

Solidification of the Sense of Eminency by Distraction of Light and Shadow at Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque

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ABSTRACT

Architecture and light are to that extent dependent on each other which body and spirits are. One for living and the other for physical presence in this world needs the other and while light is flown on the body of the space both two perceptible worlds become "existed". Since long ago, bright and shimmering materials which remind something living in the mind of individual were respectable and adorable. Being aware of the process of exploitation of sunlight is of importance as much as the process of materials formation or different fundamental forms of construction in order to design. Almost in all religions, light is the symbol of Devine wisdom and the Essence of all beneficence and purities and mobility from darkness to light, was considered as the main objective. Islamic Mosques which are ornamented with light are perfectly able to transmit this divine and moral sense. In such spaces which are lighten up with a shimmering light and by observance of the imprecise shadows of substances and masses, individual starts to complete the pictures in his mind and by such an activity gets in to an ecstasy and as a result a feeling of getting close to the source of existence and reality wakens up inner inside him. The present survey by depending on descriptive-analytic methods, studies light in Islamic and traditional architecture. This paper by case study of Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, aims to find out whether the presence of light and specifically natural light in architecture might have further meaning rather than brightness, and whether accessing an accurate pattern of application of light is possible or there is basically no compulsion in it ?

Key words: Light, Light in Architecture, Shadow, Islamic and Traditional Architecture, Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque.

INTRODUCTION

Light is an immaterial essence such as soul in the inanimate body of the architecture which as divine essence is a doctrine for infiltration of divine truth to the materialistic body which is the position of the ego of human being for growth and spiritual development; light is an inductor which not only grants brightness to our world but also binds to gather, the art, religion, science, philosophy beyond the boarders of time and place. In all heavenly books, light is the symbol of living and divinity and is also the medium for visibility, understanding and cognition. Light prepares the possibility of characterization and giving life to everyday activities and is the reflection

of life in changing imaginations and moral conditions. The concepts of light and darkness were effective on the history of human being and were considered in all aspects of his life. 'the basis of nature is set forth on that two parts of dark and bright come and pass following each other, darkness and brightness are concrete symbols and include lots of spiritual and gnostic concepts.

Unless there is no darkness there would be no light and the content would not be clear unless light is there.

Darkness is aberration, its refusal to transmit to perfection, its cruelty, rebellion and mutiny

against the creator and it's by itself is the greatest aberration and exiting from light and falling in to darkness.

Darkness is the seduction of Deamon Deavelo and discord and hypocrisy, it is inertia, stagnation and the lack of growth.

Brightness is theist and life is within the environment of theism. Light in Holy Quran is doublet in several cases with guidance and salvation and it might be synonym with that. (Habibollah Ayatollahi, 188: 1985)

Stating the problem

Lack of enough knowledge of the Essene of light as a sacred element and beyond the factor of brightness has caused that its basic function which is brightening of materialistic elements gets in to consideration.

As we may observe in modern architecture that by using wall jumps we try to get light as much as possible in to the interior space.

By infiltration of the appearances of western architecture in to the traditional Iranian and Islamic architecture, the soul of the construction leaves the body of the architecture and doors have lost their meaning as a controller for creation of different types of light such as defused light (using window door combination) central and focused (such as a set of light and shadows formed on verandas).

The objective of research by case study analysis

This article aims to explain a bit of nature and mysteries hidden in light and to state the presence of light, especially natural light in architecture further than brightness. Therefore by getting a good understanding of that, architects replace the paradigm of architecture of a master such as Mohammadreza Esfahani and an architecture like Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque with that of the paradigms of architecture by the father of light and shadow architecture, Louei Kan and architectures like Kimble Museum and a like.

Therefore we hope that these principles and patterns get in to intelligent and modern architecture

to the extent that controllers of light, beside giving a sense of relaxation, state concepts which were derived from Islamic architecture fundamentals.

Light in Quran

Quran also has a chapter named "Light". In this Holy book the word light is repeated 43 times and the word dark nesses 23 times. These two words are repeated 11 times together. In all cases the word light is stated in singular form and the word Dark nesses in plural. And their meanings differ in different cases. For example sometimes it states the guidance equal to Bible and Torah and sometimes the words light and darknesses are used as visibility and blindness. Sometimes it's equal to the prophet Mohammad, true religion and holy book of Quran and in another case it is used as reward and in some other case it states the sensual light.

In some verses light is the allusion of belief and leader and guide and darkness is the metaphor of void and Atheism. (Sima Nour bakhsh, 40-41: 2006)

At the outset of Anaam Chapter, the God says: (Arabic Text)

(Tabrasi, died 548)has stated from an instrument that darkness and light are called to night and day or in the opinion of Ghatadeh it refers to Heaven and Hell.

In an exposition referred to EbN Al Arabi (died 638) it is mentioned that: this verse is the emersion of perfections and attributes of beauty and glory of God on manifestation of detail of the living creatures. He is the absolute perfection and absolute Gloria is special to his nature which is the collection of all attributes and names.

In this exposition heaven is the world of spirit and earth is the world of physical body. God has mentioned the levels of darkness, in dark veils which are some part of human nature and has set forth the light of knowledge and cognition in the world of spirit.

Molla Sadra believes this world as darkness and the other world as the world of lights. (Sima Nour bakhsh, 41: 2007)

Position of light in Islamic Gnosticism

Considering several notices to the transcendent dignity of light which is reminded in Quran and Hadis, those versed in law and leading scholars of Iranian history have set a superior position for the concept light in everyday life of Muslims. Alaodoleh Semnani, the Gnostic of 8th century (died 726) states this special position in the life of religious mystic as follows: each part of the body of the mystic possesses a special type of light, and each type of devotion possesses a specific light either. There exists a great light for (ablution) which brightens up the dark solitude and that lights seems as the sun which appears on the forehead of the mystic and its light is pure and is out of his colored garb. (Alaodoleh Semnani, 308-310: 2006).

From the view of Iranian Gnosticism traditional art and heavenly art have a lot in common from this vision Iranian architecture is the clear appearance of traditional and heavenly art. (Haezi, 30: 2011). The heavenly art of Islam is the decay of heavenly truth on earth. This art is the materialization of spirit and the form of Islamic (revelation) which has transmitted in to sophisticated garb which does not belong to the world of deterioration of death and heavenly art of Islam is the echo of the other world in the womb of unstable existence which human beings live within it. (207: 2012) and that has appeared as light in the flow of absolute existence and wherever there is a sign of true existence there also is an oriental light of divinity.

The joinder of Islamic scholars is on this meaning that, in the appearance of instance universe everything is derived of light and in the other words, the sage, Gnostic and artist in their ascending path and spiritual ascension are trimmed down of material and dimension, experience the entrance in to the territory of light. A territory which has detached forms from material dimensions are advent and present in it. There is deep and detachable similarity of the concept of light and existence in Islamic Gnosticism (especially in the Gnosticism of scholars such as Sheikh Eshragh, EbN Arabi, and Sadrolmotealehin). So the origin of existence is advent in light. Also the presence of light in two dimensions are of the most important aspects of Islamic art as in architecture, abstract arabesque deigns and painting of luster and inherent.

In the other words light is the determiner of inherent identity of the artistic work. It means, it not only places the work in its heavenly display and hidden meaning but also grants glory and splendor which is illustrated immediately.

Noralanvar (the Light of Lights)

In the system of Sohrevardi, Norolanvar (Light of Lights) of the first existence, absolute light, which means the God is the most complete light in the dynasty of lights of the donor of perfection. (Collection of writings, vol 3, Parto Nameh, p. 39). The light of lights is the absolute rich and there exists no other upon it. (Collection of writings, vol 2, Hekmat Al Mashregh, p.121). He believes that the light shall be illuminated for the mystic so that human being introduces light of lights, light of environment and light of Qayuum as the Holly Light. Light of lights is dominant on all other lights because of its intensity of advent and perfect illumination, and since other lights are in need of it, it is called the light of Qayuum.

He states about the Hekmat al Eshragh (illumination): the first existence and absolute light which is God is always illuminating and shining and is manifested in this manner and creates everything and grants life to them by its flames. Everything in this world is derived from the light of his existence and every beauty and perfection in a blessing of his mercy and salvation is reaching completely to this brightness. Physical world which is the lowest assumed level if relates to the light can be transformed in to reality which is body.

Isthmus, or the level between light and darkness, would be viewed tender if it receives light. But if it doesn't it would lead to darkness and aberration. By combining the meaning of advent from the sophisticated thought of light, we reach to the truth and cognition of that which feels new. And at the same time believes in the separation of the world of mind from the world of visage. And call them as two advent from the truth of elements in a way that there is no dichotomy between advents but there is differences in levels. (Dibaji, 7: 2013)

The position of light in Iranian culture and Islamic arts

Hanry Carben, believes this light the same as "Halo" which exists around the universe and

animals which belong to the universe of light and illumination. "The light surrounding the creatures of Ahoura mazda ".

Also this is the same light radiant from the heavenly world which is referred to as the elixir of wisdom, power and erudition and the origin of these lights as Sohrevardi says is for sure the same thing which is craved in a special and specific way in the phrase of retail construction in the ethics of Mazdisna.

As it was mentioned the presence of this meaning in the Iranian culture, place the mentioned halo which is the main feature of saints and prophets in one side in Iranian painting and abstract geometric designs on the other side. may be the first sample of presence of halo individual and its halo surrounding him in Iranian painting is observable in dissertation manuscript attributed to Galen and related to the school of painting of Seljuk which all the characters in the painting have a halo.

The incredible similarity of the concept of light in the culture of Zoroastrian or Islamic culture is a halo which surrounds the face of prophets and saints. (Which has turn to a blazing flame now).

The sample of it is the picture of ((Abraham in the middle of Fire)) related to the school of Shiraz or ((defection of Josef from Zoleykha)) which was painted by Kamalodin Behzad.

Position of light in architecture

Light is the first condition for any type of cognition of visage and in absolute darkness, space and color are not recognizable. The scenario which an architect thinks for proper light during day and night for his construction, effects on the general mood of the building. The role of architecture in designing a set of roles which makes the viewers to face them considering darkness and brightness is very important. "Our understanding of space changes by a change in brightness or luster of some elements or materials which define the space while other elements stay stable."(Mays, 125: 2007). The natural light in traditional architecture is always navigating but in modern architecture the view of individual from heaven as a supernatural space has changed to the physical and materialistic foundation. And

light is transformed to a functional element. Since transparency is very much close to the light therefore we need to expect that the most common work in architecture is done by light. And to be honest it is so. We may say that none of the eras of architecture of the world before the modern era have not exploited light as it was so in the Iranian architecture. Light is not something transversal in this architecture but it is associated with truth and nature. Light dose not bear only one functional duty in architecture, its duty also does not limits to the creation of beauty, rather it creates the truth of the architecture and is present where sublimation of material to the light is formed and generates a story which grants embodiment to the deep goal of architecture which is transforming material to light. The supreme objective of this architecture in the philosophic point of view is in the direction of evolutionary movement of material to soul and in other architectural words elimination of material and maximizing the space and in artistic words to transform material to light.

First is that light is fixed on the slough and authentication occurs by generating shadow, and in second form it passes the external layer and penetrates the internal layer and dances by the movement of sun during different hours of day in the dark place inside the building and makes individual capable to test the qualitative objectives of the space and shows the soul of the space to the human being. in the first case, generality and sorting of dimension or dimensions are very much determinant in formation of geometric understanding by concavities and protrusions and their different features such as materials, color, texture and type,

Light might show itself on a rough and porous and embossed surface or it is reflected from a smooth or plain surface.

Indirectly we may classify the concepts which in our cognition form the way the sources of light or its reflection and radiant in space in to 3 categories.

The position of light in Islamic architecture:

Light and material are necessary of existence of each other and material is transcendence by the help of light and in the form of clear geometry

and makes it self-free of weight and lightens up and manifests the spirit of consolidate and finally according to its function (stable or dynamic) believes it. We may count the important qualities and characteristics of light and shadow and their functions in Islamic architecture of Iran as follows:

Clearance, lightening up, transcendence, granting identity, diversity, concentration, balance, giving meaning, manifest of geometry, clearance of order, evolution, dynamicity, continuity, mobility from material to meaning.

Mosque is the most special one and the purest and the most ideal and content oriented subject of architecture. Giving originality to the subject, concepts and foundations of meaning mentioned inside the principles and ideas of Islam is a basic necessity. (Zargar, 20:2009).

As Dr. Nasr states: traditional architecture specially the Mosque is an instance of the world of existence. Mosque is the home of God. a building which human being shall feel the presence of God in that and exploit the fall of divine mercy. Therefore the architecture of Mosques are reflection of the world of existence and a place for facing of human with the words of God or Logos. (Zargar: 60, 2009).

Mosque for a human being, which its natural limitations and its spirit less environment has surrounded him is the mirror of freshness and ordinance of original environment which is generated by God and its phenomenon are the verses of God. So Mosque shall be viewed as the creature of God which notices human being to its creator. (586:2010, Noghreh Kar).

In the general design of this Mosque after stepping up a few steps viewer releases himself from the environment of Naghsh E Jahan Square and it is the first step to detach from the materials.

The entrance of the mosque is divided from Naghshe Jahan square which is the place of life and preoccupation and living by a recess from a wall and the preface of entrance to the mosque and the inner world becomes ready. The height of the façade and fovea comparing to the square causes him to order all designers and frequencies of his mind and change the rebellion of his mind in to unity. (Maghsoodi, 139: 2010)

Therefore for entering this space we need to get ready. It means depletion for the entrance of light to its original place the field shall be purified from everything which is against it. For the basic

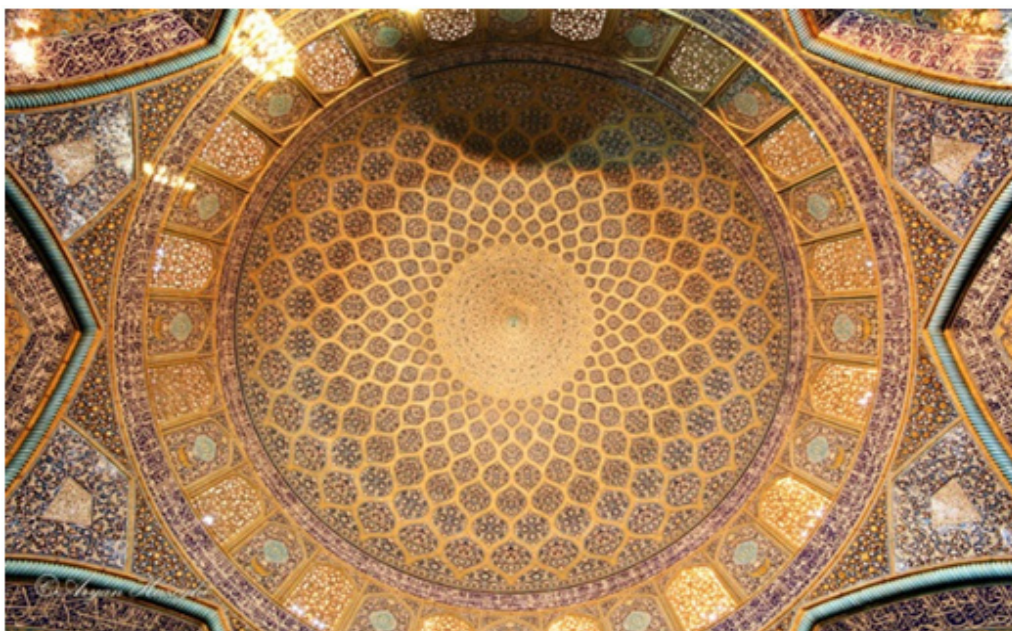


Fig. 1: The space of dome at Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque (author)

preparedness, the architect of the Mosque, have gathered these introductions by designing the entrance and a corridor and by a joint. (Salehi, 89:2012).

The space of dome at Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque

At the rachis of dome an in ordered distances, there exist windows and a pair of web is placed in them. One internal and the other external an in this manner the light gets tender and purified and reflects back at thousands of brilliant surfaces of walls and dome and surrounds everywhere such as a crystal frost and appears an unearthly beauty. (Zolfaghari, 199:2007). This reflection of light makes an unearthly beauty visible and places the individual in a living brightness until he becomes superior and munificence in a way that nobody can describe, and then he is conducted by appropriate calm and pure and mix colors

CONCLUSION

In the school of illumination, light is considered as the key word and in its philosophy there is nothing more than light and everything which is in this world and will be there are all light. This issue caused that several important constructs to be built in Iranian traditional architecture which were affected by the philosophy of illumination and the importance of the position of light. In the geography of illumination, east is the world of light and existence and is a land which is combined of purity and sacred and releases human beings from themselves and the universe.

The east is the absolute light and the place of the light of lights which is empty of any material or darkness and is beyond the visible sky and is hidden from the sights of mortal people.

Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque which belongs to the school of Esfahan. An era which culture and art of Iranian shows its limits of attentions to the illuminative training. Something which the viewer observes more than anything else in that is the quality of effective space which light is an important factor for creation of such a sense and in brief the lighting of Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque can be dependent on the following factors which increases the sense of morality in it.

A: movement of light from reticulated windows to the walls causes shaping of wall ornaments and reflection of light on the tiles and the two layers of reticulated windows banns the presence of light.

B: considering the breakage of light by two layer windows of the rachis of dome and the tender presence of light, dome is observed as suspended in the sky.

C: the tiling of the Mosque because of its great glaze, while touching the light gets a mirror like manner and changes to a glazing gold color. In all afore mentioned items it can be understood hat in the Islamic architecture of Iran light is a symbol of heavenly world and has the objective role of cognition and guidance of human being and passing through darkness and ignorance. Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque as the most modern Mosques of its time has used the basics of philosophy of illumination practically and intelligently and has placed itself in the middle of the illuminative geography.

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