

Investigating the Tradition of Construction and Maintenance of the Historical Parzaleh Mosque in Abyaneh Village

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Introduction

Abyaneh village is located in Isfahan province, near the city of Kashan. Its background goes back to the pre-Islamic period. The people of Abyaneh are farmers, gardeners, and cattle ranchers. They are Muslims, and as such, they have constructed a mosque in every neighborhood alongside the Herpak Fire Temple. Parzaleh mosque is located in the Pal local and on the edge of the historic passage of Rashta. The central structure originates from the Ilkhanid era, featuring enhancements from the Safavid and Qajar periods. It is a two-story building. A man named Arshad constructed the Parzaleh Mosque with the assistance of locals and donated a house and several farmlands to it. They repaired and developed the mosque during the Safavid and Qajar periods by planting and selling crops such as wheat and barley. This plan has been able to protect this mosque economically for centuries. As the population grew over time, the people of the neighborhood paid attention to the physical development of the mosque. The Parzaleh mosque has been used by the people of the village and the Pal neighborhood for several centuries. However, due to the migration of the local people to the surrounding cities, the mosque is now closed and only is opened on special national and religious days such as Muharram. The locals of Pal visit Abyaneh and its mosque in the month of Muharram to perform the Nakhlgardani ritual.

Materials and Methods

The moot point of the research is the lack of sufficient information about indigenous knowledge related to the construction and conservation of Parzaleh mosque. There is

no suitable architectural plan for this mosque, and the process of its construction and architectural details have not been studied. The leading goal of this study is to identify and introduce the construction and maintenance traditions of the Parzaleh Mosque. Two critical inquiries have been raised concerning historical periods, mosque construction, and conservation methods. To this end, the interpretive paradigm and interpretive-historical strategy have been used, along with field surveys, document research, and interviews to gather information. These studies were conducted during the restoration of the Parzaleh mosque by residents. They removed the ceilings and floors, providing an excellent opportunity for mapping, photography, and field surveys. Additionally, the locals renovating the mosque offered valuable information. It took three months to restore the Parzaleh mosque by the natives of the Pal neighborhood, and by this time, field surveys by the author revealed some of the hidden information in the mosque. The data were matched with similar samples and structures in terms of structures, materials, and components and were analyzed using the mentioned tools with an interpretive paradigm and a interpretive-historical strategy.

Conclusion

The research results indicate that local architects built the Parzaleh mosque with three naves and a porch during the 6th century A.H. The mosque's main structure dates back to the Ilkhanid period, with additions from the Safavid, the Qajar, and the Pahlavi periods. The primary materials, used in the mosque construction, are stone, wood, and soil along with secondary materials such as subclans, clay, plaster, and brick. The mosque has a traditional structure with native architects using stone walls and wood. It is built on a rocky bed called Zayeh. In the structural system of Perzleh Mosque, compressive stresses are transmitted by load-bearing walls and wooden columns. The thickness of load-bearing walls in the lower and upper floors varies according to the construction period. The thickness of the walls could withstand compressive stress and provide thermal capacity. In addition, the local architects needed to control the tensile and lateral forces and stresses and air exchange and heat supply. Therefore, they used materials with proper tensile strength and thermal capacity. They also considered adequate access to materials. They have grown aspen and plane tree over the centuries and used them to seek this purpose. They have used local knowledge of architecture to build and develop the mosque. Masters were provided from Kashan, near Abyaneh, to train local masters with active community participation. In selecting the mosque location, the people of Abyaneh made the agricultural economy their top priority. They used a rocky bed instead of fertile land to save agricultural resources. This traditional construction method has been utilized in most Abyaneh buildings, becoming indigenous knowledge over centuries and passed down through generations.

Keywords: Abyaneh, Parzaleh Mosque, vernacular architecture, traditions of construction and maintenance.