

Chart.1. Comparison of structural development of residential architecture in the Caucasus region (Georgia, Armenia). Source: Author, 2013.

Common features of the three periods (Tradition, Communism and Independence)		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The veranda (terrace) as an extrovert element 2. Square plan, especially in rural houses
Distinguishing Aspects of the three periods	Tradition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The organic formation 2. Having a great variety in appearance and spatial relationships 3. formation based on requirements of people’s lives 4. Using indigenous materials
	Communism	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Forming based on commanding architecture 2. Having Uniformity in appearance and spatial relationships 3. Using industrial materials 4. The conversion of veranda into balcony in residential blocks
	independence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The addition of extensions 2. The functional change of ground floors in residential blocks to commercial units

Endnote

1. In this paper, coma or inertia in residential architecture not only mean stable residential buildings in quantitative terms, but also the ravages of housing, lack of quality and diversity of residential architecture.
2. Although these modernization and reconstruction actions belong to the contemporary time, they have been modeled after the Tradition period.
3. This house is located in the town of Gori, Georgia and is now conserved as a museum.
4. Hammer move is the authoritarian movement of governing policies of the Caucasus region toward globalization in architecture, urban planning and urban management.

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est negative population growth (Asr-e Iran, 2011). Furthermore, although the low population growth can be a reason for the downturn in the housing architecture of the Caucasus region in quantitative terms, but it is not solid evidence of poor quality of residential spaces, and we must seek other factors affecting the residential architecture of this region. Government policies and administrative weakness in housing is another reason. So much so that, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, a new housing management system has not yet fully formed (Stepanyan & Varosyan, 2010).

The most important management action of this period is choosing the former architecture for housing. Also, the today architecture of Caucasus has highly practiced the approach to globalization in formal and cosmetic ways, and unlike management actions, this has not happened in housing architecture.

The existing approach mostly includes office and government buildings and urban spaces in which the attention to these buildings is evident.

Thus, housing and residential architecture are as unimportant as possible and this issue has not been fundamentally dealt with. On the other hand, due to the impact of this hammer move⁴ on people's response to

the actions of government, is also possible that policies would rather not enter these developments in housing.

Because due to the close relationship between architecture and living, any change in this area can lead to failure of public disagreement.

Of other influences of the independence period, the economy can be noted.

Despite all these governments' efforts towards posing themselves as modern and developed countries, the economic situation of the society is not very good. In fact in this region, people do not have a high level economy and most classes of the society are financially medium, so much so that poor economic situation is considered a reason for migration (Anaj, 2013).

This has led to a more important role of the government than people, in architecture and urban planning developments to construct or reconstruct houses. Studying these factors suggests that governments and governing policies in independence period have been able to control the level of evolutions in housing and have a significant role in it as a powerful element. These actions, in addition to being a result of the region's movement toward globalization, also indicate the importance of changes in housing.

Conclusion

Investigating the process of developments in residential architecture in the Caucasus indicates that residential architecture in the region after the communism period has been rapidly changed which has resulted in two types of buildings with particular architectural features. On the other hand, it indicates a kind of stagnation and inertia in residential architecture of the independence period (Chart.1).

Research in housing of Armenia and Georgia specifies various developments and challenges which given the progression of structural changes in different historical epochs, have happened because of different reasons. But the most important thing that happened in this region's housing architecture is a sort inertia or stagnation. According to observations and studies, we realize that the reasons include:

1. Low population growth rates in Armenia and Georgia
 2. The actions during the communism period, including neglecting the traditions, authoritarianism, and establishing a social justice particular to this period
 3. The dominant policy governing the independence period, due to a comprehensive dominance over housing construction by following the previous period
 4. A solely cosmetic move towards the globalization in public architecture and urban management and neglecting housing
- In general, these factors have caused the loss of residential space quality, the slow death of housing and the stagnation of the residential architecture in the Caucasus region.



Fig 6 A



Fig 6 B

Fig.6. Residential buildings established in the independence period do not have fundamental developments in structure and they follow the former period.

Fig.6A. Kutaisi, Georgia. Photo: Shervin Goodarzian, archive of NAZAR research center, 2013.

Fig.6B. Yerevan, Armenia. Photo: Shervin Goodarzian, archive of NAZAR research center, 2013.

in this region and have solved the problems of housing in Armenia and Georgia to a great extent, but the principles of communism and introducing the commanding architecture, have caused residential architecture to be of less importance and the variety and quality of spaces and residences to reach their minimum.

• Residential Architecture after the Independence

In this period no significant physical change happens in residential buildings or homes in the Caucasus region; so much so that residential buildings of this period can still be considered the product of Communism. So much so that it can be said most residential apartments are only symbolically repaired (Sargsyan, 2013). In this period due to the increasing needs of the people and injection some other applications into buildings, changes occurred in the residential complex that no one has been fundamental and is limited to some additions to the building. Residential buildings of this period are the surviving buildings from era of Communism, which with minor changes, are today used for living. An example is transforming the balconies of residential complexes into a place for modern facilities (Figs.4). Also the conversion of the ground floor into commercial units is one of other major changes that due to the structure type of the building, has added

stairs to these units for the access of people and in addition to functional changes, has also resulted in structural changes (Fig.5). On the other hand, although the amount of constructions of residential architecture in Georgia and Armenia is very little, these newer buildings also follow the structure of the former period and no development is seen. Residential complexes built as modern architecture in this region which are free from ornamentation and additional elements of the façade, are built based on the structure and architecture of the communism period. This issue is so significant that residential complexes in Yerevan are built identical to the former period and there is no difference between them (Figs.6). This has led to the loss of housing quality in this region, as well as the uniformity of residential buildings.

One of the reasons behind the stable development of residential buildings is the population growth of these countries during the independence period. Demographic studies suggest that population growth in the region after the fall of Communism has a decreasing and sometimes negative trend. So much so that Georgia with 0.1 percent and Armenia with 0.4 percent have the lowest level of natural population growth in the region of Southwest Asia in 2006 (Noorolahi & Fathi, 2008). However, perhaps these countries' population growth in recent years has had a slight increase, but Georgia is still among the ten countries with the high-



Fig 4A



Fig 4B



Fig 4C

Fig.4. Most residential buildings of the independence period are the same residential complexes of the communism period which are updated with minor changes. These changes include dedicating the balcony to embed new facilities needed for residential units.

Fig.4A. Zugdidi, Georgia. Photo: Shervin Goodarzian, archive of NAZAR research center, 2013.

Fig.4B. Vanadzor, Armenia. Photo: Shervin Goodarzian, archive of NAZAR research center, 2013.

Fig.4C. Batumi, Georgia. Photo: Shervin Goodarzian, archive of NAZAR research center, 2013.

tlement and trying to prevent the formation of human Community led to a lack of attention to the quality of residential space. In other words, the unattractive apartment blocks seen in most of these cities, have been established with the purpose of building affordable houses for workers (Askarzade & Khademi, 2010).

Investigating the actions of communism period indicated that although decisions made in this period have lead to the establishment of some infrastructures

Fig.5. Converting ground-floor residential units into commercial units and adding stairs to residential buildings are other minor, functional and structural changes in the independence period. Yerevan, Armenia. Photo: Shervin Goodarzian, archive of NAZAR research center, 2013.



residential units which connect through central stairs.

There I no longer any veranda in these types of buildings, rather, each unit has a separate balcony which protrudes from the façade and is the only eccentric element in these residential complexes (Fig.3). The role of common areas becoming of less importance and the low quality of house space, are major changes that occurred in this period.

Studying the structural changes in residential architecture indicates the significant role of Communism as an influential school in the lives of this region's people. One of the most ideologically important actions in this period is the commanding architecture beside all other rules governing people's lives which as well includes residential architecture. Neglecting tradition marginalized the structure and form of the traditional homes. A new model was established during this period along industrialization, which was indicated with the characteristic of lack of variety in residential zone (Kasravi, 2010) . On one hand, moving towards authoritarianism and magnificent cities, establishing massive

residential complexes and housing people, and on the other hand, rising construction rates, uniformity, and introducing similar patterns into the construction of residential complexes and removing ornamentation, resulted in greater quantity of residential units, however the spatial quality was reduced. This is due to the importance of "production" as the most important factor in the formation of socialist cities (Tosics, 2004). Also, too much attention to the architecture of governance and power display, caused the greatest changes to occur in government buildings, offices and public spaces, and placed the problem of housing in socialist cities with a subsequent priority. This has also doubled the loss of housing quality; so much so that residential neighborhoods of this city were identical, inexpensive, applicable to all classes, and with minimum facilities (Atashinbar, 2010). Other influential matter during the Communism is the fading of the people's role in socialist cities, due to the loss of social structure which has resulted in the separation of residential living from urban life in this period. Paying sole attention to set-



Fig.3. Balcony is the only eccentric element in residential units of the communism period. Kobuleti, Georgia. Photo: Shervin Goodarzian, archive of NAZAR research center, 2013.



Fig.1. The conserved house of Stalin is an example of houses in the tradition period in the region of Caucasus. Gori, Georgia. Photo: Shervin Goodarzian, archive of NAZAR research center, 2013.



Fig.2. The surviving houses in the historic urban tissue of Tbilisi which are reconstructed based on structural models of the tradition period indicate the extraversion of houses and the important role of veranda in residential architecture of this period. Tbilisi, Georgia. Photo: Shervin Goodarzian, archive of NAZAR research center, 2013.

Introduction

Research about the residential architecture of any region has great importance in understanding the evolution of the cultures of different nations, due to being much influenced by the lifestyles of the inhabitants.

Due to the mutual impression of residential architecture in community construction, analyzing it can identify many aspects of the process of change in a specific geographic area.

The Caucasus region's architecture of today especially in Armenia and Georgia, witnesses a move towards globalization and the so-called modernization, so much so that in some big cities major expenses have been spent to build modern public buildings. However, further contemplation on the structural changes in residential architecture of this region indicates that this type of architecture unlike others has followed a

different trend, which is inertia and stability in residential architecture. In quantitative terms and based on the amount of construction in this region, changes and construction of houses and residential complexes have been very little. Also, the housing of this region has not been qualitatively dealt with in response to changes that have been made in other types of architecture. Uniformity and inertia in this area brings out this question: Why has residential architecture not changed and is still in coma, despite changes in the architecture of modern era in the Caucasus region? To find the answer to this question, this study tries to discuss the issues of residential architecture in the Caucasus region, by observing cases in Armenia and Georgia and investigating the factors influencing the history of this architecture.

Hypothesis: Impacts from the communism rule in Armenia and Georgia, the independence rule following the policy of the former era, and a cosmetic move toward globalization have brought housing architecture in the cities of Caucasus region to stagnation.

Structural changes in residential architecture in the Caucasus

The process of developments in the housing architecture of Caucasus region can be studied in three periods of tradition (before communism), communism and independence (from 1992 onwards). Analysis of each of the factors influencing this architecture and procedures governing these developments that led to today's existing residential architecture, indicates that:

• Residential Architecture of Tradition period

Not many examples of the housing of the tradition period have remained, and this is because of the destruction of many urban texture during Communism, so that it could exert its integration ideas by forgetting national identity. However, according to the regeneration of old texture², for instance Tbilisi and traditional houses like the house where Stalin was born in³, it is observed that the overall structure of the houses in this

period is a building with a square plan and a veranda located at the front. Veranda as one of the important elements of homes during this period, through which connection with the city and other neighborhoods were established, has caused extraversion of the residential spaces. On the other hand, formation of these structures in organic forms has brought many variations on the plan and façade and is of high quality space, due to being built based on lifestyles. The housing materials of this period are indigenous and include brick and wood (Figs.1&2).

• Residential Architecture of Communism period

The construction of housing in the Communism period is entirely changed and due to the general commanding architecture, two types of residential buildings are observed; the first type, houses built in most villages and small towns which are cubic buildings with gable roofs. Houses in this period are built in two stories and like the examples of the Tradition period, with a veranda round the house. The second type is residential blocks or complexes which often exist in large and medium sized cities. These buildings are prefabricated and built using modern materials. In terms of framework, these blocks are built in cuboids to the maximum of five stories and include a set of several

Residential Architecture Challenge of Caucasus

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Abstract

Since the architecture of the residence is one of the most striking features of human life in cities and especially the view of a country, studying and practicing it can determine the effects and changes made in life and society of that country.

Research on houses and residential complexes of Caucasus, including Armenia and Georgia in 2014, indicates that although there are constructions of public and government buildings, but we see no or little change or transformation in the development of complexes and residential homes. Residential buildings used today, are the product of Communism and over time, according to the needs of people and new lifestyles, the previous frame has been updated and extensions have been added to it.

Studying the changes in residential architecture during the three periods of tradition,

communism and independence indicates that communism as an influential ideology, in addition to establishing residential infrastructures, has created a uniform trend in architecture by introducing commanding architecture to residential buildings.

This period in addition to providing housing quantitatively, has subdued residential diversity and has established an equal structure for residential architecture.

The continuation of this practice after independence and moving towards a globalization which is merely cosmetic, have made efforts in this area is minimal or of no fundamental changes at all. On the other hand, the poor economy has caused people the inability to build new homes, and all these factors have caused inertia¹ and coma for residential architecture in the Caucasus region.

Keywords

Residential Architecture, Caucasus, Inertia, Communism.