

The traditional steam baths in old Sanaa city

Architectural, historical and descriptive study

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Abstract :

The Hammam (public steam baths) were known in the old city of Sanaa ever since the ancient times, and they were mostly wide spread in the Islamic era where they had a distinctive role in activating the social, economic and political life. Most steam baths were as mosque extensions that were used as Waqf (Endowment) that generate an income for the mosques, their numbers were associated to the number of areas they serve in the city but some were working individually and spread at the superb, the public or private steam baths were widely spread in the ottoman & Islamic era and had their names after their builders or the areas they were built at.

The touristic investment for these monuments which are an image of an identity threatened to be withdrawn at any moment is an important aspect to save these monuments, which have obtained social and economic identity and even political in previous historical periods, that people still practice these roles till date. Therefore, it's an important alert to recover the social rituals that reflect the history of a nation which had a historical and social instructive role in the civilizations tender, also cooperate to restore such practices as a new method of preservation that isn't just architectural extracted from the humanitarian practice.

The benefit of this research seeks to record the history and culture of the old City of Sanaa steam baths and determine their location, shape, social and architectural identity, in additions to when they were developed and when they were done, and pair it with the events of the particular building period as much as possible. And it aimed to activate the continuity of the steam baths facilities & revive the heritage's spirit of such practices that can be a useful touristic investment if done according to systematic rewarding plans & provide the services in a traditional appearance that have all health, entertaining and recreational possible conditions.

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