



TOWARDS A CONTEMPORARY ISLAMIC HOUSING

SPAHC OMER*

Associate Professor, International Islamic University Malaysia, Malaysia
<ospahic@iiu.edu.my>, <spahico@yahoo.com>

A B S T R A C T

Central to the standards by which a house may be categorised as “Islamic” are the holiness and purity of its philosophy, vision, function and utility, accompanied by convenience, efficiency, safety, awareness of the physical surroundings, and anything else that Islam reckons as indispensable for living a decent and accountable family life. This paper discusses the subject of Islamic housing and some major requirements for its revival today. The following thrusts are the focus of the paper: 1) The meaning of Islamic housing; 2) Sound housing policies; 3) Avoiding major transgressions associated with housing; 4) Endless creativity and Islamic housing; 5) Some practical suggestions for designing Islamic houses.

The paper concludes that Islam, a comprehensive way of life, has provided ample guidance in the field of planning and designing houses as well. Islam laid a solid foundation, though in some instances in form of laws and principles, for creating what became known as the phenomenon of Islamic housing. In Islam, the house is an institution. It occupies an important position. It is a family development centre. It is a microcosm of Islamic culture and civilisation. The character of the paper is conceptual rather than empirical.

* Spahic Omer, a Bosnian currently residing in Malaysia, is an Associate Professor at the Kulliyyah (Faculty) of Architecture and Environmental Design (KAED), International Islamic University Malaysia. He studied in Bosnia, Egypt and Malaysia. His research interests cover Islamic history, culture and civilisation, as well as the history and philosophy of the Islamic built environment. He has contributed several research papers in the academic journals of repute around the world. He also has several published works on his credit, including: *Islamic Architecture: Its Philosophy, Spiritual Significance and some Early Developments* (Kuala Lumpur: A.S. Noordeen, 2009); *Islam and Housing* (Kuala Lumpur: A.S. Noordeen, 2010).