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ARCHITECTURE SPACE, A QUALITATIVE AND SPIRITUAL NATURE

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ABSTRACT

Human life is all about the space and none of the human activities including the arts can ignore the space. Consideration for the meaning and concept of the space which has been recently replaced with the term “place” is undeniable. Some consider the quantity and material aspects of the nature of space (often “shape”) as the most important characteristic of space. However, actually the meaning the man perceives from the somatic elements depends on culture, beliefs, and even the climate.

Keywords: *Quality, Space, Architecture Space, Myth, Spirituality.*

INTRODUCTION

Space has been long the center of attention of many scientists and it has been variedly defined based on the conventional social and cultural approaches during the different historical periods. The Egyptians and the Indians in spite of having different ideas on the space, shared the belief on that there is no clear cut borders between the internal space of assumption (subjective reality) and external space (objective reality). In fact, the internal and subjective space of the dreams, myths, and the fables was mixed with the routine realities. What attract the attention more than anything else, in the mythological space, are the structural and systemic aspects of space, however this structured space is about a kind of mythology which arose from the creator’s imagination. In the ancient Greek language, there was no word for the space. They used the term “in-between” instead of the word space. Prmindez when found out the space cannot be imagined like this, introduced it as an unstable state since it does not exist. Leucippus also considers the space as a reality although it does not exist physically. Plato investigated the issue based in the Timaeous’ perspective and perceived the geometry as the “space science”, and left it to Aristotle to complete the theory of space (Topoz). Form Aristotle’s viewpoint, space is a set of places. He describes it as the container of all the things. He compares the space to a container and takes it as an empty place whose environment is closed so it can exist and there is an end to it. In fact, the space is the content of a container to Aristotle.

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Whatever human does has a space perspective to it. In other words, every activity needs space. The human attachment to space has deep roots. This attachment arose from the human’s need to creating connections with other humans through different languages. Also, the human adapts himself with the physical objects using physiology and technology through which a dynamic connection and balance will be created between the human and the environment (the objects) in addition to the connection between the humans.

According to aerie of specific connections, these objects are divided to internal/external, far/near, single/unified, and continuous/discrete. In order for the human to objectify his imaginations and assumptions, he has to understand these connections and integrate them in framework of space concept. Thus, space does not represent a specific kind of connection, but a comprehensive form including any kinds of connections, be it between the humans or between the human and environment.

The space has mercury-like characteristic same as fluid stream which cannot be easily captured and defined. If the cage is not sturdy enough, it can easily spread out and disappear. The space can be so thin and wide that the feeling of existence of the dimension goes away (For example, in the wide plains, the space seems completely dimensionless) or so full of three-dimensional existence, which gives special meaning to anything in its environment.

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Although defining the space is very difficult or even impossible, it is measurable. For example, it can be said there is still space or the space is full. Closest definition is to consider the space a vacuum that can accommodate the objects or be filled by something.

Another point that should be mentioned in defining the space is that there is a connection between the observer and the space based on a ratio which is not predetermined or fixed, so that a person's location defines space and it is perceived in different ways, according to his view point.

In fact, the space is imagination and imagination is the space. Whatever human thinks about or grow in his imagination owns a space. The space does not have physical existence, but it has the capability to contain physical or spiritual elements in itself. Man can only transfer a specific state, for example sadness or happiness, when he has created a sad or happy space and it can be perceived by others.

One point should be noted here: “space is not where in which the objects appear, but a means which by its nature, lets the appearance of the objects”. For understanding this concept, we should note that although the space is non-physical element, it has a specific nature that can contain the objects in it. In other words, it is not the objects which form a space, but the nature of the space which contain specific objects in it and form them to a specific shape. The space is a substantive and self-sufficient nature, either limited or unlimited. It is an empty and prepared means which has a capacity that can be filled by something (like a soft body that is ready to accept any shapes and allows everything to be entered in it. Thus, the space is container which exists even if it is empty. If we deny the absolute space, we should instead consider it as created by the objects.

Space is never substantive. The space is created by a set of natural and artificial objects and the architecture is involved in this creation. The observer should keep a proper distance in order to perceive everything as it meant to. Very simple views can be closely looked at it without any trouble, while for the views that are rich in shapes and dimensions, the observer prefer to go back that much he can feel he is standing in the right place. As long as a building's base is attached to the ground, the need for visual breathing space is not related to the building, but if the building is taken as a mass floating above the ground and dependent on the columns and pillars, a proper free space is created for this dimension whose size depends on the effect which the architect likes. If the middle space is above ground level, the building is floating like an anchored balloon, but if this space is too small, it seems as if the forces issued by the building to the floor have been forced to occupy a surface which is too small compared to the building's mass.

Investigating an architectural work, the form and space are the subjects related and consistent with the work, introducing the nature of it.

“The point that the architecture is a reality recognized in the space, happening in the space, and is related and consistent with the space is much known that leaves no place for debate”.

Thus, the space is a factor for recognition, introduction, and investigation of an architectural work.

Dealing with the space as an entity merely quantitative and limited in several wall-like dams will distract us from recognition of its nature.

Actually, the space owns spiritual characteristics in a not quantitative range, but a qualitative one.

“Space is a spectrum including diverse qualities which in line with and beside the human assumptions and thoughts, takes a specific state in every place and has a different value power”.

The subject of Iranian architecture without recognizing the myths and mythological literature of the country is as much impossible as the introduction of each architecture work without recognition of its underlying myth is to a high extent impossible.

On the other hand, each myth is born in a space and each space deserves a myth.

“Myth is space-related and the space can be mythological”. The architecture space is created to portray special interests, pure feelings, and superior thoughts”.

Space architecture is a body which cannot be perceived visually, though there is always the possibility that or may be the goal of some spaces in the architecture has been like that, to shift the thought toward a specific direction and another imaginative space. Such as what can be seen for the Iranian garden with the

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aim of reducing the pressures and routines and directing the person to the beauties of the nature and ultimately portraying the heaven.

Architecture is about creating and organizing the spaces. The space which may each induce a specific state in their audience. However, the issue which is important about perceiving the architecture spaces is the point that the architectural spaces can be best perceived by the eye, although other senses are also important in perceiving some spaces.

The architecture of a building grows a specific idea in his mind and in order to portray this idea, he needs to create the space. This is his space determining which wall should be made of which material and which color fits which area. Some people may misunderstand that the architectural space is what is limited in the walls, columns, and the roofs, while this idea is completely wrong, since as it was mentioned in the introduction, it is the nature of the space determining which element should be placed where.

The architecture intends to create a specific space with a specific goal. For example, in case of a masque, he creates a space that penetrate the mind of the audience a feeling of holiness, unity and whatever that takes the man closer to his Creator. A good example is that of Sheikh Lotf-Allah in Naqsh-e Jahan Square in Isfahan in which even a Christian person can feel the holiness and lightness of the spirit that is due to the specific space created in the masque.

What can be concisely mentioned on the architectural space is as follow:

- The architectural space is somatic and can be perceived visually.
- The architectural space pursue a specific goal which is inducing it in the minds of all the people and different thought levels (such as Sheikh Lotf-Allah Masque)
- The architectural space is a space including physical elements.
- The architectural space owns a spirit and penetrates the man's mind and creates specific imagination.

A space in the architecture is beautiful when special characteristics of the space are consistent with space functions (the consistency of the form and function) and this principle is completely evident investigating the old and traditional architecture. The coordination and consistency between form and function in architecture is based on the general philosophical concept of harmony between "form and content" in the act of knowing and any artistic expression. For understanding the traditional concepts of architecture and urban planning, a good cultural perspective in which these concepts are created should be best perceived.

CONCLUSION

An architectural work, before being a building mass, reflects a series of thoughts and is reflecting the lifestyle of it contemporary people. Investigation of the past architecture, both the works which were considered as the symbols and the works mentioned as the local architecture, indicates that these old works besides providing the architecture culture of our country, are the basis for determining any theories for creation of the new architecture. However, it does not mean that we endorse them unconditionally or that they should be repeated. What we mean is the setting, determination, and coordination of the thoughts that are the basis for every new design.

Every space, regardless of its shape and size, can reflect and transfer some concepts. It gets more concentrated when there is a rich culture is behind the creation of the spaces. Such space gets richer in functional relations of the space, psychological perceiving and creation of spirit, choosing the material and the base, and its conformity with the spiritual and psychological needs. The investigation and recognition of the cultural symbols and signs existing in the masses of Iranian architecture can facilitate the recognition and determination of the specific cultural values and concepts prevalent among the people. Some of the existing concepts in the people routine life can be transferred through somatic elements which are themselves determining social-cultural connections and form the public thought space through the people minds. In other words, the somatic elements are indicative of social-cultural concepts as a means of thought exchange between the residents of the city. Using the signs and symbols of the past cultures in newly made architectural spaces is a new science in the field of architecture. In the current

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study, by following such approach, we tried to consider that somatic elements of the space, distinguish between them, and determine their interaction, besides categorizing their specific functions.

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