

Bait-al-Sha'ar: A Kuwaiti Traditional Bedouin Mobile Home at Risk

Assist. Prof. Dr. Ali S. Alnajadah

Associate Professor of Interior Design

College of Basic Education – PAAET, Kuwait

Member of the World Craft Council (WCC) - Asia Pacific Region (APR)

ali.alnajadah@gmail.com

Abstract

Bait-al-Sha'ar is the mobile home tent of the Bedouin tribes living in Kuwait's arid desert land. This eco-friendly nomad structure has been in use for hundreds of years among the Bedouin tribes inhabiting the Arabian Peninsula. However, Bait-al-Sha'ar is in danger of extinction due to the massive and increasing migration of Bedouin populations from its desert land to the different Kuwaiti cities and suburbs. As a result, it became quite essential to study and document the original structure of Bait-al-Sha'ar, as well as, all its external and internal soft and hard parts, furniture, and decorations.

This study aims to: 1) identify the different types and sources of raw materials, dyes, and fixatives used in Al-Sadu textiles to construct, furnish, and decorate Bait-al-Sha'ar, 2) explore the different weaving techniques used in Al-Sadu weavings, 3) identify the major characteristics of Al-Sadu weavings, which make them suitable for constructing, furnishing, and decorating Bait-al-Sha'ar, 4) study the original design and structure of the Bait-al-Sha'ar, 5) name and explain the different parts and items used in constructing, furnishing, and decorating Bait-al-Sha'ar, and 6) explain the way Bait-al-Sha'ar is constructed and deconstructed.

Thirty seven (37) interior design and art students studying "Kuwait Artistic Heritage" course at the College of Basic Education in Kuwait helped in collecting all the needed data for this study by interview their elderly, family members, relatives, friends, and others. Two A3 size internal and external images of Bait-al-Sha'ar were used identify the names of the different internal and external parts of Bait-al-Sha'ar. The collected data was cross analyzed with each other to determine similarities and differences in naming the studied parts.

It is recommended that more research should be done to identify similarities and differences between the different Bedouin tribes in Kuwait in naming the different external and internal parts of Bait-al-Sha'ar, as well as, its furniture and decorations.

Key words: Bait-al-Sha'ar, Mobile Home, Bedouin, Kuwait, Desert