



## Typology of the Form and Placement of Shanashir in Vernacular Architecture of Bushehr Port, Iran

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Received: 2016/5/23

Accepted: 2016/9/3

### Abstract

Islamic architecture in different territories has taken on various representations in harmony with natural and cultural contexts. Vernacular architecture of Bushehr Port is one the representations which encompasses features distinguished from those of other cities in the northern coastline of the Persian Gulf. Due to the special geographical position of this port and connection with other countries, one of the features is the existence of an element called “Shanashir» in the building facades, which has contributed to the interior-exterior architectural pattern of Bushehr Port, as well as privacy fulfilment.

Shanashir is generally known as a wooden element appended to the interior and exterior façade of the building. As a semi-open space, it provides a view from interior space to the exterior space of yard or urban space and is regarded as a modifying element of climatic conditions in hot and humid climate of Bushehr. This research used qualitative method and case study strategy with the aim of finding typology of this element, so as to find which types of Shanashir are important in the architecture of Bushehr Port in terms of form, what function this element serves, what types are predominant in this regard, what factors contribute in Shanashir placement, and what direction Shanashirs mostly have. In this regard, first the literature of the history of Shanashir was reviewed using library resources for data collection. Second, aiming at studying functions of Shanashir and its physical components, essential data were collected by reviewing library documents and field study. For field study, non-participatory observation was used so as to extract functions of this element by watching people’s living manner in Shanashir-included houses and behavior of Shanashir users. Moreover, oral interview with the users contributed to the scrutiny of the functions. Photography, sketch, and note taking were other tools used in this phase. Third, in order to approach the typology of Shanashir, written and visual resources regarding Bushehr buildings that have Shanashir were scrutinized and data were classified, and then all Shanashir-included buildings located in the historical texture of Bushehr were visited and the required information for the research was classified. The historical texture of Bushehr covers an area of 4.5 hectare, which encompasses four historic neighborhoods. To approach the typology, it was needed to study the texture. One of the research limitations at this point is destruction of some buildings in the east coast of the historical texture of Bushehr during Pahlavi era because of construction and development of the Bushehr Port Organization, and that of other buildings with the construction of the north-south Street passing through the texture.

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These two parts probably had remarkable Shanashir-included monuments particularly in the eastern part of the texture, as apart from a few famous monuments the remaining were destructed and there is no information but few pictures with indistinctive location. In addition to the large-scale destructions, a number of buildings were demolished due to the lack of attention and timely restoration, and there is little information on them. Moreover, some owners did not allow us to enter their buildings in order to visit the interior Shanashirs, and some monuments were demolished to such an extent that it was impossible to collect data about the existing situation of Shanashir. In the Comprehensive Plan of the Old Texture of Bushehr, 1013 buildings are specified within the historic barrier. Based on this map, field study was initiated and every single building specified in the map was visited and photographed. According to the field study, out of 1013 buildings a number of 565 buildings were demolished and new buildings with different plans were replaced with historical plans. Moreover, a number of 86 buildings were dilapidated and impossible to be seen. Thus, a number of 362 buildings remained in the second phase were investigated more precisely, among which a number of 29 buildings had Shanashir.

Analysis of available Shanashir showed that 48 percent of Shanashir-included buildings are located in Koti Neighborhood, 42 percent in Behbahani Neighborhood, 7 percent in Shanbandi Neighborhood, and 3 percent in Dehdashti Neighborhood. Furthermore, 45 percent of exterior Shanashirs were seen in monuments adjacent to the seashore, and 24 percent of the remaining were near square, 17 percent near the plaza, and 14 percent were located in within-texture passages. The results of the analyzing Shanashirs placement in buildings indicated that two major types of Shanashir namely interior and exterior Shanashir exist in Bushehr vernacular architecture, which are classified into semi-open and closed classes based on the level of closeness. Closed Shanashir were used in few numbers and only in exterior façade. Form typology of exterior Shanashir can be classified into two main classes; linear and bi-directional (L-shaped) Shanashir. The latter can entail 90 degree or more angle or curve intersection. Interior Shanashirs can be classified into four main classes; unidirectional (linear), bi-directional (L-shaped), three-directional (U-shaped) and four-directional. Based on the place of Shanashir, inside or outside of buildings, some differences exist in their functions and components. This research shows that the dominant type of exterior Shanashir is semi-open unidirectional (linear) type and the dominant type of interior Shanashir is probably three-directional type. By studying the location of exterior Shanashirs, it is concluded that adjacency to the seashore or having a spatial opening to urban spaces such as a square or a plaza play an important role in the place of Shanashir establishment.

**Keywords:** Shanashir, Historic Port of Bushehr, Vernacular Architecture, Islamic Architecture, Iran.