

CONSIDERING THE SPIRIT OF PLACE IN AYN AL-QOZAT HAMEDANI LECTURE ON PLACE AND TIME

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Abstract. Through holy places, human can approach to the intelligence higher than those gained from ordinary places, and by the material aspect, he find his existence as a kind of non-existence, but it can be imagined existence by the viewpoint of connection to God. Place of everything in Ayn al-Qozat sight is existence level of that element, like the place of water or fire, which specifies presence arena of that thing in the cosmos. So existence of mankind requires a place suitable for human dignity which should be a particular position of "existence" that architecture space stands on it. The aim of research is to study the bases of holy places in Ayn al-Qozat Hamedani lecture on "Place and Time", for applying it in architecture of holy places and to explain the opinions of him, the great philosopher and poet who was living 9 hundred years ago in 12th century A.D in Iran.

1. Introduction

Ayn al-Qozat dynamic and profound sight about the spirit of time is noticeable in his lecture on place and time. As the view point of

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philosophy, place is a quality phenomenon and it is a whole can not be separated to incomplete particles.

Place concept is consist of outward appearance and inward reality, it has no tactile existence but exist in conscious intelligence of the creatures. Place is not an absolute quantity and importance of this matter is obvious in words of highness Ayn al-Qozat, where he said: in earth and sky there is no mystery greater than mystery of place and time, and having knowledge of place and time and knowing it, is knowing the exalted God (Ayn al-Qozat 1960:15).

Holey places that spirit of place is more obvious in them are wholly divided in two parts as temples and shrines which tombs, mosques and churches are clear examples of them. Each place in any time and any religion which has been chosen for temples had transformed a little because of changes in culture, proportional to the new customs and by continuing its physical or intellectual existence it has kept its importance and value (Kabuli 1999:440).

For example, the great mosques of Hamedan and Borojerd are built on fire-temples of the Sassanian dynasty and their remains are shown in archeology excavations and investigations; most of worship places are following this role too.

One of the reasons of this matter can be considered familiarity of people to the place as a location for worship that has been recorded in collective memory of the antecedents. And another reason is the spirit of place; in attention to historical records the place has been recognized as an eternal location where unique God is worshiped for all the time.

In this article it is tried to study the spirit of place in Ayn al-Qozat Hamedani lecture on "Place and Time", which has been composed about 9 hundred years ago. First we start from the place of material as a first step to recognizing spirit of the places and continue with spiritual places and at last the place of exalted God is studied as a manifestation of all the places.

2. A brief about Ayn al-Qozat Hamedani, writer of "Places and Times" book

Ayn al-Qozat is one of the rare men of wisdom, science, literature, Gnosticism and he is one of the few unknown worthy luminaries of Iran. He is an exceptional in Sufism and mysticism history and generally in Iranian thought history.

Although he was killed on an unfair accusation of atheism at age 33 of youth, he was considered as one the greatest mystics of his time and he had many disciples and followers would devote themselves to him. In the other hand he was a thinker with his special thoughts and also a writer whom his readers can feel his powerful enthusiasm character in all Ayn al-Qozat's works (PourJavadi 1995:7).

His ancestors were from Mianah, Azarbaijan and both of Ayn al-Qozat and his father were born, lived and died in Hamedan. Ayn al-Qozat names himself as Hamedan's judge in his writings.

He has born in Hamedan, Iran in 1098 A.D and he has been some years under the auspices of his mystic father and had gone to Hamedan mysticism meetings with his father.

Reading his works shows that he had spent his short prolific life on studying and research and he was proficient on all current branches of knowledge such as conjugation and syntax, literature, jurisprudence, narration, commentary, speech and wisdom and he has wrote poets in Persian and Arabic languages.

He was truly one of the geniuses of time. His proficiency on science especially in jurisprudence and commentary is obvious among his works .He knew philosophy completely and acted like a sighted and genuine thinker to the matters.

Large amount of students and disciples attended teaching sessions of the young lecturer and instructor and their devotion to him couldn't stimulate erudite -or better to say erudite pretenders- of his time not to envy him.

One of the opponents of Ayn al-Qozat was Dargazini -minister of King Sanjar Seljuqi- whom envied him a lot, so Dargazini planed his murder and in a company of vulgar and jealous persons accused him of blasphemy and unbelief and jurists vote for death of the wise youth. So they send him in chain to Baghdad and caught his death-sentence from Abasian Caliph and hanged him in 1130 A.D under the gate of

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his academy in Hamedan and because the intensity of jealousy set fire to his body (Dehkhoda 1967:3).

Persian writings of Ayn al-Qozat are full of Sufic elegant interpretations and his words are heartburn. He has several Gnostic Persian poems too and "Tamhidat", "knowing God", "Letters", and his "lecture on Place and Time" can be named from his writings.

3. Place of material, a first step for recognition spirit of the places

Ayn al-Qozat classifies the place to three general parts: material place, spiritual place and holey place of God. Material place is divided to three parts itself: condensed, fine and extra fine materials.

Condensed materials are solids, liquids and massive one such as earth. Near and far in these materials are determined and plenty of energy is needed for movement in this kind of place. Displacement is not possible unless with movement and passing the distance in these places (Ayn al-Qozat 1960:23).

Place of fine materials is place of sound, wind and ascending gases. Energy consumption is need for movement in this place too, but not as much as in condensed materials, and speed in this kind of place is higher. Against condense materials that distance in them is long and far, it is short and near in fine materials and every distance which is passed in a month or two in place of condensed materials, would be passed in an hour in place of fine materials (Ayn al-Qozat 1960:24).

And the place of extra fine material is the place of light such as light of sun and stars and fire; and everything that is far in the place of fine materials, it is near in this place; east is far from west in that place and its near it in this place, and the reason is while sun shines from east, the light has reached the west in that time, so it obvious that light has another place from wind and sound. It is like as while light a candle in a home where wind can blow, the light of candle diffuses in the home without need to sending wind or sounds out of the home, so we understand that there is another place for light, finer than place of wind; and the wind can never go through it because of relative

condensation and light can't be considered in wind place because it is finer than it but because of too much similarity between these two places, we can not distinguish them from each other easily (Ayn al-Qozat 1960:25).

In extra fine materials place, speed reaches to the highest point; the speed of light, but again there is exist some physical restriction because light of sun and fire can't pass through condensed environments and density increasing, stops the light (Ayn al-Qozat 1960:26).

4. Spiritual place, the next step for recognition spirit of the places

Ayn al-Qozat explains the second kind of place this how: "the second type of place is spiritual place and it has lots of kinds and finer the spirit, finer the place; so four kinds of spiritual places obtains:

- 1-spiritual place of low levels
- 2- Spiritual place of mediums
- 3- Spiritual place of high levels
- 4-place of souls

Spiritualities of low and medium levels are angels whom appointed on the earth, seas, mountains, and deserts and they totally are angels whom ordered to arrange material worlds and nature. They are appointed on grades and they never change and are settled in several levels, from low to medium, who never reach to high levels (Ayn al-Qozat 1960:27).

But higher spiritualities are those nearest to God, they have no limit for the grades and their place is in heavens. They are so fine that if they cover themselves up from angels of lower levels, they can't be seen at all.

Because of extra fineness there is no barrier in their place, they enter from the wall as they enter from the door and they place in hard stones as in wide spaces, but still there is a kind of distance in their place because they need to move and however they can reach to destination in a wink but they need movement and it is against perfection of

spirituality. All the other angels have this characteristic but in their world and in their grade.

The last party of spiritual places is the place of creatures totally, which is classified on the differences between souls in fineness. The most complete soul in fineness is human's and it is very fine which other creatures don't have its fineness and no particle of heaven is not far from its place; it doesn't need to move and every where you search, you will find it. It is not connected or separated, not inward nor outward and not stable nor current. All these, are approved by intellectual reasons and heart illuminations but still there is a kind of distance and length in this place because lofty and endless worlds are far from it and with all greatness, it is limited and a limited thing can not surround the unlimited ones (Ayn al-Qozat 1960:28).

5. Place of eternal God; manifestation of place's spirit

Ayn al-Qozat continues the last part of classifying places in this manner: "eternal God is pure from all the places mentioned, his place is honored and glorified, higher than the others. The entire place is near and there is no distance in it, at all. This place has no length and no width, no up and no down, no right and no left, no front and no back.

Exalted God exists in company with all particles of existence but its company is not like company of substances with their places. His relation is not like relation of substance to its essence or earth to its substances. Company of soul and body is the best example for company of the exalted God with the whole universe. Because soul is not in or out of mould, not connected to it nor separated. Soul is from a world though mould is from another. There are no restrictions for soul as bodies such as entrance, exit, connection and separation nevertheless there is no part of mould particles that soul is truly disconnected from them, in the place deserving fineness of soul, company of exalted God with creatures is like that every body who know himself then he would know God (Ayn al-Qozat 1960:16-17).

Here Ayn al-Qozat mentions to his real purpose and believes the place of eternal God is inside faithful human heart:" dear till when you want to search world for place of God?, you are the existence essence of all universe creatures, look inside yourself till find all you have approved

in whole universe, clear in it because the place of God is inside your soul and heart (Ayn al-Qozat 1960:31).

6. Manifest recognition of place's spirit

As manifest recognition point of view, place is more than an isolated location, place is totally made of real things and it has material, shape, texture and color. Collection of these components together defines the environmental character of place. Nordberg Schultz believes places are the things that they are and this is because of inherent qualities of physical environment.

Place is a phenomenon which its real meaning and nature dose not stem from the location or common functions it provides, but places nature -with respect to Intentionality- unconsciously determine places as centers full of human being (Partovi 2003:42).

Taking place is a matter human face in the world. We recognize our identities with regard to this truth that life is a thing that take place and this is a reality that only its external characteristics may change from a place to another, not its fundamentals (Nordberg Schultz 2002:38).

Life and its events define the time, and place had always have more stability than life manifestations and since ancient Rome; stability of place has required meaning of existence. You can be what you are without being unity of the past (Nordberg Schultz 2002:60).

When it is speak about owning a place, in fact human is pointed to and how derived from Ayn al-Qozat thoughts, place is an existence matter and a station for revelation of existence.

Every existence which come into being, allocate to itself a place. So place is not fixed, same and obvious always; just as universe is sometimes hide and reveal now and then.

In architecture we have dealing with two words "space" and "place" that sometimes we misuse them.

Heidegger speaks about places and spaces in his book "Building, Dwelling, Thinking ": space is a thing that there is a place for it. An event that is released in its limits and always has been accepted, connected and gathered because of the place importance. In this way areas find they real existence from places and not from the spaces (Heidegger 2000:64).

As it was shown, they are places that bring spaces into existence by fulfillment of fourfold elements or as Heidegger says by gathering Earth, sky, mortals and divinities, a function that only can be achieved by building and construction (Partovi 2003:43).

There is in the elixir of holy architecture that *Situs* changes to *Locus* and spirit of place becomes manifest (Nordberg Schultz 2002:209).

7. Conclusion

In this article it is tried to study and know spirit of place in Ayn al-Qozat Hamedani lecture on place and time. Ayn al-Qozat to show grades of places addresses human and says: "know that your mould is consist of four opposed elements, earth, wind, water and fire. And these four are gathered in you actually. Everything remains after drying of the mould is earth and every moisture in it is water and every warmth is from fire and every coldness is from wind.

Place of Earth is apparent maybe obvious in your mould and in this earth there is another place, finer for water that deserves its softness and in this water there is another place for wind finer than the water place and in the wind there is a place for fire finer than the wind place and in this fire there is another place for your soul, finer than fire place and in your soul there is a finer place for exalted God and there is no place above God's place (Ayn al-Qozat 1960:31-32).

Human is a creature who always owns a place. Meaning his existence is in being in a place. Not only physical definition which includes all the creatures but also refers to the quality of presence and level of existence.

Every place has specific identity and the best human can do is understanding of this identity and respecting it in the endless days and accepting that even time factor can't remove spirit of place from it (Nordberg Schultz 2002:61).

In regard to all mentioned we know existence shapes time and place, not reverse. That is why architecture can be farther than place and time; or in another words it has no place and time. Thus, in holy places such as tombs and mosques, place and time are not prior to existence but it is the existence that is prior to place and time and this way the spirit of place can be felt (Davoodi 2006:39).



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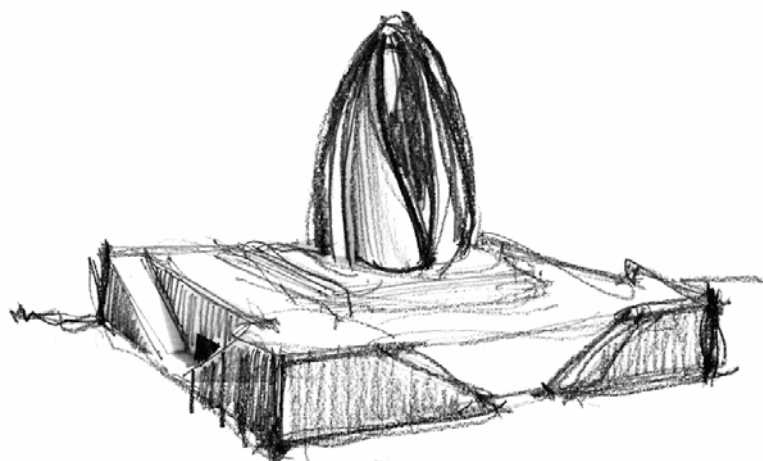


Figure2. Concept ional sketch for Ayn al-Qozat Hamedani Monument
(Source: Author)

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