Function of Endowment And Its Role In Islamic Cities-Iran

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ABSTRACT

The endowment is one of the economical substructures in Islam. The endowment tradition is a reward of religious and cult ideologies that has an important role in developing structures of Islamic cities, especially in Iran. We can study the endowment from 3 aspects: city management, economical aspects in small scales and creating vacancies. On the other hand cult is one reason that caused the endowment beard through different eras, but not generally. You can see the effect of endowment in every aspect of cities, from creating the smallest elements to the biggest areas. And establishing a court named "the ministry of endowment" in Islamic government's structures is a sign of development and effectiveness in Muslims life styles and their city management model. In this paper we studied about endowment, its characteristics in verity aspects and its historical role in creating Islamic cities by a documentary descriptive way and also by reviewing the endowment in Iran, Islam and the world. The results show endowed lands played an important role in physical development of cities and through these physical developments the endowment itself became a part of cities. Therefore, endowed lands effects and physical development of cities have a bilateral relationship.

INTRODUCTION

In spite of the fact that the endowment is a widespread matter in variety fields of economical, social, scientific and searches affairs, except few juridical researches there aren't enough studies about it. The development of Islamic civilization is a result of efforts that its repeatability is possible. A total revolution and development in the elements of human population has distinguished Islamic civilization from the others and we must say that religious and cult are never obstacles in front of it. Not only the cult is not an obstacle for scientific, artistic and mental development, but also it is the base of every mental and scientific movement and also welfare and justice development.

Endowment as a valuable heritage from Islamic teachings and prophetic traditions has something to do with social and economical affairs in Islamic cities especially in Iran and also has an important role in creating city areas. The most public and public utility places as the main elements of a city co relationship have an endowment nature. If the endowment was able to last, remain and protect itself through the history is because of this excellent culture. The main elements in Iranian cities are malls which are a result of endowment applications. The malls are in the center of cities as the central economical parts and beating heart of towns. These economical parts had an important role in Islamic-Iranian cities.

By looking at city textures of Iran we can see many elements that the endowment has an important role in their lasting in civic lives. From this point of view the effectiveness of endowment would be from creating the smallest elements such as mosques, schools, bathrooms, drinking fountains and small bazaars to creating the biggest city areas like market places and commercial complexes.

Endowment is one of the outstanding proofs of dedicating money, it is as old as human civilization and always in all religion (not only in Islam) was an element for developing in towns and villages. This good tradition is revealed in all social fields by the use of religious instruction. The study of effectiveness elements on developing Islamic cities and an Islamic Iran is the main subject for the researchers in related courses and they considered it as much as possible. In all the times endowment considered as a factor for improvement, reconstruction and development of cities in inner and outer Islamic lands especially for Iran.

Endowment not only has effects in religious, culture, education and economy but also in geography. In some zones the geographical characteristics as same as developing in endowment have changed. Tehran,
Mashhad, Isfahan, Tabriz and Ghom are the cities that are affected by endowment. So these cities are faced to a general development in some their parts by this fact.

**Some related researches:**

Khalil Abad Kalantari (2010) has studied the historical role of endowment in formation of Islamic cities, (the case study is Isfahan). Shahabi (2004) has studied the effect of endowment in Iran town planning. Fatabadi Shoja (2003) has studied the effect of endowed lands in physical development of Mashhad (the case study is Ghale Ab-e-koh Mashhad). Pormohamadi Kashi (2002) has studied the effect of endowment in social-economical development of Islamic society. Etezadi (1998) has studied and analyzed the trace of endowment culture in cultural and economical structure of the early periods of Dolat Abad in Malayer city.

**Research theory basis:**

**Endowment definition:**

Endowment in dictionary means "to stand", "to stay stand" and "calm". But at the words of Jurisconsults the endowment is: "to hold the property itself and use its profits for God pleasure". Sheikh Toosi said that: Endowment is to keep the original property and distributing its profits for God pleasure. To keep and to hold means to take away somebody or something's freedom. It is clear by devoting a property (land), any action to buy or sell that land is taken away from the owner. Tasbil means let something free for God pleasure. A martyr said at first: endowment is to keep the property itself and provide its profits for God's sake.

**Kinds of endowment:**

There are two kinds of endowment; the first kind consists of two types:

A: endowment for general profit: mosques, schools, bridges, roads, cemeteries and dams . . .

B: endowment for especial people.

**Discussion:**

**The applications of endowment in Islamic society:**

If the devoted properties be used in a religious commandments way in the society, it can be useful to solve the problems in social, cultural and economical fields. Generally we can categorize these applications into 3 characteristics: social, economical and cultural. In order to develop the endowment culture we should be aware of positive results of it in society, Therefore, before going further and to study the ways of development of endowment we should be aware of its applications.

**Cultural application:**

The main and the most important application of the endowment are its educational and cultural effects. The cultural and educational aspects in Islamic society are so vast. Endowment as a constant financial source of scientific centers, always support the people. There are so many schools and scientific centers in the Islamic society that are established by this way and also some of the famous scientists achieved to the high degree by the endowment. The Islamic schools would be able to affect the European culture of training and education by strengthen the financial matters by endowment. Endowment is a way for spreading Islamic learning. Cultural applications of endowment are as follow: establishing mosques, universities, dormitories, libraries, setting up pilgrimage to Mecca, ceremonies of mourning for Imams, reading Koran international champions. By devoting religious schools the Muslims could provide their best works to the world, and it is clear that their science is developing and spreading all over the world by these devoted properties.

**Social application:**

In society, the endowment considers all the poor. The endowment saves the society from the poverty, (the main factor of social, behavioral and religious problems) and provides a friendship environment for a peaceful living that leads to developing and improving society. Many of social services were provided by endowment. In the past some needs were very crucial like: inns, Karvansra, ligaments, orphan asylum... and according to such needs, the persons who wanted to endow have considered those needs. The most important social applications of endowment are supporting from social groups such as travelers, the poor, the people who are not able to marry because of financial problem, creating health care centers, nurseries, training centers in deprived regions in the country.
Economical applications:

In spite of Capitalist and Communist regimes, Islam is the cult of justice and equity. Therefore, Islam has provided a better economical structure from God. In this economical structure there is no cruelty, no injustice and there is no dictatorship. In Islam the economics are something related to politics and pray not related to dictatorship and force. The endowment by an effective training, has made an Islamic milieu that in it the being numerous is not a criterion for being superior, in other milieus like material ones everybody try to want everything for himself, on the contrary in Islam austerity, helping to others and distributing extra wealth by the use of endowment and … is not only superior criterion but also a kind of praying. On the other hand, the Islam policy is according to justice and protect from society wealth. Therefore, there is no uncontrolled way to gather wealth without hard working and by encouraging others (the rich) to endow their wealth for the poor, reduce the distance between these two groups and make a moderation in society. In other words, the endowment moderates the wealth in Islamic societies. The Islam provides the wonderful act of endowment to save the humans from despair and sadness and above all to conquer any discrimination. Islam has avoided class discrimination by endowment. The positive economical application of endowment in Islam is in the level of faith to God, Imams and Resurrection. In general, the nature of endowment in economical, (it is something related to economics). Endowment will be so useful to solve the financial problems of a society. The endowment is regarded as a powerful supporter of government. It is very important to spend the endowment in following ways: making roads and paths, creating public buildings, bridges, building productive factories to employ the unemployed, feeding indigent, providing cheap domiciles, investing in developmental, industrial and agricultural plans, reducing the prices and increasing the production. So, the endowment is very important in a society development.

Islamic city:

After spreading the Islam in different lands, the nature of those cities gradually changed, according to the values that were taken from that cult. The European researchers named these cities as Islamic cities. Islamic cities are out of Islam cults frameworks. (These cities are created and developed in a cultural framework that is rooted in Islam). All of the above mentioned countries according to their Islamic rulers and sovereign have common ground.

An Islamic city is a city that in it you can see Islamic manifestation and all of the elements and factors of such a city is presenting the God. This developed city is the mosque and the home of prophet. In other words an Islamic city is a manifestation of monotheism, a city of unity, not disunion.

In general, Islamic cities are those with Islamic rules, values and beliefs and they are across the world centrality in Middle East and Africa. These lands are spreading from Atlantic Ocean to China Sea, from Gina gulf to central Asia and from Africa to Bengal gulf. The word "Islamic City" for the first time was used for northern African cities by Europeans. The Islamic cities are of two kinds: 1. Remained from before Islam civilization (Damascene and Iran) and 2. New-built cities with military and political goals (Baghdad)

The main elements of Islamic cities are markets and mosques. The main public building in the city is mosque and in urbanism has a basic location. These buildings were at first at the corners but recently their location become in the heart and in the center of cities. (Mashhadizade Deghhani, 1995: 281) Nowadays, the mosques in Islamic cities according to the population of that area is many (big or small); they play the main role in the appearance of the most cities. (Paknejad, 1977:117).The markets were not just a place to deal, but because of their important location, the markets had some sensitive social factors in themselves. The markets in the point of view of economical and social applications had a wide influence on everything.

However, some researchers consider the Islamic cities without any background or identity. According to this, the cities of an Islamic country should be considered as the cities of Islamic lands or cities of Islam era.

Historical effects in Islamic cities:

Many of old cities were mostly small parishes that form gradually and by increasing in their population and developing their building and places became a city. In fact many structures and substructures were established by people themselves, there was no need and necessity for governors to establish such places. And this is the culture of endowment.

The endowment is not only a factor to create places and valuable elements in cities, but also moral connection of devoted places with religious affairs caused their permanent in city areas during the ages. (Kalantari & co workers 2011: 36).

These devoted places are repaired and protected and remained durable by the money that earned from those places. Some of the reasons that caused the devoted places in spite of events and phenomenon stay still now are 1.their nature is permanent and durable 2. They are not for selling and we cannot remove those 3. Their income would spend in pious acts and interest of Muslims. It is observed that during the ages many of these devoted places such as mosques, scientific schools and public baths have more stable structures than other places in a city. (Ghadiri, 1991:39)
The endowment is one of the most popular structures in the economics of Islamic world. We should consider the endowment as a special element for development and welfare of society. According to the religious basis the endowment can lead to justice and wealth share between people. (Kalantari & co workers, 2011: 37).

The effects of endowment are: 1: Social equity 2: Wealth moderation and 3: Social unity that all of them are the basis of economical and social equity. (Kashipoor Mohammadi, 2003: 3)

In the morphology of Islamic cities below factors are important: regional factors, economical factors, relationship factors, governmental, health and endowment factors. (Shokooi, 1995: 187)

In addition to religious, cultural, economical and social effects, endowment has important geographical effects too. So in many areas the cities have changed obviously. Ecant Ehlers recognize four main applications for endowment in the fields of social-economical in Islamic cities:

1. To provide the most parts of responsibilities in ceremonies such as: organizing, provide expenses partly or completely to repair mosques, scientific schools and Hoseinie.
2. A verity of helps to the poor, students, urban schools and gives hand to maintenance some hospitals, baths, reservoirs and doing charity affairs from the endowment income.
3. To provide cheap homes and to assign devoted lands, stores and workshops with long term rents for the poor.
4. A large group of depauperates would be employed in devoted building, shrines, commercial and industrial real states and other devoted organizations of cities and countries. (Ehlerz, 1996: 53)

The endowment has deep effects in the geography of the Islamic cities. For example Mecca and Medina in Arabia, Najaf and Karbala in Iraq and Mashhad, Ghom and Isfahan in Iran have significant changes in the formation of the city (by endowment).

**Historical place of endowment in formation and development of Islamic cities environment:**

The outstanding role of endowment in reconstruction of Islamic cities is also noticeable, because the endowment creates devoted religious places that has political meaning and are religious application, on the other hand the endowments cause to gather some money from rebuilding unused devoted places like: Kale, inns, baths, houses, stores and other places and spend the gathered money to build other useful places. (Bagheri, 2008:5-164).

Endowment as a religious fact is a planner of much geographical manifestation like mosques, universities, hospitals, observatory, monasteries, shrines, ligaments, inns and bridges and other charity institutes all over the country. (Danesh pajoh, Afshar, 1963: 41)

Many buildings and structures were made by people without the government interference. (Fath Abadi, 2000:68-70).

The places of geographical areas and devoted properties are following a reasonable discipline that is completely economical and mental. Usually there are several devoted places in one area near each other (some mosques, schools and malls). (Shaghafi, 1998: 33/67) Placing these factors is so valuable in urban areas that the architects and city planners are attracted to them.

In this way, the endowment has an important role in formation of Islamic countries. But we should say some endowments such as Karvansra and Ghanat (underground channels of water) are not a need for the society now. On the other hand some Devoted places in urban areas are confirmed needs of people of a modern society such as mosques, universities and markets. Therefore the center of formation of these devoted places is in cities and in the realms of Islam. (Kalantari & colleges, 2011: 37).

Some cities in Iran like Ghom, Mashhad and Isfahan are more affected by endowment than others. The appearance of these cities always was changing through the ages by governors and people. For example, the best periods of devoting in Iran were the improving time of Isfahan.

The number of devoted properties in Iran is more than other countries. And the cities Ghom, Mashhad and Isfahan have the highest number of devoted properties among Islamic cities. According to recent studies there are more than 114000 devoted properties in Iran. (Kalantari & colleges, 2011: 37).

**The historical role and the effect of endowment in cities of Iran:**

The reflection of endowment are those devoted properties that related directly to physical features of city, such features are schools, universities, hospitals, mosques, bridges, houses and so on. In fact the reflection of devoted properties are their applications, these applications play an essential role in society life.

Endowment is one of the most important principles and sentences in Islam that encourages people to devote and create devoted properties in cities. Endowment causes improvement. Most of the religious places and public places like mosques, schools, mills, hospitals, Hoseinie are out of endowment basis. (Saeedi Rezvani, 1994: 137). Those buildings that are related to endowment automatically lead to cities development.

The improvement and development in Ottoman and Safavie periods without the endowment was absolutely impossible. It was common to develop cities by act of devoting in Ottoman period. These public utilities were
gathered around a central core like mosques, schools and baths or main squares. These devoted properties were the most important reasons for movement and having a lively city. These complexes are still remained from those periods in cities of Iran. (Etezadi, 1999: 9-20)

In Safavie era the endowment was in the center of attention. In those periods the kings themselves encouraged to endowment and have devoted many respectful and religious places like the cemetery of Sheikh Safi-Al-Din Ardabili and Samen-Al-Aeme. In those periods the kings themselves encouraged to endowment and spent a lot of money about that. There are two devoted places by the city market in Shah Abbas period, one of them is hospital (Dar-Al-Shefa) and the other is Mesgaran Inn. The Safavie's people have known as the leader of endowment. (Mir Ahmadi, 1993: 29-48) On the contrary the historians always emphasized on the role of cult and the substantial evidences and documents in Islamic cities as a source for studies and searches.

We can study the endowments for developing geographically, cultural and economical from 3 aspects:
1. Local importance
2. Social-Economical importance
3. Political importance

In Iranian Islamic cities the endowment tradition had a crucial role in forming and creating areas from small parishes to big cities. The oldest collections of such endowments are Nezamie School in Salgoghian era, Rob-e-Rashidi collections in Tabriz, Naghsh-e-Jahan square in Isfahan, Gang Ali Khan in Kerman and Sheikh Safi Ardabili in Safavie era, Zandie collection in Shiraz and AmirKabir Dome in Tehran from Ghajareeh era. (Shahabi, 2005: 290)

The role of endowment in creating and forming the small and big factors of a city (fountains or mosques) is completely observable. In addition to architectural characteristics, the endowment plays role in aggregating and facilitating the applications and forming the structures of urban.

The Islamic cities, more than any other cities in the world have affected by Islamic rules and sentences extracted from books, practice and consensus. From the above mentioned factors, religious and endowment are rooted in religious world view and are clearly observed in Islamic city planning and urbanism.

Most of the features of Islamic cities like structure or texture are a reflection of Islamic point of view. Islamic and religious factors of cities are very well qualified and able to make relationship with the people, mobilize and move them toward Islamic goals. Endowment has important effects in developing and evolutionary of cities. By changing the evolution of social living, the importance of endowment was revolution from one era to another. And in every era the devoted properties played important roles in social and rebuilding matters.

Since long time ago, creating public services and structures were goals of endowment. Public services and structures are the most common devotes in cities, and it is a reason for emigration of people to cities. The motivation and the reason for creating and devoting such places were because of the charity characteristics of kings and princes.

In Ghajareeh period, the rich helped to the poor by devoting, but in Pahlavi period the endowment was gradually disappearing. In that period the rich men just devote things with highest income for them.

In Pahlavi period the devoted places such as hospitals, educational and commercial places were spread all over the city but in Ghajareeh period these places were just around the city markets. It was in Pahlavi periods that charity institutes were established. (Hosseini, 1999)

The endowment is observed in everything, from small elements like mosques, passages, lights, small markets and schools to the biggest city structures like markets. (Ghadiri, 1991: 36)

Conclusion:

The most important factors that their roles are emphasized in formation of cities are as follows:
1. World-view factor (how to though about world)
2. Economical factor (how to define material world)
3. Regional factor (biological condition)

Among these factors the first one considered the most important one in Islamic cities and because of this in spite of different climates and natures in Iran all of the structures in most of cities are the same.

In general, the qualities of devoted places are strongly dependent to scale and sizes of the structures. It means the bigger a devoted place, the highest it’s influence in city. Another point that should be considered here is that some of the devoted properties are organized (structural) and some of them are unorganized (dispersion factors). Formation of devoted properties is directly related to the devoted factors distributed in zones and areas.

The endowment from one hand is making suitable environment by creating different religious structures and its appurtenances in Islamic cities, and on the other hand maintain and protect from the nature of cities like Tehran, Mashhad, Isfahan, Tabriz and Ghom. These effects are continuing.

The endowment as an active system plays an important role in different fields of economics and politics. According to the verity of endowments in Iran and according to the fact that every change in devoted properties
need a legal and religious rule, there will be an important role of endowment in shaping and developing big and especially small cities, such as Mashhad, Isfahan, Ghom and ... .

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