumed. However, it seems that different functions have not been ineffective in this variety, and each caravanserai, based on its function, is in one of the different categories, and in some cases the function has affected the architectural structure or the way of ownership. For instance, the caravanserais near the cities had different service functions than the more distant caravanserais, and this was effective in arranging the rooms and the internal and even wall structure in high-rise. For this reason, the function of caravanserais to achieve a deeper understanding of why a caravanserai exists is studied.

Caravanserai functions

Caravanserai is one of the valuable examples of Iranian architecture that in its historical periods, has experienced a special gradual development and expansion and at any time has taken a special name such as, Carbat, Sabat, Khan, Yam and etc (Sawagheb & Najafi Aliabadi, 2012, 40).

In the past, the various functions of caravanserais have led to these words entered into the dictionaries, which originally had similar functions as caravanserais, but each had different characteristics in terms of feature and architecture. Although the main purpose of out-of-town caravanserais has been the accommodation and

other travelers, particularly on long routes and inland caravanserais, they have experienced different functions throughout their history due to their structural and semantic nature. Some of these functions are:

• Economic function

As already mentioned, the creation of appropriate routes and platforms for the circulation of goods and human beings has been one of the most important axes of economic development at any given time. Because of the vastness of Iran on the one hand and the necessity of commercial and economic prosperity, caravanserais were created as one of the important pillars of the economic structure. On the other hand, these caravanserais, along with bazaar, the main economic point in the city, were among the most important economic points of the city. Economic functions can be divided into several categories.

- **Business development:** The main function of caravanserais has been the development and prosperity of trade (Pirnia, 2010, 232). Concerning the mercy of private founders rather than caravanserais suggests that there is a continuous subset of large-scale chains set up by a ruler to facilitate trade, pilgrimage, and other types of travel in the interest of the country (Hillenbrand, 1998, 434).

For instance, there have been various discussions about the economic function of the caravanserai during Safavid era (Tatari & Neyestani, 2014, 113). The Safavid government by emphasizing the security of roads and caravanserais understood it could cause the development and expansion of trade, thereby promoting the economic development of the state and the development of employment (Kohestani, Malaki, Movaffagh & Nasergharaei, 2017, 68). During this period, political stability and security, expansion of communication routes and caravanserais, religious tolerance, granting some special privileges to business enthusiasts the country and reducing travel costs made possible substantial entry of commercial caravans in all parts of the country, particularly in the capital Safavid dynasty, Isfahan. The presence of domestic and foreign trade activists necessitated the construction of suitable residences in desert and urban areas to provide temporary accommodation for the convenience of commercial transactions (Sawagheb & Najafi Aliabadi, 2012, 40).

- **Making money for the treasury:** As well as their impact on the country's economic prosperity, the caravanserais also generated revenue for the government. In such a way that the governor received a lot of income from these caravanserais (ibid., 55). The caravanserais where the merchants lived and traded paid 50,000 dollars (150,000 marks) annually to the king. Just in Isfahan, there were

24 caravanserais, each of which paid 200 to 300 tomans in taxes annually (Olearius, 1990, 745).

- **Making money for people:** As stated in terms of the ownership, of caravanserais, it has private owner. These caravanserais generated a good income for the owners and were known as a good business.

- **Making money for charity:** In addition to government revenues and private individuals from the caravanserai, a part of the caravanserais was created for charity. For instance, the proceeds of Shah's Mother Caravanserai in Isfahan was belonged to the students and the maintenance of the school (Kiani, 2007, 132). On the other hand, in some cases, part of a monarchy and private Caravanserai incomes were also spent on charity. From the income of Shah Isfahan Caravanserai, Shah Abbas provided the expenses of Seyyed Hosseini's men and women in Medina and Najaf (P Blake, 2009, 127).

• Cultural function

Caravanserais have always been a crossroads of different cultures, and these cultural exchanges have added to their architectural values (Hosseini & Poornadari, 2014, 82). The caravanserai was a place where people from different ethnic groups and even different nations lived together for several days. This created a good opportunity for cultural exchange. The caravanserai provided a place for exchange of thoughts and views on various social and cultural concerns and the transmission of different culture (Talebian; Atashi & Nabizadeh, 2013, 113).

• Service function

The caravanserais provided a variety of services to their passengers and customers. Some of these services were:

- **Residency:** Indeed, caravanserais can be regarded as modern guesthouses (Farshchi & Haji Zamani, 2019, 3). This has been particularly important in suburban caravanserais, and accommodation services have been provided free of charge or at a small amount of money. This type of building (caravanserai) is the only place in Iran where travelers can stay. Their numbers in the city are commensurate with the scope of the trade circle and the multiplicity and scarcity of the trade route in all the ways in which the caravans travel. Rent of a house in the caravanserai is absolutely not taken. A small amount of money is demanded in the caravanserai located in big cities in order to load a commercial concession (Olivier, 1992, 43).

- **Provision of food:** Due to the existence of various goods in inland caravanserais, people provided some of their supplies for their own use and some for sale in shops (Bigdeli, Bagheri, Asadi & Zare, 2019, 5). For instance, it can be seen in Isfahan. The proximity and relation to the bazaar's needs and caravanserais is one of the characteristics of the city's bazaar. Passengers provided (Shafaghi, 2005, 263). In suburban

caravanserais, caravanserais provided water and food for travelers.

- **Warehouse Services:** Another important function of caravanserais has been to provide warehousing for goods. These goods were kept separately in different warehouses (Siroux, 2007, 89). As stated by Gemelli Careri, in caravanserais, if something was lost from the landlord, the caravanserai was responsible for compensating it (Careri & Francesco, 2004, 99). The caravanserais were in the city, they were used not only for the accommodation and food of the travelers, but also for warehouses and targeted a particular group of merchants (Hillenbrand, 2006, 231).

- **Welcome and See Off:** Inland caravanserais have been a popular destination for travelers. Something like today's passenger terminals where the families of travelers came to welcome or accompany their loved ones (Saburi Zalouabi, 2013, 156).

- **The place where beast of burden are kept:** As well as goods, the inland caravanserai was also a place for keeping animals. For instance, Safavid caravanserais consisted of a combination of residential, commercial, and social spaces, as well as goods and stable. such as Safavid caravanserai of Isfahan Bazaar, which is composed of large spaces such as inn, pack station and schools (Hosseini & Poornadari, 2014, 92).

- **Transportation Services:** Because of the travel conditions at that time, as well as keeping, treating sick animals and resting livestock, the caravanserai were supplied with messenger horses (Moradcheleh, 2010, 3) and providing animals for emergencies.

- **Religious Service:** In the caravanserais, there was a place for performing religious duties, such as prayers hall. However, in some cases, there were spaces for non-Islamic religions inside the caravanserai. Like the cathedral, inside the Mirjan Caravanserai from the 7th century AH.

• Political function

Regarding political function, two issues can be stated.

- **Ccreation of ambassadors of foreign countries:** During Safavid period, when the number of foreign ambassadors to Iran increased, some of the caravanserais belonging to the Safavid court became the headquarters of political delegations from other countries who charged with the responsibility of maintaining relations (Saburi Zaluabi, 2013, 154). Ambassadors in these caravanserais wore formal clothes and then they were accompanied by special guards to the city (Siroux, 1983, 28).

- **Establishment of government agents:** Some caravanserais have been fully in the service of the kings and courtiers with time allotted for hunting and entertaining kings and courtiers. The caravanserais were also useless to government officials and tax officials, and

they rested in the affairs of towns and villages, collecting taxes, and providing law enforcement with caravanserais to investigate issues.

• **Security function**

Some consider the caravanserai to be a center for the exchange of goods and a kind of guest house in the east, and another group considers it a safe place for the protection and comfort of caravans as in a fortress (Farshchi & Hajizamani, 2019, 2). The most important legacy of the caravanserai was its role as protecting the lives and property of the passengers (Piri & Afshari Azad, 2016, 209) and they were created to create security on the roads. In the field of trade, the great distance between the shopping centers and in many ages the all organized bandits demanded the existence of safe places which considered a resting place for caravans and other travelers (Pope, 1987, 238). During Safavid period and with the expansion of caravanserais, insecurity and robbery in the country forced a substantial reduction and security was established in cities and roads (Sawagheb & Najafi Aliabadi, 2012, 45).

• **Military function**

Sometimes caravanserais were used during the war (Matofi, 2003, 663). In such a way that some caravanserais were more in the service of military purposes and objectives, and through them the kings could communicate with themselves and the farthest points under their territory and neutralize the danger of any revolt against the central government (Saburi Zalouabi, 2013, 145). In such cases, the caravanserai as a military station was considered as a temporary military stop, then mansions used by the royal escort (Rafifar & Lorafshar, 2003, 45). The Ribat, known as the caravanserais of the early Islamic period, were originally military barracks and places where horses and food were kept by the Islamic fighters (Labaf Khaniki, 2000, 91).

• **Educational function**

Caravanserais were used to propagate Islam and to teach and train Islamic concepts (Farshchi & Hajizamani, 2019, 6) and played a vital role in Islamic education (Labaf Khaniki, 2000, 94). Furthermore, along with most of the city's caravanserais, there were schools that were funded by the caravanserais' income.

• **Social function**

Urban caravanserais are often built close to or attached to shrines, schools, or bazaars which naturally enabled the flourishing of commercial and civic activities (Pope, 1987, 241). The caravanserai was not only a place for business, but also a place of aggregation and socializing. It has also been used as a gathering place for social relations (Soheili & Rasouli, 2016, 59). They have been a place of aggregation for people, a place for thoughts and exchanges of social issues, and for the telling the memories,

events, customs, and religious issues of different ethnic groups. Indeed, this conversation has had a tremendous influence on the awakening of public opinion and public awareness (Mashhaki Isfahani, 2019, 11). Even design of the caravanserai elements had been placed in a way to facilitate it. For instance, while the courtyard, as an air regulator, prevents wind and creates shadows, it has created a special space for human interactions (Rafifar & Lorafshar, 2003, 54) or in the caravanserais with four porches, the presence of porches causes It has always been possible for one side of the building to be in the shadows and also to assist the human interactions become more intimate, because it has increased the possibility of face-to-face communication (ibid., 2003, 52). It is said allocation of income and incomes of caravanserais goes to schools and hospitals also indicates the social function of caravanserais (Ebrahimzadeh & Qarakhani, 2017, 6).

• **Religious function**

The religious function of the caravanserai is studied from several points of view.

- **Construction of a charity caravanserai:** For Muslims, the caravanserai, like the construction of a mosque, a school, and a bath, was part of the charity (Tavassoli, 2002, 167). In Safavid period, the construction and expansion of caravanserais as well as economic dimensions rooted in the Islamic beliefs of the rulers of the time, which in the Holy Quran refers to the rights of travelers on the way (Kohestani, et al, 2017, 68).

- **A place of aggregation for religious people:** Ribatha has been a place of aggregation for dervishes and Sufis (Kiani Mira, 1990, 66). It changed, and Ribat was said to be a place where Sufis and Tariqah lived. The caravanserai played a major role in providing services to pilgrims, scholars and the Taliban. The importance of this issue becomes clear when in the fourth century, the term caravanserai was interpreted as a monastery. This was due to the gathering of the people of Tariqah and the Sufis and the Nir of life and the study of religious groups in it (Farshchi & Hajizamani, 2019, 5). Abusa'id Abolkhayr also sat in solitude in the ancient Ribat, and it was the Ribat that brought him home on the way to Abivard (Ibn Munawwar, 1992, 29).

- **Sanctuary of the Caravanserai:** With the presence of religious elderly in the caravanserai, their sanctity gradually reached a point where people attributed miracles to elders and elders and even ordinary people living in them (Labaf Khaniki, 2000, 93). As stated by Abu Hafs Suhrawardi, those who are engaged in obedience to God in the relationship with their prayers remove calamity from the city and worship (Talas, 1958, 28).

- **Waqf and charity:** Sometimes instead of renting the [caravanserai], they allocate some property to the public

(Chardin, 1995, 1402).

- **Solemnize a ritual ceremony:** Some of the caravanserais were the place of worship during special days, and during Muharram the movement of the groups was arranged in such a way that they passed two or three caravanserais, where they welcomed and entertained the mourners (Ahmadi & Haji Babaei, 2016, 5). 6.9.6. Pilgrimage caravanserais. Some of the caravanserais were mostly used for pilgrimage caravans and these caravans were less frequently seen. The pilgrims discussed religious issues by exchanging information while resting in these caravanserais, as well as attending their local observations and events. They informed each other (Saburi Zalouabi, 2013, 155).

• Information function

A vital point that should not be overlooked in the function of caravanserais is the role of information and news in this type of building. The caravanserai has been regarded as a center for the transmission and exchange of news and information. Caravanserais, travelers, and even local riots have been reported in the caravanserai. In terms of information function, the caravanserai has been regarded as one of the important communication arteries between cities and the government (Ebrahimzadeh & Qarakhani, 2017, 5). Furthermore, the emirs and rulers, as well as settling in the caravanserai during the trip, they published and exchanged political news of various cities and lands (Moshbaki Isfahani, 2018, 14).

• Semantic function

Caravanserais in the cultural mind of Persians, from temporary spot perspective, was a reminder to the world that men like caravans are coming and going, and perhaps that's why additional and unnecessary decorations it has been avoided, and the grandeur, beauty, and grandeur are embodied in its nature and its essence (Rafifar & Lorafshar, 2003, 57).

• Ethical function

Apart from the functions that were taught, they also had ethical functions. Some of these caravanserais were known as the "Barefoot" caravanserai, which was the place for prostitutes (Saburi Zalouabi, 2013, 155). The prostitutes regularly took up a neighbourhood. Often their place was outside the city so that sensual men could have fun there (Shanvaz & Khaghani, 2015).

Discussion

The caravanserai was built by the ancient Iranians to create prosperity in travel. Studies determine that over years, they found a variety of functions that went beyond a place to rest during a trip. The addition of these functions has been for various reasons. Including:

• **Location reasons:** Caravanserais were created along the way, and in some cases were the only signs of life along

the way. Therefore, functions such as security and service functions have been formed.

• **Social reasons:** The caravanserais have been a place of aggregation for different people with different characteristics. The society formed in this place has been a reason for social, cultural, informational and religious functions.

• **Economic reasons:** Road development with the purpose of enhancing travel and trade exchanges between different cities and countries has been one of the development strategies in ancient Iran. Urban and suburban caravanserais have played a vital role in the economy.

• **Structural reasons:** Suburban caravanserais were built outside the cities. As a result, some of the activities that have made it less possible to offer in the cities or need a different and more secluded environment have been done in them. Therefore, educational, religious and even immoral functions have been created in the caravanserai. The above reasons led caravanserai to find meaning more than a place and play a vital role in economic, cultural, military and security structures. Therefore, the development of the caravanserai has flourished in periods such as the Safavid era, when the central government sought to strengthen its economic power and expand its sphere of influence.

Different functions have given different identities to this type of building, and it is studied and analyzed its identity from a certain angle. With such a view, the caravanserai can be regarded as a landscape that was formed for original reasons, but over years, as a result of human interaction with the environment and the surrounding society, its nature and content has changed and has changed over years.

Then, in all different historical periods, the development of these important architectural elements have been on the agenda of various governor. Because in each period, it plays a significant role in trading and transportation by adding functionality to its functional content. In landscape narrative, buildings become more than just backgrounds, they can be places that can create many events and stories. So many places are known for their stories.

The narration of the most beautiful caravanserai for a tourist can change their view of wall structure in high-rise, chambers, rooms, shops. To create a new and memorable narrative for them from the buildings that were constructed along the way or inside the cities and in the old days; therefore, the economic development center were regarded. With this narrative, the tourist can feel the hustle and bustle of the caravanserai in their mind and understand the reasons for its architectural structure rather than being objective. Tourists often

travel to see the scenery. In order to consider a place landscape, there must be comprehensive information about its identity, function, and its reason, to enhance the viewer's awareness, it can play a role in making the trip memorable. Explaining the shape and appearance of the caravanserai and examining their architectural structure cannot provide a complete interpretation of the value of these monuments. The true value of this place is determined by its deep mental and intangible layers. To estimate the age of a caravanserai by the number of rooms and its area is lost a little after starting a trip. Function is one of the narrative landscapes that can assist in producing the content of a place and tie the story of the place to the story of the trip. Reviewing the various functions of the caravanserai is important in creating a historical landscape.

The fact that a building has been able to maintain its functionality in accordance with the conditions of the time has been due to the variety of functions that have always been expressed in a scattered and ambiguous way. Accommodation, security, services, economy, etc. create an objective mental concept for the caravanserais. The concept of human life in ancient Iran is based on the lifestyle of that time.

The caravanserai has been a response to the vast and growing needs of Iranian society over years. That's why, its functions have been constantly changing and it has found a new structure and identity according to the conditions of the time. In other words, this landscape has been active. The dynamism of this landscape has been a reason for its permanence throughout history. However, over years, with the growth of technology in the twentieth century, caravanserais have lost their function in the economic and service system and have now become dilapidated buildings. Looking at them, these historical buildings can be turned into destinations

for landscape tourism, in which the tourist can gain a better understanding of human movement in ancient Iran and its economic, commercial and cultural behavior. Given the disappearance of the caravanserai function in the current world, reviewing its functions over the past years can play an essential role in designing landscape narratives for this building and create a new look for them.

Conclusion

Attention to the well-being and security of caravans throughout the history of Iran has led to the establishment of caravanserai buildings and its affiliated elements in order to meet communication and economic needs. The construction of caravanserais in Iran has a very long history and as stated by Iranian historical sources, Iran has been a pioneer in the construction of caravanserais. One of the most important achievements of this land is Iran in different climatic conditions, trade, and variety of styles and functions have varied. As already seen, in addition to the physical body, the caravanserais also had a semantic aspect.

Reviewing the functions mentioned in the previous section, it is clear that the caravanserais were one of the most important socio-cultural and economic spaces in ancient Iran. A place that, in addition to its structural function for resting and accommodating travelers and caravans, had a tremendous capacity to create a social, cultural and political, military and commercial space. Viewers' landscape of caravanserais has received little attention from researchers. It has been regarded most in the research has been the physical structure and the main elements of the caravanserais. Understanding the multifunctional aspects of caravanserais can have a substantial impact on increasing the interest of visitors to the caravanserai which is vital to the attraction of cultural tourism.

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