

## The Four Pillars of Islamic Design: A Methodology for an Objective Approach to the Design and Appraisal of Islamic Urban Planning and Architecture Based on Traditional Islamic Religious Knowledge

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**Abstract :** In the modern urban planning and architecture landscape, with western ideologies and styles becoming the mainstay of experience and definitions globally, the Islamic world requires a methodology that defines its expression, which transcends cultural, societal, and national styles. This paper will propose a methodology as an objective system to define, evaluate and apply traditional Islamic knowledge to Islamic urban planning and architecture, providing the Islamic world with a system to manifest its approach to design. The methodology is expressed as Four Pillars which are based on traditional meanings of Arab words roughly translated as Pillar One: The Principles (Al Mabade'), Pillar Two: The Foundations (Al Asas), Pillar Three: The Purpose (Al Ghaya), Pillar Four: Presence (Al Hadara). Pillar One: (The Principles) expresses the unification (Tawheed) pillar of Islam: "There is no God but God" and is comprised of seven principles listed as: 1. Human values (Qiyam Al Insan), 2. Universal language as sacred geometry, 3. Fortitude© and Benefitability©, 4. Balance and Integration: conjoining the opposites, 5. Man, time, and place, 6. Body, mind, spirit, and essence, 7. Unity of design expression to achieve unity, harmony, and security in design. Pillar Two: The Foundations is based on two foundations: "Muhammad is the Prophet of God" and his relationship to the renaming of Medina City as a prototypical city or place, which defines a center space for collection conjoined by an analysis of the Medina Charter as a base for the humanistic design. Pillar Three: The Purpose (Al Ghaya) is comprised of four criteria: The naming of the design as a title, the intention of the design as an end goal, the reasoning behind the design, and the priorities of expression. Pillar Four: Presence (Al Hadara) is usually translated as a civilization; in Arabic, the root of Hadara is to be present. This has five primary definitions utilized to express the act of design: Wisdom (Hikma) as a philosophical concept, Identity (Hawiya) of the form, and Dialogue (Hiwar), which are the requirements of the project vis-a-vis what the designer wishes to convey, Expression (Al Ta'abeer) the designer wishes to apply, and Resources (Mawarid) available. The Proposal will provide examples, where applicable, of past and present designs that exemplify the manifestation of the Pillars. The proposed methodology endeavors to return Islamic urban planning and architecture design to its a priori position as a leading design expression adaptable to any place, time, and cultural expression while providing a base for analysis that transcends the concept of style and external form as a definition and expresses the singularity of the esoteric "Spiritual" aspects in a rational, principled, and logical manner clearly addressed in Islam's essence.

**Keywords :** Islamic architecture, Islamic design, Islamic urban planning, principles of Islamic design

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