

A Review on the Relationship between Identity and Place Sense

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ABSTRACT

Human has been consistently looking for its own identity, since this nature provides the motive of creating better understanding from the place in which he lives, because human has always been looking for a means to recognize itself. Product of the evolution of humans has been the transformation of identity in the world. This has been the cause of losing a desirable sense of place or place spirit. The retrieval of this lost identity causes to recovery the sense of place and removes the sense of alienation with the environment, which is a great concern for the present generation. Architecture and urbanization play a very serious role in the evoking of meanings and transition of the space Concepts. Because the place is not just a shelter for human beings efforts. Furthermore, it is the emblem which human beings gives meaning to it by interaction with it and gets involved to it so that he sometimes searches his identity in it. If we look carefully, then it is observed that the most important aspect of the human life is a sense of belonging to a place that should be considered

by designers and architects. This article attempts to analyze and interpret the identity of the place and the desirable sense that a place transfers to human beings; because the sense of place causes to create the identity and character for a community. As we all have a special sense to particular places, and we allocate this feeling (good or bad) into the architecture of that space, so as a result, if there is no space, the sense of place will be also meaningless.

Key words: sense of place-identity-architecture

Introduction

Architecture is the container of human life and the architect is who thinks and feels and can also make a creativity by using intuitive perception that embraces life. Hence the architecture can be considered as a narrator or may be a language which explains human life with all dimensions or in some dimensions in various scales by the requirement. (Mahoosh, Maryam, Ph.D. Thesis, Tehran University). In most architectures of the past era, this definition of space is explanative in most works that clearly reflect the attention of architects to create a good sense of place for users. Contemporary architects must also think about creating a sense of belonging to a place before design and express the place so that create desirable sense and fixation. Because the place is part of space which is occupied by someone or something and has semantic and value concept. If the space gives you the possibility of movement, the place will create strangle and this interaction ultimately makes the place identity. The identity of a place is a special mixture of social relationships and therefore it always persist in minds. And also, "the realm with a place finds a psychological identity and becomes as a symbol with the sense of ownership and composition (Pastalan, Leon, 1970, 88-101). In fact, form is important form to create a sense of place that besides other emotions and feelings guides us to relative degree of meaning of the place (Mehdi Nejad, 2014). The research methodology of this paper is an explanatory descript which is considered with respect to the importance of identity in

creating a sense of place and in this topic, library method has been also used.

Place Identity

In today's world, trying to maintain identity is one of the main conflicts of nations. Urban architecture and Design are also not excepted form this issue. The place experience, its memories and affiliations, today is considered as unattainable task. New urban life has made humans immigrant; human ancestors have been sheltered in one settlement for centuries, but today's humans are very active and have transformed identity into a normative and valuable category that discussion about it requires valuing and normative positioning. In many specialized texts and researches, the study of identity in artificial environment is carried out according to theories of the environment perception and behavioral sciences. in this study, Identity means the belonging sense and this is considered identical to environment and criteria such as sense of security, memorability, sense of belonging and dependence are codified and applied in order to assess identity (Daneshpoor, Seyed Abdul Hadi,2000). Recognition of identity concept in urban public space (Street) (Case study: Tehran , Enghelab Ave., Urban Planning Ph.D. Thesis, Faculty of Fine Arts, University of Tehran), another method which is used in the study of the identity of the artificial environment, this approach is expressed in the terms of "place sense" and the city .character (Arefi, 1999, No.2, pp.179-193). In fact, the sense of identity is the emotion that a person feels about continuity of his psychological life, and the unity that he always eels feels in his psychological states against external circumstances (Kardan, 1993, p. 8-27) but psychologically, identity is positioned in contrast to otherness and multiplicity); that is, when it encounters itself in different situations, at the same time, it understands and absorbs the situation, but maintains its unity and stability (the same). As a result, identity means distinction from other and similarity with self.The dynamic identity is influenced by time

and while retaining itself, it does not remain the same. The sense of identity is always accompanied with the sense of existence unity - while awareness from presence of multiple components. Thus, semantic field of "similarity / distinction" presents definition of identity as awareness of the presence of multiple components and two semantic field "continuity/evolution" and "unity/multiplicity" of conditions of it. identity is a "value and directional" concept. In other words, when the object is considered as having identity, is also implicitly referred to the desirability of the identity (Mirmoghtadaei, Mahta, 2004). Regarding to termed concepts, identity while being persistence should make some changes with respect to the circumstances of its age but preserve the identity principle, so that the desired sense of place be still continued. Christian Nouberg Scholes in the book "Architecture, presence, language and space" in this case says that "it is important that every place while any changes preserves also its identity" ...continuity and evolution indicates this issue which is still constant... The place is both stable and also has variability, and that is not the point which could be easily attainable. The stability is the same as the place spirit. and in the other words, it is the special connection of that place with space, the form and faces used in it, the variability and instability of the place due to the need for interpretation and redefinition of the place in different ways and It may be also the opposite, as in the case of the city of Rome, we are faced with this phenomenon of interpretation and paraphrase of places and spaces. The city of Rome, also referred to the "City of Eternity", has passed many ups and downs in its long history, and yet indicates that it can remains what it was without becoming the same as past. (Noberg schoulz, 2002, p.60-61). Finally, identity refers to the nature of being and existence which is detectable through the intrinsic or transitive, objective or subjective traits (recognizable). These characteristics distinguish entities and beings from their non-existent ones and reveal its similarity to insiders and it distinguishes these traits, entities and beings from non-existent ones. It reveal its similarity to insiders. For this reason, identity

in any place is different from other place. Because identity, as it relates to place and material, equally links to spiritual and non-material issues. According to Naghizadeh, "a review on the concepts associated with identity shows that attention to identity has both moral and non-material aspects as well as material and physical aspects. Different aspects of identity cannot be mentioned as separate, isolated and independent from each other, and any of them has effect on the other; additionally, not only any object qualifies identity, but also this identity is attributed to the characteristics which are result from the act of that object and are representative of the spiritual attributes of that identity, which are manifested in appearance and framework ("Naghizadeh, 2006, p.257). Identity can also be divided into two groups of public and particular. According to Jalil Saliba: Identity has been interpreted from particular and public point of view. Identity can also be divided into two groups of public and particular. According to Jalil Saliba: Identity has been interpreted from particular and public point of view. Namely, public identity in Arabic Language is derived from pronoun "Hova" which means "He" and in the mystical approach it refers to "absence". Islamic scholars have also referred the term "identity" as an "external" entity. Imam Davoud Qaisri Rumi in an introduction on "fosool-alhakam- Ibn-Arabi", has brought one of the most beautiful definitions from identity: what is the objectivity of the object is for it is referred as the validity of realization of "Truth" and regardless of any nature. In Islamic wisdom, the term "identity" is synonymous with the essence of divinity, which indicates divine nature, and its names and attributes are absent from us; it means that "they aware us from conscience and absenteeism identity" and this is inner consciousness (Saliba, 1987, p.678). and particular identity is identity from sociology and psychology point of view which has relatively clearer definition. In psychology field, one of the identity characteristics is termed as identity feeling and that is a sense that a person has toward continuity of his psychological life. On the contrary, sociologists believe in the theory of symbolic mutual interaction about

identity, and they know identity as social matter (Anthony, Giddens, 1984). From architectural and urban perspective, identity is often presented in two complementary parts. As Pakzad has expressed these two parts as follow:

the first part is the creation of memories and invoke in person; and the second part, the distinction and independence of the person. Therefore, the detection of identity is a comparative process between the present objectivity with its data in mind (Pakzad, Jahanshah, 1996, *Sufeh Magazine*, No.28 and 22, identity with space). Diagram of the method of determining the scope of environment perception with urban identity from psychology point of view (Source: Mohammad Komeili, *Safeh Publication*, No.46). [Figure 1]

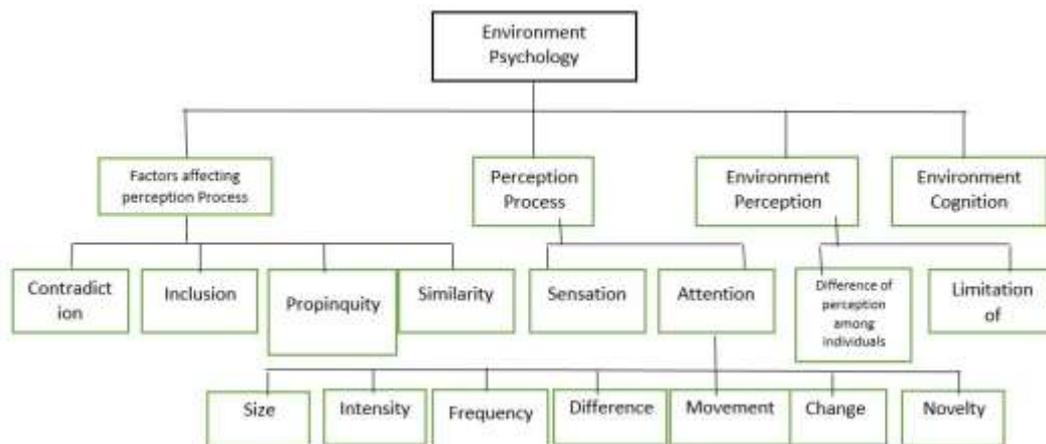


Figure 1: Environmental Psychology Diagram,
Resource: Author

In the environment psychology, knowledge and understanding are divided into the process of perception and feeling and attention and are considered as one of the criteria for measuring the identity. This is while the professionals of social and behavioral sciences knows perception of identity in assessing the identifiable relationship of human (with a preformed mentality) from the state of self-reflection observation, ,

records, perceptual defenses, etc. (with issue of identification of framework, environment, etc.). In the present article, we try to understand the urban identity from the environment psychology point of view and accordingly, we draw its elements in the above chart; and in this chart, the most important factors in understanding the environment from psychology perspective include cognition and understanding the environment as well as the perception process and factors affecting it. [Figure 2]



Figure 2: Picture on the right: Hajib al-Dawla Timche of Tehran
Picture on the left, Shazdeh Mahan Garden of Kerman in order to
perceive the place

Resource: Author

Sense of Place

Sense of place like identity can be studied in two ways: studying people sensation from the place or the impression of specific physical and particular features of the place. The sense of people from the place is the result of the experience of presence and relation with various sensual dimensions and historical aspects and its past. Factors affecting creation of this sense in addition to physical features include stories and myths, historical figures related to place, human and natural events, the weather, and even smells and particular sounds of that place. This feeling is especially evident in sacred places like Jerusalem and Mecca. The second

method is used today. In this approach, geography, shape of the land, architectural style, colors and other visual characteristics are taken into consideration. Basically, some believe that the best person who is able to experience and express the spirit of the place, does not inhabit in that place, but also he is a tourist, because the tourist is looking for purposeful research of the place experiences (Jiven, & Larkham, 2003, 67-81). In the phenomenological field of the sense of the place, the truth is the place, and it mostly means non-material characteristics and features of the place or the place identity which has a meaning close to the spirit of the place. That is, some places have so attraction that they induce a person an indescribable feeling and make him lively, happy and interested in attending and returning to those places.(Falahat, Mohammad Sadeq, 2005) [Figure 3].



Figure 3: The picture on the right: the mosque of Sheikh Lotfollah.

Source: Author

The picture on the left; Nasir al-Malik mosque in Shiraz.

Source: Author

In some way, feeling of interest in place is made in people. in this field, Tuan instead of the sense of place uses from the term "place-friendship" and knows it as an affectionate and influential link between people and places (Tuan, Yi-Fu, 2001) which can be aesthetic, sensory or emotional link. Lynch defines the identity of the place simply as being unique from

other place (His basis for this identification is to have separate nature. (Lynch, 1993). To better and more correct perception of sense of the place, first, we describe our meaning from the place. The place is a part of the space which is occupied by person thing. The place is the center of tangible value which along with security and sustainability meets human biological needs. In other words, the place is the most natural, purest and most immediate link between people and space. Ralph says: the place means having a safe point that from there, we can see the world. It is a strong connection that relates the human in its position to other objects and is achievement or psychological and mental relation with a specific point (Relph, 1976) and from Schulz point of view, the place is objective manifestation of the world environment. It is spatial and temporal consistency of the world (Schulz-Noburg, 2002, p.31) or we can explain the place so that the space has meaning, so the place is defined as a part of the space which is identified by social relations. In this order, reality of a place is always acceptor of what to place its definition in the heart of a social process (Logan & Moloth, 1987, p.47). Finally, it can be found that the place is a physical location with its all social and special qualities which despite the acceptance of continuous evolution, redefines from its universal material generality and retells its mutual communicates in a moment of time. When the space was seen in the social context and in its production process can have multiple identities, and yet be placed in the certain circumstances. (Madani Pour, 2000, p. 20).

Thus Schulz describes the sense of the place as "when the inhabited landscape is approached to human, form, space and face all work together and multiply the impact of the place more times and this is the same effect that has been referred as the spirit of the place from ancient times("Schultz, 2002, p. 10). In many literature related to place, the concept of place often emphasize on the belonging sense or dependency of feeling to one place and is defined by some terms such as "having root", "conjugation" or "identity". The concept inside and outside is often

easily understood by the term territory and by the definition of people in terms of physical and mental boundaries. People form groups and organize each other by differentiation of inside and outside. Hence, territory-orienting is often the basis of social development of textures which are formed by shaping the thoughts and actions of their inhabitants. (Knox, & Pinch, 2000, p.8-9).

Conclusions

According to the discussed topics, experience or expression of phenomenology, presence in a certain original space is the most important factor of the recognition and sense of that place. Although the experience of the place for everybody is unique, but human interaction with physical factors forms meaning and identity, and ultimately sense of the place. Since the identity of each place derives from the identity based on the worldview and the sense of man from the place and this identity is directly related to people's feelings and leads to create belonging sense, dependence and collective memory and mentality in the individuals of a society, it can be said that the item of identity forms the city framework and the sense of place that this feeling is transferred from a generation to another generation as a particular form of that place residences. This indicates that the interaction of identity and place sense is a constructive and effective interaction that can in the case of lack of inappropriate interventions can be enumerated as an essential element for the development of society for the contemporary and future generation.

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