

CHANGES AND THE ROLE OF LIVING ROOMS IN INDIVIDUAL HOUSES, CASE STUDY KOSOVO

Zana Prelvukaj¹

¹*Zana Prelvukaj*
**zana.prelvukaj@ubt-uni.net*

Abstract

The living room is one of the main housing units. The living room is considered as a common space for all the residents inside the living spaces. In Kosovo, the living room unit is considered the central part of the house which weaves the daily activities of residents such as family gatherings, watching television programs, reception of guests, games, etc.

The research aims to study the role and evolution, from the “kulla” house to the application of the last buildings in Kosovo in the last years. The change of using living room, the way of life, the number of residents in the house as well as the mentality of the population.

The research, it is notes the change of the surface of the unit, the function and utilization of the space, the connection with other functions of the house, the interior, the material used in interior design, and the lighting in the residential houses in Kosovo in 21th century.

Keywords: Living room, daylight, surface, evolution

1 Introduction

Living in a residential area is important for many reasons. It provides a sense of community that can be beneficial to everyone living in the area. This sense of community can also help to reduce crime rates, as people are more likely to look out for one another. Residential areas often have amenities nearby such as parks and shopping centers, making them more convenient for residents. Additionally, living in a residential area can help to foster a sense of belonging and connection to the surrounding area. The living room is a central space in residential architecture that is designed for relaxation, entertainment, and socializing. It is typically located on the ground floor and serves as a hub for family and guests to gather and spend time together. In terms of architectural design, the living room often features a large, open layout with ample natural light and access to outdoor areas, such as a patio or garden. The design may also incorporate elements such as fireplaces, built-in shelving, or other decorative features that create a cozy and inviting atmosphere. The most important aspect of a living room is creating a space that meets your needs, preferences, and lifestyle. It should be a comfortable and inviting environment where you can relax, socialize, and enjoy time with family and friends. what is a daily stay today in our homes?

A daily stay in our homes today encompasses various activities and functions that are essential for our comfort, productivity, and well-being. Here are some common aspects of a daily stay in modern homes:

1. **Relaxation and leisure:** Our homes provide a space for relaxation and leisure activities. This may involve lounging on the couch, watching TV or movies, reading books, listening to music, or engaging in hobbies and recreational activities.

2. Socializing and entertainment: Our homes serve as a gathering place for socializing and entertaining friends and family. This can involve hosting dinner parties, game nights, movie marathons, or simply spending quality time with loved ones.
3. Dining and meal preparation: The kitchen and dining areas play a significant role in our daily stay, as they are where we prepare and enjoy meals. Whether it's a quick breakfast, a family dinner, or experimenting with new recipes, these spaces facilitate the nourishment and enjoyment of food.
4. Personal care and relaxation: Our homes provide spaces for personal care and relaxation, such as bathrooms, bedrooms, and dedicated areas for self-care routines. These spaces allow us to unwind, take care of our hygiene, and prioritize our well-being. (Glancey 2017).

2 Living room in tower “kulla”

The tower “Kulla” one of the first residential buildings in Kosovo dating from the 18th-19th century with a large number of residents, contained living spaces such as a living room, kitchen, sleeping areas, and storage space. It is worth noting that housing was developed from the second floor, while the ground floor was used for cattle storage. Based on the culture of Albanians, the daily stay in the tower was used for gatherings in the residential area, receiving guests, and the stay of the head of the family. Traditionally, living rooms in Kosovo may feature low seating arrangements with floor cushions, rugs, and ornamental pillows. This style of living room design reflects the cultural traditions of the region, which places a high value on hospitality and welcoming guests (Doli 2001).



Figure 32- Kulla in Peja (<https://docplayer.net/21245172-Kulla-a-traditional-albanian-house-type-in-kosovo.html>)

The living room in Kulla is also called "Men's Room" or "Fireplace". The space with the largest surface which had the greatest importance in the residential building. One of the main functions of daily dreaming in traditional houses (towers) is the integration of the fireplace. The front part of the stone wall, at the fireplace, for functional, architectural, decorative reasons, etc., it is usually decorated (the butt elements and its upper part) (Zekë Islamaj 2022). The opening is arched (in the form of a vault) and protrudes from the surface of the wall about 15 cm, with a horizontal finish, in the form of a shelf, with a width of about 20 cm, which is used for the placement of sound sources, lighting tools and objects of others (Zekë Islamaj 2022) in the men's room, the part next to the fireplace which is called “sandraça”, for safety reasons is also paved with stone slabs, well carved with a hammer (Zekë Islamaj 2022). In the men's room, the fireplace, in addition to the function of heating water, coffee, etc., has also had historical, psychological, social and emotional effects: manhood, life - vitality, hope - future, security - faith, friendship - engagements, economy - sales, etc (Zekë Islamaj 2022) in the big side (cherva), in the men's stove, in the place next to the fireplace, the owner of the house (the head of the family) usually sits, while in cases where there were guests, as a sign of respect, this place was vacated for the guest, while the owner of the house (the head of the family) is sitting next to him - in the sandracha, or on the small side (cherga) (Zekë Islamaj 2022).



Figure 33- Living room in kulla

(<https://docplayer.net/21245172-Kulla-a-traditional-albanian-house-type-in-kosovo.html>)

The content of the inverter in the towers during the daily stay:

1. The carpet (Qylimi)
2. Tradicional table for food (Sofra)
3. Sitting on the ground around the parterre of the wall
4. Small window
5. Chimney

3 The changes in the living room in Kosovo,

After the end of the war in Kosovo, changes in the construction and reconstruction of residential buildings have caused major changes. From a daily stay separated from other functions of the house such as (kitchen, table, vertical and horizontal communication). Overall, the living room is an essential component of residential architecture that plays an important role in shaping the character and functionality of a home. Modern living rooms in Kosovo, on the other hand, may incorporate a more contemporary design with comfortable seating arrangements, ample lighting, and a range of decorative elements. The use of natural materials such as wood, stone, and brick are also common in modern living room design in Kosovo.

The ideal size of a living room can vary depending on several factors, such as the size of the house, the number of people living in the house, and the intended use of the living room. However, as a general guideline, the size of the living room should be proportional to the overall size of the house and should provide enough space for the intended activities.

3.1 Orientation

The orientation of a living room refers to the direction it faces and the placement of windows and doors. This can have a significant impact on the amount of natural light, ventilation, and views that are available in the room, as well as on the overall energy efficiency and comfort of the space. In addition to the orientation of the living room, it's also important to consider the placement of windows and doors to maximize views, natural light, and ventilation. Working with a professional architect or designer can help ensure that the living room is oriented and designed to meet your specific needs and preferences.

3.2 Size square units of living room

Factors to consider when determining the ideal size of a living room include the availability of natural light, the number of windows and doors, and the placement of furniture. It's also important to consider how the living room will connect to other areas of the house, such as the dining room or kitchen. There are no specific standards for the size or layout of a living room, as this can vary greatly depending on the needs and preferences of the homeowner. However, there are some general guidelines and recommendations that can help ensure that the living room is a comfortable and functional space.



Figure 34- Living room in individual house in Rahovec.2021
 Figure 35 ,5 - Livin room in individual house in Pristina and Kamencia, Kosovo,2021

3.3 Connection with other living space

Ultimately, the areas that are connected to the living room will depend on your specific needs and preferences. When designing your home, it's important to consider how you will use the space and which areas you want to be connected to the living room. Working with a professional architect or designer can help ensure that your living room is connected to the right areas and designed to meet your specific needs.



Figure 36- Living room in individual house, connection with other spaces, Vushtrri 2020

The living room in the houses built in recent years is also related to other functions such as the dining room, and kitchens which do not contain any physical separation between the functions.

The integration of additional functions within the living room space is continuing, based on the preferences of the residents. In Kosovar houses today, we can also find the integration of other spaces, such as workspace, internal greenery, doubling the spaces of the couch, large surface, views with increased window format, etc.

Conclusions

Ultimately, a good design for a living room should be both functional and beautiful, creating a space that is inviting, comfortable, and reflective of the homeowner's style. In Kosovo, living rooms are typically an important space in residential architecture and serve as a central hub for families and guests to gather and socialize. The design of living rooms in Kosovo can vary depending on factors such as the size of the home, the regional architectural style, personal preferences, the number of people in the house etc. With the development of architecture, working with a professional architect or designer can help ensure that the living room is designed to meet your specific needs and preferences, while also incorporating best practices for comfort, functionality, and style. The choice of color for the walls in a living room can depend on a variety of factors, including personal preference, the overall style and design of the room, and the amount of natural light in the space. That being said, there are some general guidelines and recommendations for choosing colors for living room walls.

References

- [1] Doli, Flamur. 2001. *Traditional popular architecture of Kosovo* . Albania.
- [2] Glancey, Jonathan. 2017. *From the salons of Versailles to today's clean lines, for a clear depiction of the mindset of your time, you need look no further than your nearest living room, says Jonathan Glancey*. December 21. Accessed 03 23, 2023. <https://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20171221-the-evolution-of-the-modern-living-room>.
- [3] Petrut, Andrei. 2016. *Resarch Gate*. 05. Accessed 03 15, 2023. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/303681656_Reimagining_the_Living_Room.
- [4] Rechavi, Talya B. 2008. "A room for living: Private and public aspects in the experience of the living room." *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 134-142.
- [5] Zekë Islamaj, Bekim Ceko. 2022. *Interior elements of the traditional residential building, called "Kulla"*. Pristina, Kosovo, 10 30.