



## The “Quranic Teaching” and the “Ideal Islamic City”

Mohammad Naghizadeh\*

Science and Research branch of Islamic Azad University

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“Surely this Quran guides to that which is most upright...” (The Holy Quran, 17: 9)

### Abstract

Despite many scholars in various domains including scientific, academic, professional and political fields talking about “Islamic city” and “Islamic ideal city” (Utopia), there is not a specific definition for “Islamic city” based on sacred Islamic texts. In other words, a variety of definitions and attributes of the “Islamic ideal city” are spread in texts based on different backgrounds and study domains of researchers. However, it seems that the appropriate definition for the “Islamic ideal city” as well as its essential and main attributes should be derived from the Islamic fundamental sacred texts, especially from the Holy Quran.

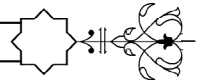
Moreover, to explain and clarify the definition of any phenomenon, its main attributes should be recognized and classified. The fundamental attributes for the Islamic ideal city include “foundations”, “pillars”, “ideal model”, “characteristics” and “principles” which should be derived from the Holy Quran. Indeed, this article endeavors to discover and recognize these attributes for the Islamic city by benefiting the Quranic teaching, with which the Islamic ideal city can be defined.

In other words, the basic hypothesis of the article is: “attributes and definition of Islamic City (Islamic Utopia) can be derived from the Holy Quran.” Obviously, considering the comprehensiveness, everlasting and universality of Islam (and its Holy book: Quran) the definition and attributes of the Islamic city are fundamental and essential for all times and all places but their manifestations in different places and eras are subjected to cultural issues, environmental conditions, economic situations, available technology and other conditions of the specific era and place.

The article responds to the following questions:

1. What is the research method for recognizing the main attributes of the Islamic city from the Holy Quran?
2. What is the definition of Islamic City?
3. What are its main attributes according to Quranic teachings?

According to the background of different parts of the study and its issues, a variety of research methods such as discovery, commentary, deduction and analysis will be used.



To explain the manner of achieving the main goal of the study, it is useful to bring about a brief explanation about the main issues recognized from the Holy Quran.

As mentioned above, there is not an agreed definition for the very important term of “Islamic city.” It seems that the best and the most appropriate definition for “Islamic city” should be derived from the basic Islamic sacred texts, especially from the Holly Quran. The first stage in proposing the definition of this term is recognition of its foundations, definition of its pillars, its paradigm, its attributes and classification of its principles.

There are essential and important points which should be considered in Islamic built environment:

1. Islamic architecture and urban design need to be based on specific Islamic theoretical bases derived from Islamic sacred texts.
2. The Holy Quran is the main source of criteria and guidance for all Muslim activities including Islamic architecture and urban design and their theoretical bases.
3. The Holy Quran does not directly indicate details but timeless values and principles are indicated for creating an appropriate built environment for Muslim life.
4. Although attributes of Muslim acts and products should be derived from the Holy Quran, the main questions are:

- How can Muslim benefit from the Holy Quran in the field of architecture and urban design?
- What are the main principles and values and their original models which have to be considered in Islamic architecture and urban design? and
- Are there any relevant comments and basic principles and values on Islamic architecture and urbanism in the Holy Quran?

This study has been done with the attempt to respond to these important questions. It will endeavor to recognize and introduce those verses of the Holy Quran which indicate attributes of the Islamic built environment for Muslim life. Indeed, a series of principles and their application will be presented in order to design and identify those Islamic architecture and urban design by which Islamic built environment can be demonstrated.

The subjects and issues which clarify the attributes of these principles can be classified in seven categories:

#### I. Islamic Principles and Values:

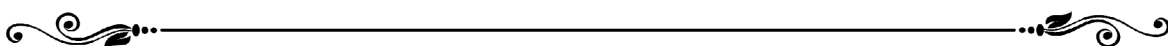
The Islamic Divine Book indicates many principles and values which should be considered in all Muslim acts and activities. These principles and values are the main concern of Muslims and should predominate over their activities and include: tawhid, tasbih, dhikr, ibrah, islah and so on.

#### II. Universal Principles and Values:

Universal principles need to be considered in Islamic architecture and urban design. The relevant values and principles are introduced by indicating the reference verses of the Holy Quran. Justice, balance, hierarchy, truth, beauty, freedom and so on are the most important of universal principles.

#### III. Attributes of Allah's Acts

According to the Holy Quran, Man is the vicegerent of God on earth. Therefore attributes of Man's acts should be similar to the attributes of God's acts. Human who is the vicegerent of God





must represent those qualities and seek the best way to creation and maintenance of a suitable environment for life and development of the earth, and his (or her) actions and activities must also be harmonized with the universal principles established by God. In other words, attributes of Allah's acts (as an original and basic model for human activities) are explored and introduced in this section by paying deep attention to the Holy Quran.

#### IV: Nature and Natural Elements

Man lives and acts on earth by benefiting from nature and natural elements. Recognition of spiritual meaning and material benefits of nature and natural elements are two important points which should be considered in human activities and relationships between man and nature. The spiritual and symbolic meaning of natural elements and their relationships with Man and his architecture and urban design are recognized and introduced by considering relevant verses of the Holy Quran.

#### V: Regulation of Social Relationships

The fifth section will deal with Man and his relationship with the society and those attributes by which a Muslim society can be manifested. Therefore, those verses of the Holy Quran that have expressed the attributes of Muslim society (ummah) and the effects of these attributes on Muslim architecture and urban design are discussed in this section.

#### VI. Ethics Islamic Values

Islamic teaching has introduced many moral values including two main parts: those that should be respected, and those which must be avoided. An appropriate city for Muslim life has to help people to live in the city according to these moral values.

#### VII. Attributes of the Built Environment

Those verses of the Holy Quran which indicate the elements and attributes of the built environment as well as their relationships with human beings have been gathered in this category.

#### VIII. Architectural and Urban Elements

The Holy Quran indicates many architectural and urban elements by which some Islamic architectural attributes can be recognized. This category includes the relevant verses that indicate suitable or unsuitable attributes of architectural elements which may contribute to identification of Islamic architecture and urban design.

Essential, basic and timeless principles for Islamic architecture and urban design will be flourished by paying deep attention to those verses of the Holy Quran which are collected here. These concepts, elements and words are related to one or more of the seven items mentioned above, such as Muslim society (individual, family, and neighbors), Muslim architecture, nature, natural elements, architectural timeless principles, symbols and signs and other relevant subjects. Indeed, this index is so comprehensive as to be used by not only architects and urban designers but also artists, environmentalists, social scientists and so on.

“Wa ma tawfiqi illa billah: And my success can only come from Allah” (The Holy Quran, 11:88 )”

**Keywords:** Islamic ideal city, Islamic city, Sacred texts, Culture, City.

