

Original Research Article

The Narrative of Saqqakhaneh Landscapes in the Iranian City

Saeedeh Derakhsh*

University of Science and Arts, Faculty of Humanities, Department of Management, Yazd, Iran.

Mehdi Basouli

Ph.D. in Tourism Management, ACECR, Tehran, Iran.

Received: 02/08/2020

Accepted: 09/10/2020

Available online: 22/06/2021

Abstract | In the vernacular architecture of Iran, there are numerous formal elements by studying other aspects show how they were not constructed only for a particular function. Saqqakhaneh are considered as many in Iran and in the cities of this land. Some of them are very beautiful works and very unique in terms of their architecture and it is significant to be noted. Symbols, customs, beliefs and faiths are related to Saqqakhaneh including the special culture of Saqqakhaneh. In contrast, under the influence of the culture and beliefs of the community, this building has various functions at the community level. The narrative of the Saqqakhaneh's landscapes is aimed at redefining the identity and deep meaning of these elements at the community level. For this purpose, the method used in this research is documentary studies using practical sources. In this study, in addition to examining the origins of Saqqakhaneh, its various functions in Iranian community have been regarded. Four categories of religious, cultural, social and artistic functions are among the functions that have been studied in this study and have been viewed from different perspectives. These functions are divided into more detailed categories that represent the identity of Saqqakhaneh throughout history and express how community interacts with this significant element of architecture in the Islamic Iranian city. Due to these identities, this particular place can be regarded as a unique attraction in religious cultural tourism because of its semantic distinction and exclusivity.

Keywords | *Saqqakhaneh, Landscape, Urban tourism, Function, Iran.*

Introduction | Construction of places with a particular identity and function is one of the main missions of urban planners and designers. In this regard, understanding the meaning of the place and the progression of its formation and identifying the components and criteria affecting it can be effective in redefining and recognizing more citizens and other visitors to create a basis for the restoration and maintenance of these places. By accepting the city as a living being, one cannot look only at its physical dimensions. There is a phenomenon in the city that is an indicator and

symbol of the quality of civilization and the collective spirit of nations and peoples; therefore, it is the result of the decisions and imaginations of the people of that city. This qualitative phenomenon is not by chance or something beyond the rules of human understanding, or even it is not the product of poetic action or illusions; rather, it is the result of the freedom of the city's inhabitants and as an element that carries meaning, it is essential to liven the city up (Vahdat, Karimi Moshaver & Bakhshi Balkanoo, 2018, 129). The identity of place is understood as one of the ways of communication between man and place through culture, historical history, collective memories, type and nature of construction technology, functions, signs, forms and urban symbols, and

*Corresponding author: +989132583318, s.derakhsh59@gmail.com

visual and physical features (Aminzadeh, 2010, 5). From Schultz's point of view, the sense of space and the perception of the environment are intertwined with people's memories. He seeks some of the concepts of place in human experiences and moods. For him, place is the living space; alive both in a particular sense and in a general sense (Nurberg Schultz, 2003, 72). Landscape narrative can be effective in defining the identity of any place. Landscape is a word that has a variety of meanings, one of the most common meanings of which is the continuous visual perception of a pre-conceived or random view or frame of view, or a complex mechanism that allows the explanation and presentation of places in the world (Nunes, 2013, 50). The landscape is called a dynamic and relative being that is formed in the constant interaction of community and nature. Thus, the landscape will be an entity with cultural capabilities that simultaneously pursue three aesthetic, cultural, and functional goals. Landscape perception is a progression based on sense that takes place without intermediaries (Mansouri, 2005, 69). Landscape is a kind of relationship with the environment and a kind of place. A place whose existence depends on the connection with the subject and the mentality of the living being. Reality indicates the combination of an objectivity and a state that shows this objectivity as it (Mansouri & Shafia, 2019, 44). In other words, landscape is another kind of place and product of human-environment interaction in outer spaces, the product of human experience in space. But the landscape space is varying from the architectural space and throughout history, the interaction of man and the environment, by community and within the framework of natural and historical circumstances, has created the landscape (Basouli, 2018, 33). Actually, the perspective is a new look at different environments and their functions. In other words, to study the landscapes of a place, the reasons of it is examined its creation and its various functions throughout history to achieve its true identity and create a new and different meaning for it. Saqqakhaneh is one of the manifestations of the connection between time, place and people. It is a special element in the Iranian city that has been created for historical, social, cultural and religious reasons and has achieved a particular function in the city.

In contrast, due to their special identity, these places also have unique attractions for tourists and visitors that have received less attention. In some cases, more attention has been paid to its external aspects or its dominant functional aspects, namely water supply. The purpose of compiling this article is to study Saqqakhaneh from different aspects and to examine its other functions in Iranian urban community so that by redefining this particular element in Iranian architecture and expressing less expressed characteristics, its identity can be studied conceptually and a step taken in a symbolic revival. In the narrative of landscapes, architectural elements, rather than being backgrounds, become a place with meaning and

identity that can create many incidents and stories or be the basis for the creation and occurrence of various incidents. Saqqakhaneh's landscape narrative can open a new window for tourists and create a different look. With this narrative, the tourist does not only pay attention to the appearance of the building and analyzes its identity theoretically which can make the memory of the trip more lasting for him. Accordingly the tourist can imagine a Saqqakhaneh that is located in the middle of the city and in addition to water supply, has played different functions in interaction with humans and community.

Research methodology

This study examines the generality and various functions of Saqqakhaneh in urban spaces with a phenomenological view. The philosophy of research is based on the interpretive paradigm, the orientation of basic research and the method used in qualitative research and is based on the inductive approach of analysis. Library research was the method of collecting data in this study. For this purpose, documentary studies have been conducted by reviewing authoritative books and articles about Saqqakhaneh, and the initial data have been explained descriptively after reviewing the studies. By reviewing and analyzing these data, an analytical inference has been made to study the functions of the Saqqakhaneh. In addition a review has been made of the concept of this public place in the urban space with a landscape approach. Indeed, in this study, with a preliminary study of Saqqakhaneh and the reasons for its creation, by studying various documents. Therefore, an attempt has been made to achieve a theoretical framework for defining its functions throughout history with the intention of further study of the interaction of this architectural element in the environment to study its identity. Thus, the theoretical basis of this research was simply to express the functions of Saqqakhaneh to study its perspectives.

Theoretical foundations

• Water and its sanctity

Water and its sanctity is a long-standing subject in Iranian culture, so that its history can be traced back to prehistoric times, in the minds of the natives of this land (Zaree & Habibi, 2013, 38). In Mehrdearitual, much emphasis used to be placed on the sanctity of water. Throughout history, human beings from time to time appreciated and sanctified the elements that they needed or were thick on the ground. Over time, these elements have gained special respect and credibility and beliefs have been formed around them and water has been one of those elements (Atyabi, 2004, 56). "Water has a pure and holy identity. In pre-Islamic Iran, the people regarded Anahita (the goddess of water), and after Islam, her holiness Fatemeh Zahra (PBUH) to be the embodiment of water. The choice of such pure and divine

faces as the manifestation of water has been the reason for the importance and role of water in the life of Iranians (Yavari, 1980, 42).

Regarding the background of the sanctity of water among the ancient Iranians, it also can declare the special importance of water in Zoroastrianism. Some believe that many Saqakhanah were relics of the temple of Venus. "One of the temples of Venus that has been left in Iran for a long time is the temple of Shahrbanu in the city of Rey, which is still standing on top of a mountain overlooking the ancient Rey, and Banu was supervising the city from the top of that mountain. Many ancient Saqqakhanahs, which are abundant in Iran, are traditional relics of this god of water and fertility. The past beliefs of the people cannot be ignored in the formation and emergence of Saqqakhanah; but there is no strong evidence that the Saqakhanah were once the temple of Venus" (Farhvashi, 1991, 76).

Water is also very significant in Islamic beliefs. There are many verses in the Qur'an on the subject of water: "We made water every living thing (Surah Anbiya, verse 30).

The philosophy of watering and drinking water is one of the most delicate aspects of Islamic insight. In the battles and wars of the beginning of Islam, distributing water even for prisoners of war was regarded Mustahab¹. The spread of Shiism in Iran and the general mourning of the third Imam of Shia and his companions in community as well as the constant repetition of the historical incidents of Karbala and the narration of the martyrdom of his holiness Abolfazlhas caused water to become more sacred to Iranians Shia and to have more religious respect because in that incident they lost their lives in delivering water to the thirsty people of Karbala, (Afzaltousi & Mani, 2014, 52).

Contrary to the arid and semi-arid climatic conditions of most of Iran have a profound and fundamental impact on the creation of various architectural phenomena of this landsince the study of it has great importance (Kiani, 2000, 223).

• Saqqakhaneh

In fact, water distribution and distributing water among people has been the main reason for the construction of watering holes and drinking fountains in Islamic lands. Saqayat and Saqayi are originally Arabic words used in Persian culture to mean "drinking water" and "giving and selling water" (Bonyadloo, 2002, 15). The water distributor is called Saqqa and the place where water is stored is called Saqqakhaneh (Bahmanyar & Talebi, 2015, 4). The word Saqqa from Saqa means water musk, milk musk, a container and something that has been for water or milk, which is added to Asqiyah, whose active name is *Saqi*, meaning watering. But the word *Saqqa* is an occupation (Jafarnejad & Jafarnejad, 2017, 91). Saqqakhaneh is defined in Moein dictionary as follows: "A place where water is stored for the thirsty and it is blessed" (Atyabi, 2004, 56).

In the past, in addition to Saqqakhaneh, words such as

Sangab were also used (Fig. 1). Sangab was a large vessel made of stone and used for storage. In fact, the Sangabs were an undeveloped form of Saqqakhaneh that were installed in some public passages and public places and were kept by philanthropists to store clean and drinking water (Bahmanyar & Talebi, 2015, 4). They can be regarded as the first official form of showing the Shia's respect for the martyrs of Karbala and the Saqqa tradition arising from that incident (Afzaltousi & Mani, 2014, 53). "The story of Sangab is the story of a disciple and a target; Sangab is a point of intent standing according to everyone's needs. Standing on a stone base means there is a rich source of life inside it and sometimes background inscriptions outside because of the importance of water story, make the disciple think. This disciple represent a seeker of water who sought Murad in time of thirst which is a sign of Sangab" (Dadmehr, 1999, 107).

On the whole, the formation of any space in the urban context is influenced by several elements such as the natural environment, the culture that governs community and the worldview of its inhabitants. The emergence and formation of Saqqakhaneh as an element of ancient habitats can be influenced by several elements. In a study entitled "Tehran's Saqqakhaneh", Ebrahimi (2006) considered the natural environment of the country, people's long-standing beliefs about water, the Karbala incident and the practice of hadiths as the factors in the formation of the Saqqakhaneh. Over time, the Saqqakhanehs were regarded a religious place where people lit their candles and tied cloths to meet their needs in the sanctuary.

"In Saqqakhaneh culture, life point of view of each one is different. Although people make themselves out of it, solving the difficulties of their work. They lock in to meet to the dead ends of their lives. They spend money to pay off their debts. They light candles to enslave the darkness. They would be lucky enough to meet their chance, and they grant to get. In this culture, there is talk of the simplicity of hearts that have not taken on the color of adultery and have regarded

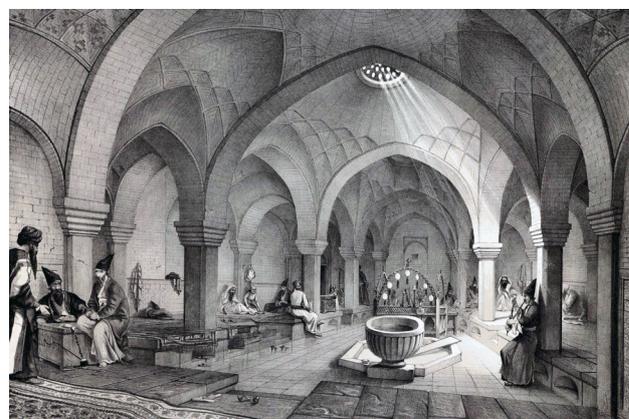


Fig. 1. Sangab in the bath of Khosrow Agha, Isfahan, Iran, Photo by Pascal Coste, 1867. Source: www.data.abuledu.org.

the purity of their hearts as rituals in which the respondents wait for their needs as an invisible image” (Dadmehr, 1999, 41-42).

As mentioned above, Saqqakhaneh has a significant function which has emerged as a spiritual structure among Iranians. And such structure architecturally by religious artists has become a symbolic painting, appeared from spiritual concepts behind shapes and patterns have become apparent. Therefore, this element has become a manifestation of the art of urban architects in Iranian cities. As Wilson stated: “When someone passes a market in Iran or crosses an alley in an old neighborhood, you come across a kind of recess that is embedded in a wall and an iron lattice window covers part of it. Inside this recess, it can be seen the valves connected to a tank behind the wall, with a large cylindrical water tank made of copper, ...” (Etemadi, 1998, 29).

At night, thirsty people need to see better, they lit candles in chambers near the water, and this was a prelude for those who had a vow and demand, and lit candles every Friday night (Najmi, 1983, 390). However, some consider this as a superstition that has been promoted by others (M.N., 1990, 20) and has gradually been created as a belief in the minds of the community.

• Saqqakhaneh architecture

From the point of view of space organization, Saqqakhanehs are like joints that connect a network of passages. These small buildings, as warning signs, are a significant element in the spiritualization of urban roads and passages, and physically, pauses for passers-by to stand in the midst of all the worries and troubles of daily life, to drink a sip of water and to extend greetings to the martyrs. They represent Karbala (Satarifard, 2013, 6). Spatially, this building was a room in the heart of the wall, in the direction of the passage, where these cavities were formed in different sizes which were often small (Hashemi & Jafari, 2016, 3). The dimensions of the Saqqakhaneh were from time to time small, sometimes large and every now and then with architectural ornaments and decorations. The architecture of the Saqqakhaneh is similar to that of mosques and altars. The arches that can be observed in the altar of a mosque are also observed in Saqqakhaneh with a very small difference (Ahmadi Maleki, 1998, 86).

Saqqakhaneh was constructed in various ways and every so often a dome of brass sheets was placed on top of some of them (Maleki, 1991, 181). Some are three by four and often smaller. Sometimes they are so small that they look like holes in the wall. Most of them were constructed next to mosques and Takayas and the busy intersection of people in the market (Atyabi, 2004, 57). In terms of architecture and shape of the building, Saqqakhaneh can be classified into three general groups and common characteristics can be defined for each group.

-Independent Saqqakhaneh: Saqqakhaneh that are formed independently and have no connection with the surrounding

buildings. These Saqqakhaneh were usually cube-shaped or made in the form of cylinders or octagons, so that they have a facade from four directions and can be used (Zarei & Golzarian, 2012, 418).

- Shop-shaped Saqqakhaneh: The general view of these Saqqakhaneh is shown in the form of a semi-open or single-door shop which are located next to a set of shops or houses and surrounding buildings. The construction site of these Saqqakhaneh is mostly next to the main and busy thoroughfares of the city (Ghabeli, 2011, 412).

- Rafi-shaped Saqqakhaneh: Such Saqqakhaneh in general are completely dependent on their surrounding building and in terms of ownership are regarded part of their adjacent building and are mostly located in side streets and alleys (Anasseri, 2004, 123).

• Saqqakhaneh 's functions

Although the construction of a place to drink water and quench the thirst of passers-by has been one of the motives for the construction of the Saqqakhaneh, behind the idea of building this unique architecture, there are various functions. However, these functions may have been added to this architectural element and have been institutionalized over time. In contrast, lately, due to technological advances and lifestyle changes, many of these functions, as their main function, have undergone a fundamental change in such a way that, except for the old texture of Iranian cities, Saqqakhaneh is not actually regarded as an architectural element. The main function of the Saqqakhaneh was to supply water to passers-by. But according to studies, other functions can be regarded for this place. These functions include:

- Social Function

The most significant functions of urban elements have been social ones. In a time when community had limited reasons to be present in the city, such as business, places like Saqqakhaneh, in addition to providing water to thirsty people, causes the participation of different people in social activities. Some of the social aspects of Saqqakhaneh can be listed as follows.

- Manifestation of group work of individuals in social activities: The construction of Saqqakhaneh is one of the cases that has been done by an individual or a group of people and different people have cooperated in setting up, maintaining and providing its resources in a participatory manner. The founder or patrons allocated a space for this and constructed its building. In contrast, other people with particular plans have been in charge of preparing and conserving water, and this has been done over different years and generations.

- Important role in religious rites: Although as already mentioned, the sanctity of water among Iranians traces back to before Islam, after Islam and especially the incident of Ashura², water enjoyed a special sanctity among Shias. For this reason, Saqqakhaneh has become a symbol of Ashura and mourning ritual and was covered in black during the

days of Ashura. In fact, in creating a connection between time and people, Saqqakhaneh, as a space reminiscent of time and the incident of Karbala, are a reflection of history in the urban body (Satarifard, 2013, 5). Ritual ceremonies were held next to the Saqqakhaneh, and in the meantime, the people regarded a more serious role for this place by their vows next to the Saqqakhaneh.

“It is customary for the neighbors to donate oil, lamps, milk, fruit, dates, sweets and other materials to the local Saqqakhaneh, and thus, they would bear part of the costs of holding the ceremony next to the Saqqakhaneh” (Safari & Daqiqi, 2016, 88).

- Doing charity work in partnership: In addition to the fact that the construction of the Saqqakhaneh was done in a charitable manner, most of the Saqqakhaneh had a special place to collect the money donated by the people. This is due to position of this place in the culture and beliefs of the people of Iran. “.... If the amount of money collected in the funds was enough to cover needs of the people with partial disability or pay for a minor illness, the trustees would not give up doing so” (Ahmadi Maleki, 1998, 88). In other words, Saqqakhaneh was a place for the hardship and the needy. Food offerings and charities for the dead were placed in containers and placed on Friday nights in the Saqqakhaneh. Involving and offering money into the Saqqakhaneh was another common practice. This was done as a vow or charity (Bonyadloo, 2002, 64).

- A place for Stamping Ground: The stamping ground is a gathering place for people at different times of the day. Neighborhoods such as the Zurkhaneh or Saqqakhaneh in traditional Iranian community were regarded as a gathering place. This was especially the case during the mourning period of Ashura. Mostofi wrote in the book of my biography: “If this holy place was located at a crossroads or in a square, and would be possible to arrange a mourning procession near it on mourning and Friday nights so it will be bright after light, because the Saqqakhaneh will become famous and become a stamping ground of the neighborhood, and never the fame of this holy place exceed outside the neighborhood, because other passages and neighborhoods of the city also have their own Saqqakhaneh and stamping grounds. There was only one Saqqakhaneh in all of Tehran, which, due to its antiquity and decorations, and the care of local documents, ruined the city’s reputation and brought vows and needs for it from all parts of the city, and it was the Nowruz Khan Saqqakhaneh.” (Mostofi, 1981, 617).

- Religious function

As already mentioned, water has always been revered by Iranians and has a special sanctity. Some temples of the Mithraic period are constructed on water. After the incident of Karbala and the role of water in the narrations related to this significant historical event, water became a sign of this occasion. For many years, the Iranians kept the Karbala

incident alive in various ways. Therefore, the *Saqqa* ritual had been a great vow by the *Saqqa* to the thirsty: “Drink water and to pour curses on Yazid ... sacrifice your life for the shrine of the martyred king” (Anasseri, 2003, 98).

Hence, Saqqakhaneh, like mosques, Hosseiniyah, and Zurkhaneh, became a religious symbol especially in the Shia school.

- The symbol of Ashura: The role of the spiritual values of Ashura following “the whole day of Ashura and the whole land of Karbala” which has tried to keep this epic alive in the context of people’s lives, has been well evident in the Iranian Saqqakhaneh which are part of urban spaces (Satarifard, 2013, 5). In other words, the Iranian Shia has always kept alive the memory of this epic incident by spreading the symbols of Ashura in the context of life and community.

- A special place in beliefs and convictions: Due to the reasons for the establishment of Saqqakhaneh, and its connection with the beliefs of Iranian community, over time, this place gained a special place in the beliefs of the people. In some cases, these beliefs even went beyond a sacred place and regarded the Saqqakhaneh as a place to meet their needs. Let’s say, lighting a candle means hoping for the desired response from the needy and is regarded the cheapest vow: “... The Saqqakhanehs became a holy place for the needy to share their desires with their God or the intercessors of their religion. These demands are sometimes accompanied by the baking of Kachi or halva and sometimes by lighting a candle that has been vowed by the Saqqakhaneh. Black and thick smoke often fill the place of lighting candles, which in the popular opinion is a sign of the greater credibility of Saqqakhaneh” (Dadmehr, 1999, 56). Concerning Saqqakhaneh, popular beliefs have been formed among the people, some of them are still preserved (Atyabi, 2004, 55).

- Sanctuary: Sanctuary is to sit in a particular and generally sacred place so that one can escape punishment because of the sanctity of that place. This has been the case in different cultures and has delayed the sentencing of individuals. People are usually chosen to be in holy places who are in danger. Some Saqqakhaneh have had such function: “The servants and his relatives [to the slaughterhouse] were safe from any crime, fine and persecution. With the witness as the American ambassador, he took a picture of the Saqqakhaneh of Sheikh Hadi’s bazaar and the trustees threw it on his head and cut it to pieces.” The government is not able to arrest its perpetrators, which leads to the severance of relations between the two governments” (Shahri, 1978, 79).

- Artistic function

In almost all Saqqakhanehs, it can be seen a large number of paintings and drawings of the pure Imams, especially the paintings of his holiness Abolfazl. These portraits are breathtaking. Moreover, various poems on this subject have been written by poets. In other words, Saqqakhaneh was regarded a suitable subject for the manifestation of Shia art:

- Painting art exhibition: Portraits were created with a variety of tools and materials. Painting was done on tiles, wood, canvas, paper and cardboard and even on plaster walls (Ahmadi Maleki, 1998, 89). "Whenever an Iranian artist has taken care of these buildings, he has left such a passion and beauty in them that art has erased the drinker of water from these Saqqakhanehs and the greatness of faith in love for the noble martyrs and the value of this donated water until it has raised the water level of Kowsar" (Anasseri, 2004, 133).

- Appearance of poetic ideas: Some poets, such as Nusrat Rahmani, took ideas from the spiritual places of Saqqakhaneh to compose their poems. More than women in chadors, Saqqakhanehs, Takayas, mosque garlands, and the ordinary life of the new generation were the subject of contemporary painters and it was depicted in the poems of these poets.

"... In the first book of Nusrat (published in 1954), a poem entitled Saqqakhaneh was published for the first time ... This poem described both the instruments and objects in the Saqqakhanehs well and also explained the social reasons of the Saqqakhanehs" (Asadi Kiars, 2008, 7).

In contrast, poems about water, Karbala, etc. were written on the entrance of the Saqqakhaneh where the most places were lit for lighting candles, which turned the Saqqakhaneh into a poetry collection in this regard.

"Whoever drinks water from our cup get the grace of the king of Karbala" (Zarei & Golzarian, 2012, 417).

The purpose of expressing the poems and writings carved on the Saqqakhanehs and expressing the names of some of these neighborhoods was to get acquainted with them and the poems and how they were used, which shows the taste and art of the past (Hashemi & Jafari, 2016, 7).

- Visual effects of calligraphy: In most of the Saqqakhanehs and Sangabs, very beautiful poems in praise of the Imams and martyrs of Karbala have been written in beautiful fonts such as Naskh and Thals and mostly Nastaliq. Calligraphy is a special Islamic art that is sacred to every Muslim through the writing of the Qur'an (Safadi, 1978, 127).

"Elegant and talented artists, either by the order of the founders of Saqqakhaneh and Sangab or by their belief in Imam Hussein (AS) and his holiness Abolfazl Abbas, recorded images and poems on the entrance of Saqqakhanehs and around the edge of Sangabans or its outer part which made every viewer shine and make his soul sparkling" (Hashemi & Jafari, 2016, 4).

- Cultural function

Saqqakhaneh is a manifestation of a set of beliefs and practices that are closely related to the recent past of Iran (Sheikh Mehdi & Qomi, 2011, 122).

"Saqqakhaneh which is considered as clean and holy places reminiscent of thirsty and drunk one; it tells the story of the culture of our predecessors. It is still a place where people humbly pass by it and put their hands, foreheads and lips on it to reach the goal" (Atyabi, 2004, 56).

Every element of the Saqqakhaneh has been a symbol of Iranian culture. At the same time, Saqqakhaneh has had a special place in the culture of the Iranian people. Rituals, candles, claws, stars and the colors blue and green are each cultural symbols in the history of Iran. In this regard, the following two issues have been significant.

- Origin of words and proverbs: In the culture of the ancient Iranians, due to the different type and function of the Saqqakhaneh, several proverbs were made that originated from the Saqqakhaneh culture: "Stealing a candle from the Saqqakhaneh" is an allusion to doing something wrong and the culmination of doing something wrong.

(Bahmanyar & Talebi, 2015, 3), or "Candle-taking from Saqqakhaneh" is a special theme. In the past, if someone was oppressed, he would take a candle from the Saqqakhaneh and vow that whenever the oppressor was punished for his deed and the oppressed achieved his right, he would offer a pack of candles to that Saqqakhaneh instead (Anasseri, 2004, 136).

- The origin of some superstitions: As already mentioned, the sanctity of the Saqqakhaneh has sometimes gone beyond religious beliefs and turned into various beliefs and superstitions. Let's say, sometimes the traditional relationships and morals of some women caused them to demand their failed demands from the Saqqakhaneh. These demands originated from a superstitious culture. Traditions and superstitions were formed that regarded the role of Saqqakhaneh to be more than a religious symbol.

"... The story began in the middle of July 1924, it was rumored in Tehran that the Saqqakhaneh on Agha Sheikh Hadi Street in Tehran has many miracles. The stories are told by word of mouth and through the narrator's imagination at each stage of the narrative. "The sight of a blind man, the healing of a paralytic, and most famously and most provocatively, the drying up of a hand or the blinding of the eyes of a person who was trying to poison the well of Saqqakhaneh had been the subject of these miracles." (YarAhmadi, 2010, 17).

Conclusion

Shia culture and its reflection in the urban space has given a special face and identity to Shia cities. Islamic cities offer a special concept of the city and in this concept, Islamic values and attitudes are manifested. These values and attitudes have been appeared in the construction of urban elements in such a way, construction, texture and urban buildings such as mosque, market, school, caravanserai, Saqqakhaneh, garden in the Islamic city are value, symbol and manifestation of the concepts of values, and the manifestation of many Islamic concepts. However, Iranian national culture has also played an effective role in the formation of these elements. Lots of the characteristics of the Islamic Iranian city are the result of the manifestation of the concepts of Islam in the culture of ancient Iran, which has been presented for the life of the

people of a city. Water has a precious value in human life and its absence for a moment can lead to stop of life and produces irreparable consequences. Iranians have long adjusted their lives to climatic and geographical conditions and water shortages, and have devised distinct measures to obtain water in hot and dry desert areas, particularly in the scorching heat of summer. One of these measures was to create a Saqqakhaneh. Saqqakhaneh had a special place among the people and were constructed with beautiful and special architecture. In any case, an architecture has become an aspect of Iranian Islamic culture. Moreover, due to the intrinsic value of water in Iran, especially Shia Muslims, this place has had a different sanctity rather than other similar places in other cultures. It has somehow infiltrated people's beliefs and in some cases even led to superstitions.

In addition to the function of water supply in different parts of the city, these places have been a particular manifestation of the culture of Iran, Islam and Shias and have had different functions in community. Landscape is an objective element that is formed in the mind of the community associated with it throughout history and is influenced by the culture, beliefs and lifestyle of each historical period. The emergence and development of Saqqakhaneh is significant in the sense that the Sangabs which were formed only to supply water in different places. Under the influence of the culture and beliefs of the Iranian community became sacred places that had different functions as a symbol for manifestation. Religious rituals came into being. In fact, under the influence of community culture, this place, during its lifetime, has achieved other functions that have made it sustainable in urban community and its interaction with the environment. These functions can be divided into four general categories as: Social function, Religious function, Artistic function, Cultural function. Each of these functions is subdivided into different categories and each of them represents a part of the Saqqakhaneh identity over time. In contrast, due to the deep interconnection to beliefs, this place has not only diminished throughout history, but also by connecting to arts such as

architecture, painting, calligraphy and poetry, they have been heightened because of their identity in community and their importance. Saqqakhaneh did not belong to a particular group or class and all members of the community benefited from it, and that's why it is regarded as one of the special elements in the architecture of the Iranian city. Consequently, the culture associated with the Saqqakhaneh has spread to all levels of community. At present, the Saqqakhaneh are constructed in a modern way, which is taken from the old Saqqakhaneh. In many cases, due to health issues and new technologies, the method of water supply is different and the use of traditional Saqqakhaneh is less regarded. In some cases, due to the loss of its main function (water supply), its sub-functions are still effective and people seek to meet their needs by lighting candles and tying cloth to the Saqqakhaneh, although the Saqqakhaneh does not have any water to offer but it has maintained its portraits and sanctity among the people.

In landscape tourism, you can gain a new understanding of a place and increase your knowledge of the environment and architecture. Exploring the reason of creating a phenomenon and by explaining it, it can convey a new insight to the viewer. This tourism has led to a new understanding of the place and can be told as a lasting story for the tourist. Saqqakhaneh can be regarded as an urban landscape and an intermediary between tourists and urban attractions, and they can be regarded as lasting effects, with its unique architecture and various functions; as a tourist attraction, it was regarded an urban landscape that has the ability to attract many tourists to urban environments and landscapes. As a tourist attraction, in addition to having a rich and historical identity, it is a significant and distinctive element in the Iranian-Islamic city and over time and throughout history has been able to add various functions to its functions, to make its role in the city more significant. A distinctive and unique attraction that can only be seen in the Islamic Iranian city and can be regarded as one of the places visited by tourists who want to gain a different understanding of the culture of Iranian community.

Endnote

1. Mustahabb is an Islamic term referring to recommended, favoured or virtuous actions.
2. Ashura is the tenth day of Muharram, the first month in the Islamic calendar.

Reference list

- Afzaltousi, E. & Mani, N. (2014). Sangabs (Lavers) of Isfahan, The sacred Shia art. *Bagh-E Nazar*, 10(27), 49-60.
- Ahmadi Maleki, R. (1998). Saqqakhaneh-ha-ye ghadimi-ye Tehran [Old Saqqakhanehs of Tehran]. *Vaghf-e Mirath-e Javdan*, (23 & 24), 84-89.
- Aminzadeh, B. (2010). Beauty and identity of place. *Hoviatshahr*, (7)4, 3-14.
- Anasseri, J. (2003). *The sultan of karbala: a chronicle of the martyrdom of Imam Hosein and a survey of rituals commemorating this tragic event in Iran*. Tehran: Zarrin and Simin Publications.
- Anasseri, J. (2004). Ta'sir-e tashayyo bar abniye, amaken va ziaratgah-ha-ye mazhabi-ye Iran [The impact of Shiism on religious buildings,

places and shrines in Iran]. *Shi'a Studies*, 2(7), 121-146.

- Asadi Kiars, D. (2008). Naghashi: Tandis-e Nosrat Rahmani (Yek yadavari baraye Hossein Zenderoudi va naghshan-e Saqqakhaneh [Painting: Sculpture of Nosrat Rahmani (A reminder for: Hossein Zenderoudi and Saqqakhaneh painters)]. *Tandis*, (141), 6-7.
- Atyabi, A. (2004). Saqqakhaneh -ha-ye Isfahan [Isfahan's Saqqakhaneh]. *Farhang-e Mardom*, (10), 55-61.
- Bahmanyar, H. & Talebi, M. (2015). *Naghsh-e Saqqakhaneh -ha dar hoviatabkhshi-ye eslami be faza-ha-ya shahri-ye Iran ba tajalli-ye farhang-e Ashouraei* [The role of Saqqakhanehs in Islamic identification of urban spaces in Iran with the manifestation of Ashura culture]. Hamayesh-e Melli-ye Me'mari va Shahrsazi-ye Hoviatgera, Mashhad, Iran.
- Basouli, M. (2018). Landscaping Perspective in the Public Bathhouses, its Elements and its Functions. *MANZAR*, 10(45), 34-43.
- Bonyadloo, N. (2002). *Tehran's Saghgha-khaneh*. Tehran: Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts.
- Dadmehr, M. (1999). *Saqa xaneha va sangabha -ye Esfahan*. Isfahan: Golha Publications.
- Etemadi, E. (1998). Saqqakhaneh. *Motale'at-e Honar-ha-ye Tajassomi*, (3), 40-29.
- Farhvashi, B. (1991). *Iranovich*. Tehran: University of Tehran.
- Jafarnejad, S. R. & Jafarnejad, S. H. (2017). Naghsh-e iconography dar takaya va Saqqanefar (Saqqakhaneh) Mazandaran [The Role of Iconography in Takaya and Saqqanfar (Saqqakhaneh) of Mazandaran]. *Journal of Human Science Research*, 3(25), 87-109.
- Hashemi, Z. & Jafari, A. A. (2016). *Saqqakhaneh sazi va tajali-ye honar-e she'rnevisbar an, honari faramosh shode* [Saqqakhaneh -making and the manifestation of the art of writing poetry on it, forgotten art]. The First International Conference of Art and Industry in Iranian-Islamic Culture and Civilization with Emphasis on Forgotten Art, Isfahan, Iran.
- Ghabeli, H. (2011). *Barresi-e me'mari-ye Saqqakhaneh -ha az did-e kohan oulgo-ha* [A study of Saqqakhaneh architecture from the perspective of archetypes]. Avalin Hamayesh-e Me'mari va Shahrsazi-ye Eslami, Tabriz, Iran.
- Kiani, M. Y. (2000). *Me'mari-ye Iran-e Dore-ye Eslami* [Iranian architecture of the Islamic period]. Tehran: SAMT.
- M. N. (1990). Tarikhche-ye Vahabiat va zamine-ha-ye roshd-e Vahabigari, dars-haei az maktab-e Eslam [History of Wahhabism and the Growth of Wahhabism, Lessons from the School of Islam]. *Falsafe, Kalam va Erfan*, 30(11), 19-22.
- Maleki, H. (1991). *Tehran dar Gozargah-e Tarikh-e Iran* [Tehran in the Crossroads of Iranian History]. Tehran: Eshareh.
- Mansouri, S. A. (2005). An introduction to Landscape architecture identification. *Bagh-E Nazar*, 1(2), 69-78.
- Mansouri, S. A. & Shafia, S. (2019). *Introduction to landscape (Landscape Tourism)*. Tehran: Mahkameh.
- Mostofi, A. (1981). *Sharh-e Zendegani-ye Man* [My Biography]. Tehran: Zavar.
- Najmi, N. (1983). *Iran-e Ghadim va Tehran-e Ghadim* [Old Iran and Old Tehran]. Tehran: Janzadeh.
- Nurberg Schultz, C. (2003). *Architecture: Meaning and Place* (V. Nowruz Borazjani Trans.). Tehran: Jan-e Jahan.
- Nunes, J. (2013). Landscape, the Context for Perception of Transition. *MANZAR*, 5(23), 50-52.
- Safadi, Y. H. (1978). *Calligraphi Islamic*. London: Thames and Husdon.
- Safari, M. & Daqiqi, Gh. (2016). *A Study of the Symbolic Aspects of Water in Islam*. 3rd International Conference on Research in Science and Technology, Berlin, Germany.
- Satarifard, S. (2013). *Saqqakhaneh -ha bayani az hoviab-ye Eslami-ye shahr-ha-ye Irani* [Saqqakhanehs; Statement of Islamic Identity of Iranian Cities]. National Conference on Sustainable Architecture and Urban Development, Bukan, Iran.
- Shahri, J. (1978). *Goshei az Tarikh-e Ejteme'e-ye Tehran-e Ghadim* [A corner of the social history of old Tehran]. Tehran: Amirkabir.
- Sheikh Mehdi, A. & Qomi, M. (2011). Postmodernism dar maktab-e Saqqakhaneh: Amikhtegi-ye sonnat va Modernism [Postmodernism in the Saqqakhanehschool: the fusion of tradition and modernism]. *Ketab-e Mah-e Honar*, (151), 120-127.
- Vahdat, S.; Karimi Moshaver, M. & Bakhshi Balkanoo, A. (2018). Spatial spatial analysis of effective factors in creating the meaning of place from the perspective of users and urban planners. Case study: Urmia, Golestan. *Geographycal Planning of Space Quarterly Journal*, 7(26), 129-143.
- Yarahmadi, M. (2010). Ghatl-e konsolyar-e America dar Saqqakhaneh-ye Tehran va payamad-ha-ye an bar sahn-ye siyasat-e dakheli va khareji [The assassination of the US consular embassy in Tehran Saqqakhaneh and its consequences on the domestic and foreign policy scene of Iran]. *Hafez*, (72), 16-21.
- Yavari, A. R. (1980). *Shenakhti az Keshavarzan-e Iran* [An Introduction to Traditional Iranian Farmers]. Tehran: Bongah-e Tarjome va Nashr-e Ketab.
- Zaree, M. & Habibi, H. (2013). Saqa-Khaneh and the development of Iranians thought on its background, Case Study: The Arbab Mirza Saqa-Khaneh of Shahr-e Kurd. *Pazhohesh-ha-ye Bastan shenasi Iran*, 3(4), 37-56.
- Zarei, S. & Golzarian, M. (2012). *Mafahim-e mojud dar me'mari-ye Saqqakhaneh ba tasir paziri az maktab-e Shia* [Existing concepts in Saqqakhaneh architecture influenced by the Shia school]. First National Conference on New ideas and Technologies in Architecture, Tabriz, Iran.

COPYRIGHTS

Copyright for this article is retained by the authors with publication rights granted to Manzar journal. This is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).



HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE

Derakhsh, S. & Basouli, M. (2021). The Narrative of Saqqakhaneh Landscapes in the Iranian City. *MANZAR*, 13(55), 52-59.

DOI: 10.22034/MANZAR.2021.242210.2078

URL: http://www.manzar-sj.com/article_125945_en.html

