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**Beauty Secrets of Quran Gateway Shiraz-
Iran**

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Introduction:

Introducing different kinds of gates, the present article introduces and analyzes “Quran Gate” of Shiraz and examines its characteristics.

Quran Gate is considered as one of city gates of Shiraz, but studies say that this gate with its special characteristics has been a symbolic gate showing the religious belief of people which has got the role of city gate by the expansion and development of city and destroy of its fence in the end of Qajar time.

The connection role and special success of Quran Gate or “Tang 1 Akbar” as the only connection way of Shiraz Plain with north western part of Fars and the effects of its surrounding environment on travelers together with cultural and religious motives inspire the feelings of visitors and gives special value to this symbolic gate of Shiraz.



Figure 1

It is located in Shiraz near Allaho Akbar Tang between Baba Kouhi Mountain and Chehel Magam.

Naming of this gate is for the Quran put on a high arch. This gate has a high camel-litter arch in the middle with shorter arch surrounding it. This arch was built during Azdoddole Deilamy government time in Fars and a Quran put on it; thus the travelers passing under it would have safe trip. Passage of time made the arch broken and destroyed it. In Zand time Karim Khan (1193-1172) reconstructed it and built an arch in upper part of it and put two volume of Quran with Soloth and Mohaggeg fonts by Soltan Ebrihim Ebn Shahrokh Gorkani in that room.

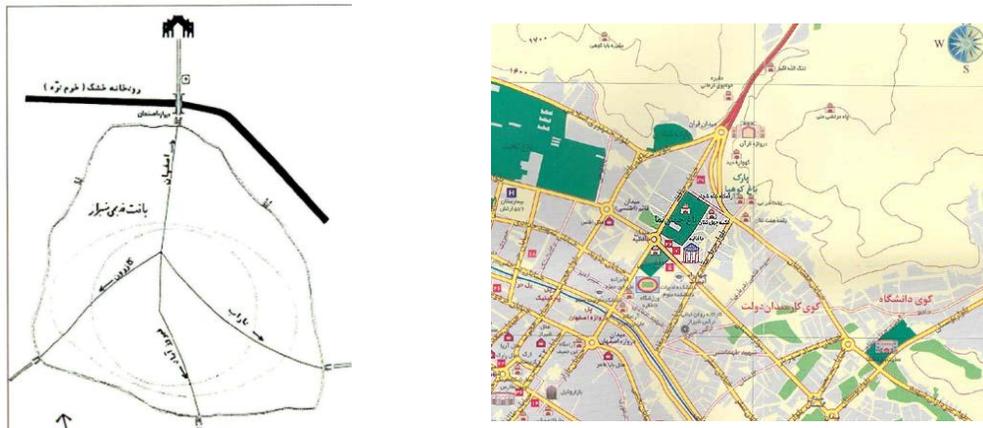


Figure 2

In 1327 in Solar calendar one of Shiraz traders known as Etemado Tejareh reconstructed the present arch by his own expenses and established on the body of arch some Ayat of Quran in Soloth and Naskh fonts written on a tile.

The main building of Quran Gate which has been a beautiful and strong building with two rooms in each side is thought to be constructed in Azdoddoleh Deilami (388 in Islamic calendar) time, the Al Bouyeh dynasty. In the upper house there was a big netted window in the middle and there was a one volume or some say two volumes of valuable and expensive Quran knows as “Hefdah Man Quran” was put there for the travelers to pass under it when taking trip.

It was common among Shiraz people to come to this gate in the beginning of each month (in Islamic calendar) and pass under this Quran and insure themselves against accidents.

In Karim Khan time this building was nearly destroy (1172 – 1193 in Islamic calendar) and it was reconstructed by Zaki Khan, grand vizier of Karim Khan; it was on foot until 1315 in solar calendar.

To expand the route in that year the old gate was destroyed with dynamite by the governor general of city.

In 1327 in Islamic calendar one of the famous traders of Shiraz named Haj Hosein Etemadodtojjar Igari the new gate was constructed with a distance from the old gate. The new Quran Gate was constructed in a bigger size with a main entrance with sharp arch and two small entrances on the two pillars in two sides and a rectangular room was constructed on them to put the old Quran.

After Etemadotojjar was dead he was buried in the small room in the left side of gate facing the valley according to his own testament.

Façade Inscriptions on Quran Gate:

In front façades of Quran Gate which was made of seven color tiles some Ayat of Quran is written.

Geometrical secrets of building:

The beauty of Iranian Islamic Architecture is the result of balance and equilibrium nourishing from observing drawing geometrical principals using detection of length sizes coming from angle-detecting point.

Studying plans of Quran Gate geometrical order based on the use of compasses and ruler and following symmetrical and dimension principals can be observed.

The basic of model and passing the drawing base is from the square parts and its divisions; in this symmetry the pattern of square base and its divisions is used in two ways.

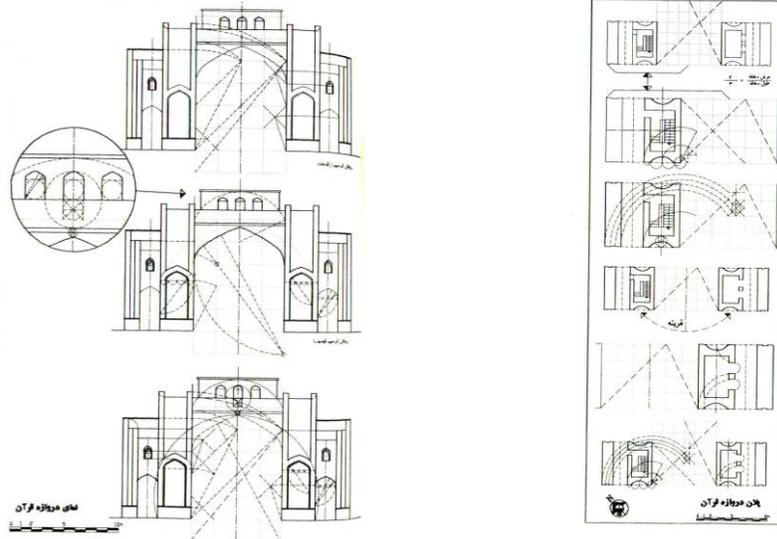


Figure 3

1. In drawing the dimensions of Quran Gate facades the measuring expansion or “modular” are used which were common in decorative works and repeatable geometric plans. In this kind of expansion inter-squares and diameters are used.

The basis of drawing heights and place of arch pillars are got by passing the pillar as much of one fourth of entrance length and measuring expansion.

2. In drawing the arch of main and secondary entrances and the cavity of entrance sides, one arch and four broke is used.
3. In plan the entrance is of golden expansion and conjunction of square diameter and diameter of half square expansion, which were common in imaginative works and golden compositions. By drawing a line parallel to entrance length from conjunction point of mentioned diameters the width of entrance is gained; as a result of this revision the ratio of width of entrance and entrance length is two to three.

The model of basis of drawing parts' dimensions coming from square is one fourth of entrance width and the details of façade is drawn using measuring expansion method.

Location of Quran Gate to changing route of Shiraz surroundings:

John Shadern, French tourist who traveled to Shiraz in Sofi time says in this case:

The city gate faces a beautiful long and narrow street whose width is 50 feet. In both side of this street there are gardens whose frontline in street side is 200 feet and each have an door head and a glorious entrance with half dome arch and there is European hat on tp of each door head.

In the end of Qjar time and beginning of Pahlavi time and as a result of city expansion and development the subject of city fence, fertility and city gate was cancelled and all gates situated inside the city and Quran Gate was considered the city surrounding border and a city gate.

The Quran Gate characteristics can be viewed from different aspects:

Settlement condition:

Examining the topography of the region we can see that in northwestern of Fars high places are joined to each other and has made deep and dreadful precipice and passages are very difficult to pass, but the more we go toward southeastern the distance of mountains from each other becomes more and the plains between them becomes vast.

These routes mostly pass the valleys and arduous gorges and most of them are exceptional routes remaining from Achaemenian period and are repaired in other periods. In times of Achaemenian and other dynasties before Islam this was the only route connecting Shoush, Part, Send, Persian Gulf coast and other cities of Khouzestan to Takht Jamshid and Pasarqad. In Sasanid times that Bishabour, Gour (Firouz Abad) and

Kamal Abad cities were thriving the connection to pool and other central and northern cities of Iran was possible only by passing the Shiraz plain and the narrow pass named “Allaho Akbar” where Quran Gate was constructed.

From the other hand naturally Shiraz is a city in a plain surrounded by high mountains; due to high mountain no sign of city can be seen from the road when coming from northern part of country until the travelers reach “Allaho Akbar” narrow pass and in this place they can see the beautiful landscape of Shiraz city from Quran Gate frame; in such moment they will be surprised and involuntarily open their mouth to praise all this beauty and would say “Allaho Akabar” (God is the greatest) from heart.

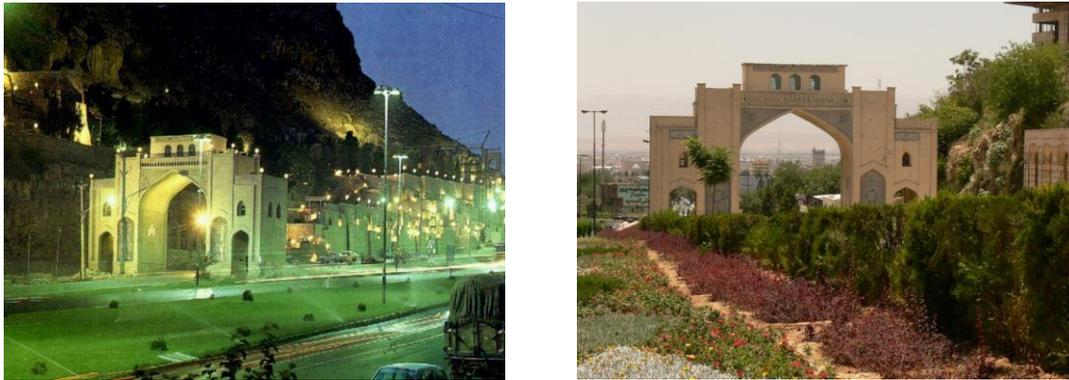


Figure 4

Diyalafoa explains in his travel account: “... Suddenly between the mountains I saw a red plain inside of which was covered with domes of colored tiles and it did not take long that the fence and tower of city and the gardens around city with cypress trees showing off in them appeared front of my eyes and remind me of Jackob grave yard in Istanbul.” Of course it is natural that after the traveler endures the difficulties of walking in barren deserts would get mad and happy of seeing such beautiful landscape of governor-resident city of Fars province.

It is in such point where the “Allaho Akbar” (God is the greatest) would come to anyone’s mind; thus the Quran Gate is constructed and the Quran is put on top of it.

Cultural and religious specifications:

The first thing coming to mind seeing Quran Gate is passing through a glorified and magnificent gate where Quran is put on top and putting the soul and spirit of oneself under the care of a God who has created all universe.



Figure 5

Passing under our holy book, the Quran, when traveling, is one of the visual aspects of our religion and is propounded as a religious tradition and custom. The people aiming to take travel to other cities and leave city would pass under Quran as a custom in the beginning of their trip to avoid difficulties and dangers and keep healthy during their trip.

This tradition had surely influenced construction of Quran Gate; one volume of Quran is put in a room on top of Quran Gate thus the travelers would take trip unworried and tranquilly passing under this gate.

Manifestation of feeling:

One of the characteristics of this gate which needs profound thinking is its exceptional geographical situation and the effect which it puts on the soul, mind and feeling of passengers.

When passing under the gate the travelers would pray God and be thankful to him with a calm and quite heart for the successful trip they had and for being away from dangers and difficulties during their trip; in such a point the hearts will calm down and the Quran gate with a Quran on it is located just there.



Figure 6

Know that remembering God will calm the hearts down. Remembering God and passing under Quran and moving toward city the nature changes; the wide and orderly street

between the beautiful and pleasing gardens and the cool air blowing from gardens would double the immunity and tranquility feeling of passengers and would remind the paradise for some moment as if they exit from hell and enter paradise.

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