

Explanation of Matter Importance in Perceptual Hierarchies of Safavid Era Mosques' Spaces based on the Mulla Sadra's Views; Case Study: Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque*

Mahdi Baniasadi Baghmirani^a- Seyyed Behshid Hosseini^{b**} - Azadeh Shahcheraghi^c

^a Ph.D. Candidate of Architecture, Department of Architecture, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran.

^b Professor of Architecture, Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning, University of Art, Tehran, Iran (Corresponding Author).

^c Associate Professor of Architecture, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran.

Received 24 August 2021; Revised 27 October 2021; Accepted 18 December 2021; Available Online 20 March 2023

ABSTRACT

Meaning perception in the architecture of the Safavid Era requires reviewing the thoughts of Shiite philosophers of that time. Substantial motion theory is one of the most important thinking schools of that era. According to Islamic philosophy, the truth of perception is not limited to material hierarchy, while the matter can provide the field for understanding meanings at different hierarchies by relying on the substantial motion theory. Safavid Mosques represent this thought in architecture. Perception hierarchies in Safavid mosques, including Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, rely on the substantial motion theory of Mulla Sadra- emphasis on perception movement from the existence of the matter or substance to inexistence- providing the field for journeying the perceptual hierarchies from appearance to the essence. Therefore, this is multidisciplinary, qualitative, and case-study research. In the theoretical foundations part, this study explained three pillars in the perceptual hierarchies of Safavid Mosques by examining the importance of the matter in epistemological topics proposed by Mulla Sadra and its relationship with the motion principle. The type of perception in Sheikh Lotfollah was then investigated in each pillar to find the importance of matter and body in the perception of mosques in the Safavid Era regarding the main purpose of this study. According to the principle of journeying from matter to meaning, the main question is about the importance of the matter in each perceptual hierarchy of Safavid Mosques. It is also asked how the substantial motion theory by Mulla Sadra is manifested in perceptual hierarchies of the Safavid Era. In terms of the importance of the matter in the perception, the results indicate that meaning perception in Safavid mosques, particularly Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque includes three pillars (stillness, motion, and unity), which are consistent with perceptual hierarchies of Mulla Sadra. In the stillness pillar, which is the least perceptual hierarchy (because of being mixed with matter), perceptions are confined to sensory issues. In the motion pillar, however, imagination power allows for achieving a spiritual perception of material affairs. Finally, in the unity pillar, light and transparency of space allow the audience to be united with the space's reality. The last pillar includes intellectual perceptions.

Keywords: Matter, Perceptual Hierarchies, Substantial Motion, Architecture of Mosque, Mulla Sadra.

* This paper was derived from the Ph.D. Thesis under the title of "position of unconstructed buildings in Iran architecture and relation of these spaces with the concept of unity" by the first Author, guided by the second author, and consulted by the third author in Islamic Azad University Science and Research Branch .

** E_mail: behshid_hosseini@art.ac.ir

1. INTRODUCTION

Due to the profound influence of philosophical bases on the architecture of the Safavid era, it has received great attention from researchers, including Stirlen and Carbone. Safavid Era is the peak time of Shiite thought when the thinking of some philosophers, such as Mulla Sadra was realized. Since architecture is a determinant of thoughts raining in each era of the material world (Parvizi and Poormandeh 2012). Hence, mosques of the Safavid Era can be considered the best medium for finding the thoughts of Shiite philosophers living in this era, including Mulla Sadra. Explanation of perceptual hierarchies in mosques of the Safavid Era requires describing the importance of the matter and meaning in space perception. By building mosques and religious monuments in each era, one can transcend the human spirit in society, direct individuals' perceptions toward spiritual perception, and reduce the material aspects of perception (Alborzi et al. 2020). Perception and wisdom in architectural spaces include various definitions; some researchers, including Morris define perception in architectural spaces as referential meaning (meanings that refer to external examples) and value meaning (meanings that refer to intrinsic values of each person) (Morris 1971). Like the definition proposed by Charles Morris, Umberto Eco defines these two perceptions as explicit and implicit perception (Eco 1968). In contrast, Roland Barthes has an idea that is different from the views of Charles Morris and Umberto Eco defining three main hierarchies for perception: the perception first relies on the appearance and material factors; it then comprises perception of implicit and esoteric meanings; finally, meaning perception's nature will change for individuals through time (Barthes 1982). It seems that one can say with caution that the epistemic viewpoint of Roland Barthes is somewhat close to the epistemic views of Mulla Sadra Shirazi. The specific third hierarchy of his epistemic view involves the element of time (that implies the concept of motion) in the perception.

According to Shiite thoughts of the Safavid Era and Mulla Sadra (especially, substantial motion and perceptual hierarchy theories), the perception of architectural spaces is subject to the journey from material to meaning (or the journey from appearance to reality) (Tabassi and Fazelnasab 2012; Nattaj 2014). Mulla Sadra considers the existence of anybody as an element that stems from the material and perception of that body, while this case has been neglected unfortunately (Raeeszadeh 2004; 56). The functional aspects are considered in the perception of temporary architecture; however, these functional aspects have not played their right roles because the function is not just limited to a material issue. Perception is basically rooted in the spiritual aspect of a human and the spiritual aspect in architecture is related to space.

It was necessary to conduct this study due to the influence of the philosophical thought of each era on the architecture of that time. Recognition of such influences can facilitate the actual perception of architectural spaces for the audience. Therefore, this study aims to describe the matter-meaning interaction in different perceptual hierarchies of Safavid Era Mosques by explaining the importance of the matter in epistemological topics proposed by Mulla Sadra. This study asks the following questions: 1. what is the position and importance of the matter in each perceptual hierarchy of Safavid Mosques regarding the motion pillar? 2. how the substantial motion theory of Mulla Sadra is manifested in perceptual hierarchies of Safavid Era Mosques?

2. BACKGROUND

The research background of this study can be presented in two parts: the first part includes the importance and position of matter in the perceptual hierarchies and perception journey from matter to meaning hierarchy. Momeni (2011) and Mokhtari (2020) consider the perceptual journey through transcendent wisdom as a process rooted in substantial motion believing that perception reaches a high hierarchy when matter influence on the perception of individuals is at the minimum level. In this case, the audience will achieve a spiritual perception of matter based on the substantial motion theory and perceptual hierarchies proposed by Mulla Sadra. On the other hand, Azimi and Afshar (2018) consider matter unable to be present in the perception due to its execution features and its mixture with non-existence. They mention types of non-existence in the opinion of Mulla Sadra in this case. Hosaini Shahrudi and Eskandari (2017) introduce the spiritual aspect as the agent for actual perception in epistemic topics. However, the second part is associated with the perception journey from matter to meaning in Safavid Mosques. This study consisted of the major part of both theoretical foundations and case studies. Parvizi and Pourmand (2012) and Moradinasab et al. (2018) defined Isfahan School in Safavid Era as the golden time of Shiite thought in their theoretical foundations. In this golden era, the thought of some philosophers, such as Mulla Sadra has been realized. They also consider the architecture of mosques constructed in this era as a platform for expressing these ideas in Safavid Architecture. Dorri et al. (2018) believe that architecture perception requires receiving meaning from space considering perception through feeling and matter as an impossible case. In His opinion, mosques comprise various symbols and meanings, which should be perceived as a hierarchy beyond the matter. Zafarnavaei (2017) points to the weakness of contemporary architecture considering it as a consequence of object-subject separation (matter-meaning separation). He assumes that matter

is a three-hierarchy (sensation, imagination, and reasoning) motion used to manifest the meaning in Islamic architecture. Alborzi et al. (2020) believe that architects of mosques of the Safavid Era followed the thought of that time and tended to direct humans towards spirituality downsizing the material aspects of perception. They insist that light is one of the most significant elements in these mosques that reduce the physical and material aspects of space.

3. METHOD

Previous studies have investigated the position of matter in perceptual hierarchies proposed by Mulla Sadra in addition to the position of physical elements in the perception of architectural spaces. However, no comprehensive study has been conducted on the philosophical position of matter in the perception of architectural spaces. Due to this research lag, it is necessary to examine the position and importance of the matter in perceptual hierarchies of architectural spaces. This was multidisciplinary, qualitative, and case-study research. In theoretical foundations, this study explains three pillars in perceptual hierarchies of mosques of the Safavid era by addressing the position of matter in epistemic topics by Mulla Sadra and its relation with the motion principle. In the next step, data analysis is done through the case-study technique to examine the type of perception in each pillar in Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque (considering perceptual hierarchies of Mulla Sadra) to find logical reasoning for the position of matter and body in the perception of mosques constructed in Safavid Era.

4. THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

Mosque is the outstanding symbol of the Safavid era's thought in architecture and Islamic citizens of that time; hence, mosque must fully manifest Islamic meanings (Etminan, Hosseini, and Panahi 2020). In Islamic architecture, these meanings are perceived through latent meanings hidden in the motif, not by the color and signs of the physical body of the building (Dorri and Talischi 2018). This is the motion in matter's essence until a spiritual perception of the material aspect is achieved. This research examines the importance of the matter in Mulla Sadra's viewpoint to describe a transcendental journey of perceptual hierarchies of Mulla Sadra in mosques of the Safavid Era. In the next step, substantial motion theory is used to investigate the influence of physical and material elements on the perceptual journey of individuals in spaces of Mosques of the Safavid Era.

4.1. Position of Matter in Perceptual and Epistemic Topics by Mulla Sadra

In the opinion of philosophers before Mulla Sadra, perception's truth is just substantive unity between object and subject (matter and meaning), while Mulla Sadra thinks differently and does not consider it

the final point (Mokhtari 2020). He emphasizes the object-subject union but considers the superiority of subject to object as an element that ensures this union (Hosaini Shahrudi and Eskandai 2017). Sadra considers perception as the outcome of who perceives and what is perceived and uses the term of unity between wise and sensible for it (Raeeszadeh 2004, 59). On the other hand, he considers matter as a barrier to perception because the matter is vague and mixed with non-existence (Momeni 2011); therefore, perception does not belong to matter, except by chance (Mulla Sadra 1981/3, 183; 1981/3, 317-363; 1981/6, 256).

According to the intellectual school of Mulla Sadra and substantial motion theory, the audience must experience a journey from matter to meaning, so can understand the meaning and truth of architectural space (Mokhtari 2020). This view of Mulla Sadra is a matter of precedent so Aristotle believes that perception is not limited to the hierarchy of material sense and cognition (Aristotle 2010) and assumes that real perception requires an esoteric understanding. Accordingly, the sensation is a measure used to perceive space, not perception, in the esoteric understanding of mosques. When an audience is present in a mosque's space, watches the physical body and distances from the material world through a substantial motion using soul power and connects to the world of meaning to provide an esoteric and semantic perception for self (in-person perception) based on the elements of the physical body (Mokhtari 2020; Azizi and Ebrahimi 2018). This process of perception improvement in architectural spaces is considered a theory called Noorieh by Mulla Sadra (Amini 2015) (Fig. 1).

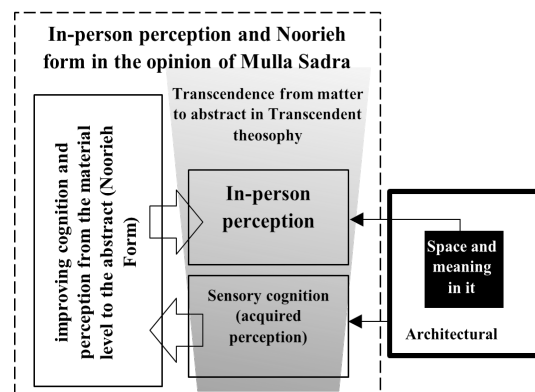


Fig. 1. Noorieh Form resulted from an Abstract Perception of a Material Affair through Substantial Motion

4.2. Influence of Motion Principle on the Perception of Matter and Body of Safavid Mosques

Religious monuments in Safavid Era are interconnected with Shiite thoughts relying on the

thinking of philosophers who lived at that time. These monuments are full of initiatives in which, perception is subjected to a hierarchy beyond the material dimension. Therefore, perception is not limited to the matter level but ends with profound and abstract meanings (Khatami 2011). The substantial motion theory is one of the most important philosophical initiatives in this era. As the essence of mosques of the Safavid Era, space masks a soul and meaning (Dursun 2009), which manifests through the body. To perceive the meaning of spaces in Safavid Era mosques, the audience should move among the physical and material elements of the mosque. The motion pillar is a kind of journey through space hierarchies (Tabassi and Fazelnasab 2012), which is in line with the substantial motion of the audience's perception from the material to the spiritual level. Accordingly, an understanding of architectural matter and body depends on the understanding of architectural spaces, which contain latent meaning (Zafarnavaei 2017).

According to what was explained about the influence of the motion principle on perception, transcendent from matter to meaning is a suitable factor that can be used to perceive implicit meanings of mosques of the Safavid Era. According to the epistemic views of Mulla Sadra and substantial motion theory, this transcendent in mosques of the Safavid Era creates some perception hierarchies, which have been mentioned herein.

4.3. Perceptual Hierarchies in Mosques of the Safavid Era

Mulla Sadra considers three hierarchies of intellectual, imaginary, and sensory perceptions based on the existence and non-existence of matter in the perception process (Nattaj 2014). According to the position of matter in the journey from appearance to the inner aspect in epistemic topics and the importance of mosques' body (and the design and motifs on the body) in the perception process, perceptual hierarchies in mosques of the Safavid Era are as follows:

A) Sensory perception in low hierarchies: in this hierarchy of perception, the focus is on the material (through execution features of matter), which is void of perception (Momeni 2011). Therefore, the audience is busy seeing the design and color of the physical body of mosques in this hierarchy, while cannot understand and perceive profound meanings hidden in the design and color.

B) Imaginary perception at intermediate hierarchies: meaning perception in Islamic architecture, especially in mosques is an underlying issue beyond the sense and matter aspects. Imaginary perception is at the middle position of perceptual hierarchies; hence, it is considered an intermediate between the world of sensations and meanings (Mulla Sadra 1981/3: 362). Audiences find meanings in architectural spaces relying on their mental images and meanings reflection based on their imagination, which is beyond

the sensory perception of physical and decorative elements (Charkhchian 2019). Mulla Sadra tends to promote and evolve the soul to higher spiritual hierarchies (Nattaj 2014). When audiences are present in mosques of the Safavid Era for the first time, they have no perception but gradually find a sensory and material perception and can perceive the meanings of mosque spaces based on their existence possible, and imaginary power.

C) Intellectual perception in higher hierarchies: religious monuments are full of implicit meanings that can be perceived at higher intellectual hierarchies, by using the power of intellect. In this hierarchy, perception is void of any physical and material aspect, and it is just a spiritual perception (Momeni 2011; Mulla Sadra 1984, 150-151). Under such circumstances, audiences are unified with the space truth at their highest perceptual hierarchy by being present in the mosque and paying attention to some elements such as light and space. In this way, the audience can understand the latent and implicit meanings (Dursun 2009) of architectural spaces.

4.4. Determining Pillars of Mosques of the Safavid Era Considering the Importance of the Matter in Perceptual Hierarchies

As mentioned before, meaning perception in mosques of the Safavid Era is done not through material perception but is based on high-hierarchy perception based on the perceptual hierarchies of Mulla Sadra. In other words, the audience cannot achieve a profound perception when seeing the space of the mosque for the first time (Masoudi 2003), so the perception is limited to material and objective aspects of this hierarchy. However, imagination and intellect powers help the audience to journey through some pillars and reach the meaning perception. These are three stillness, motion, and unity pillars in mosques of the Safavid Era obtained based on the existence and non-existence of matter in perceptual hierarchies by Mulla Sadra.

A) Stillness Pillar (matter existence): unlike some empiricist philosophers like Hume confined perception to the experience and sensation, Mulla Sadra posits that the influence of matter and sensation on our perception only is a minor part of sensory perception that does not cover the whole process (Mulla Sadra 1981/3, 245; Amini 2015). In this pillar, the audience just pays attention to forming perceptions when is present in the mosque. This perception only includes the visual pleasure of the body and decorations. In this case, the audience's perception is limited to sensory perception without understanding the meaning; therefore, audiences experience a kind of stillness in their perceptions.

B) Motion pillar (matter existence): according to epistemic views of Mulla Sadra, material and physical elements are exposed to destruction due to their possible innateness (Mulla Sadra 1996, 44); hence, Mulla Sadra considers this innate potential close to

non-existence (Mulla Sadra 1999, 166). However, the substantial motion of matter and imaginary perception allow in-person perception in motion pillar through architectural matter and body to manifest the appearance specifications in the spaces of mosques of the Safavid Era. Matched with substantial motion, in this pillar, the audience distances from matter and achieves a meaning perception by meaning reflection through an ascending trend (Charkhchian 2019).

C) Unity pillar (matter non-existence): various hierarchies of perception are experienced with the presentation and motion of the audience in the space following the aforementioned two pillars in mosques of the Safavid Era. In the first steps, perceptions occur in the sensory hierarchy. If these sensory perceptions have some implicit concepts, the audience can achieve perceptions of a semantic hierarchy (Tajer 2010, 110). The implicit meanings in space of the mosque serve as an agent linking humans to esoteric hierarchies. According to the intellectual school of Mulla Sadra, the unity pillar in mosques of the Safavid Era unified the wise and sensible matter (Soleimani Sheijani, Khakpour, and Raees Samiee 2014). In this case, the audience is united with space truth regardless of the material world and achieves an esoteric and intellectual perception using intellect power.

Transparency is provided by space perception potential under the unity pillar. The transparency

principle means transcendent from material to spiritual quality (Noghrekar 2018, 417) through which, the body and matter of the building are reduced to allow light to enter. According to the verse "Allah is the light of heavens and the earth¹," the light manifests itself in the architecture like an allegory of divine existence and a spiritual essence that enters the matter concentration when space is transparent, and makes it an eligible and honorable form for the human soul. The essence of this soul comes to form the world of lights. The allegorical role of light is to make the matter transparent and reduce the architectural rigidity, so it can be a heart and a haven for the soul captivated in the matter heart (Bolkhari 2005, 47).

Therefore, transparency is the measure used to understand and perceive the space in the unity pillar. The light helps to increase transparency. In mosques of the Safavid Era, light does not interfere with the space, but clarifies the space truth.

Therefore, transparency is the measure used to understand and perceive the space in the unity pillar. The light helps to increase transparency. In mosques of the Safavid Era, light does not interfere with the space, but clarifies the space truth. The light is not just a functional and aesthetic aspect of space; it reveals the mortal essence of matter uniting the audience with the space essence making them think and use intellect power to perceive the glorious attributes of the space.

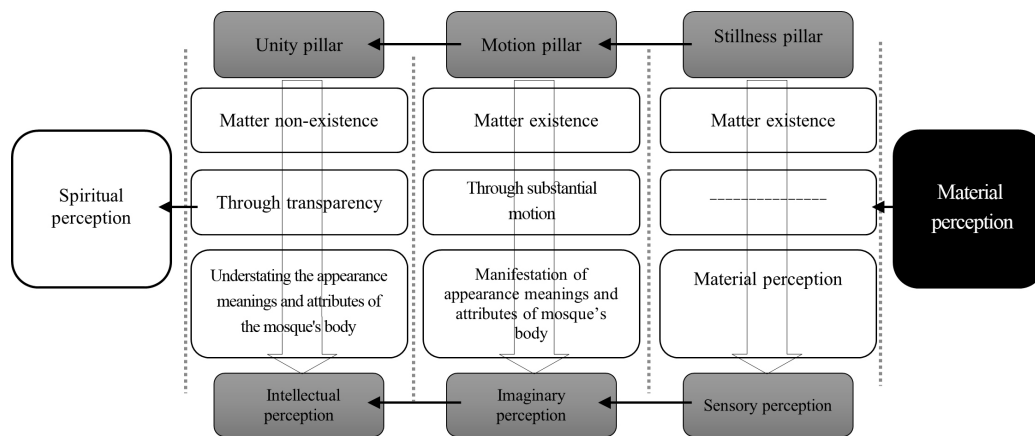
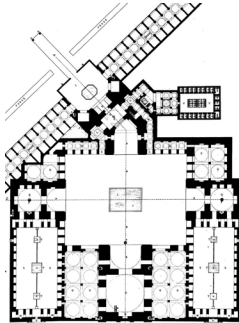
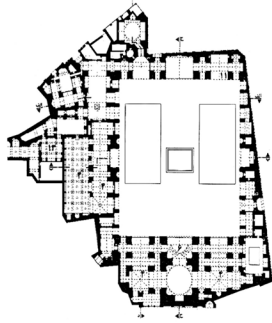
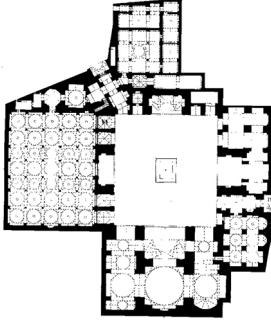
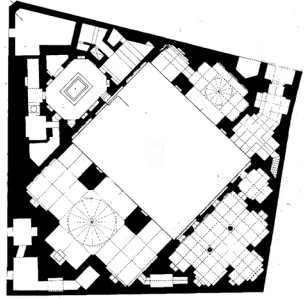
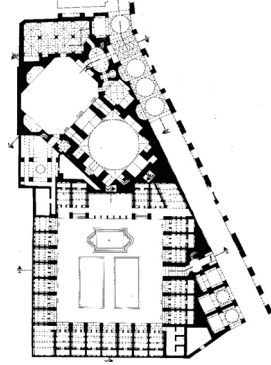
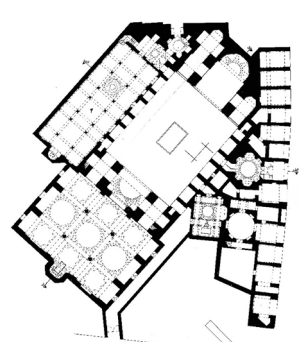


Fig. 2. Position of Pillars of Safavid Era Mosques in Perceptual Hierarchies based on the Matter of Existence and Non-Existence

Table 1. Triple Pillars in Mosques of the Safavid Era

Mosque Profile	Plan	Mosque Profile	Plan
<p>Sheikh Lotfoll Location: (Isfahan, Naghsh Jahan Square) Shah Abbas I (1011-1025 AH)</p>		<p>Mesri Mosque Location: (Isfahan, Qods Square) Shah Abbas II (1061- 1116 AH)</p>	

Mosque Profile	Plan	Mosque Profile	Plan
<p>Imam Mosque Location: (Isfahan, Naghsh Jahan Square) Shah Abbas I (1021-1040 A.H.)</p>		<p>Hakim Mosque Location: (Isfahan, Qods Square) Shah Abbas II-Shah Soleiman (1061-1116 A.H.)</p>	
<p>Aqa-Noor Mosque Location: (Isfahan, Ibn-Sina Street) Shah Abbas I-Shah Safi (1039-1034 A.H.)</p>		<p>Sheikh Ali Khan Zanganeh Mosque Location: (Isfahan, Malek Street, Sheikh Yousef Neighborhood, Sheikh Ali Khan Alley) Shah Abbas II-Shah Soleiman (1090 A.H.)</p>	
<p>Saru Taqi Mosque Location: (Isfahan, Bazaar) Shah Abbas II (1053 A.H.)</p>		<p>Mohammad Jafar Abadei mosque Location: (Isfahan, Jamal Al-din Abdorazzagh Street) Shah Soleiman (12th century A.H.)</p>	

5. DATA ANALYSIS

This part of the study determines the pillars of 8 mosques located in Isfahan, Iran based on the position of matter in different pillars of the mosques of the Safavid Era. A case study is then conducted to explain the influence of these pillars on the perception of the space of Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque.

5.1 Perceptual Hierarchies in Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque

In three main spaces of Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque (forecourt (Jolokhan), corridor (Dalan), vault (Gonbadkhaneh)), spatial miracles and motion hierarchies attracted the attention of researchers. This motion reflects the journey from the material to the spiritual world calling the audience from a hierarchy to a higher level of perception (Fig. 3.)

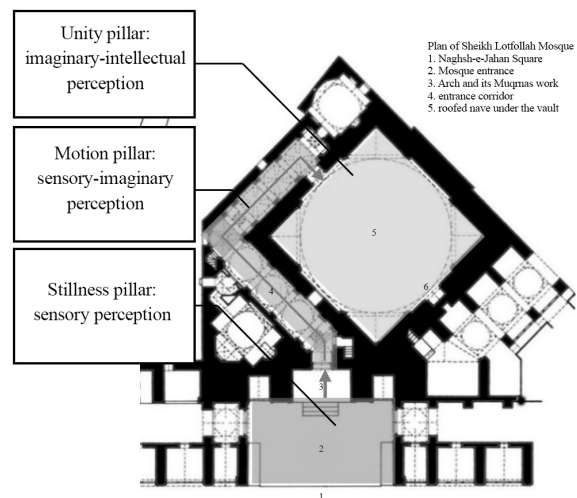


Fig. 3. Perceptual Hierarchies in Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque

Forecourt is the first space in Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque and is considered the stillness pillar of perception. This stillness in the truth allows us to understand the luxurious decorations of the entrance gate of the Mosque. Because perception in the forecourt is done through visual power, the perceptions of the audience include sensory and material perceptions. However, these decorations minimize the toughness of material elements providing the field for perception at a high hierarchy. The appearance form becomes a key for meaning perception.

The corridor is the next space designed after the forecourt and entrance gate. The corridor is a motion pillar in the mosque. According to Shiite thoughts of that era (substantial motion theory of Mulla Sadra), this pillar indicates the conception of motion in perception. Three specific spatial qualities are seen in this motion-based pillar. First, spatial continuity in the entrance system through rotation in motion route due to the angle between the arch forward the square and the mosque's axis towards Qibla (Tabassi and Fazelnasab 2012). This rotation creates a connection between the interior space of the mosque and the square (Golestani, Hojat, and Saedvandi 2017). In this way, the mosque's lobby (Sahn) is interconnected with the city without interrupting the motion of the audience in the mosque's spaces. Second, indirect motion in space fluidity lengthens the motion route allowing the audience to spend longer time in space and achieve more mental preparedness before entering the mosque (Moradinasab, Bemanian, and Etesam 2018). Third, a 28-m corridor with 90° rotation at the middle part. Light enters the corridor space throughout the corner or this rotation and meshed windows directing the audience to continue his/her motion (Alborzi et al. 2020). The light indeed creates a kind of motion in space through numerous shades. Due to matter's presence through motion and the presence of light, the journey from matter to meaning occurs in the perception under this pillar so that the audience is involved in the imaginary perception. The vault is situated after the corridor and is the unity pillar in perception. After moving into a long, half-dark, and small corridor of the mosque, the audience becomes eligible for entering the glorious spaces of the vault where light plays a substantial role. The light directs the audience toward Mihrab and the excellent light of lights (Karimi and Mirza Ali 2017). Hence, light appears in its holly meaning in space transparency reminding the verse "Allah is the light of heavens and the Earth." Light presence and transparency of space beneath the vault allow man distancing from the material world and start a journey in the world of meaning using intellectual power.

In the unity pillar and due to transparency (matter non-existence), perception is an imaginary perception at first but reaches the intellectual level due to the presence of intellect power and audience-space unity (unity between wise and sensible matter).

In a summary, perception is the outcome of sequential spaces in three stillness, motion, and unity pillars occurring by passing from outside to inside space in Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque. Perception becomes transcendent when the audience achieves a great esoteric perception after going through all pillars. According to the perceptual hierarchies of Mulla Sadra, the audience is involved in sensory perception after seeing tilework and colors in the forecourt and entrance gate of Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque. Moving in the lateral corridor of the vault in the next pillar, the audience experiences sensory perceptions after watching the rhythm of arches and tilework. However, the light-shadow interplay in the space adds an imaginary perception to provide such perceptions in higher hierarchies for the audience. The highest perceptual hierarchy in Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, however, occurs in vault space where intellect power is at the highest level and the audience is distanced from matter and the soul is immersed in the meaning. In this hierarchy, perception is not sensory but is sensory at the first step and reaches intellectual perception at the most transcendent level (Fig. 4).

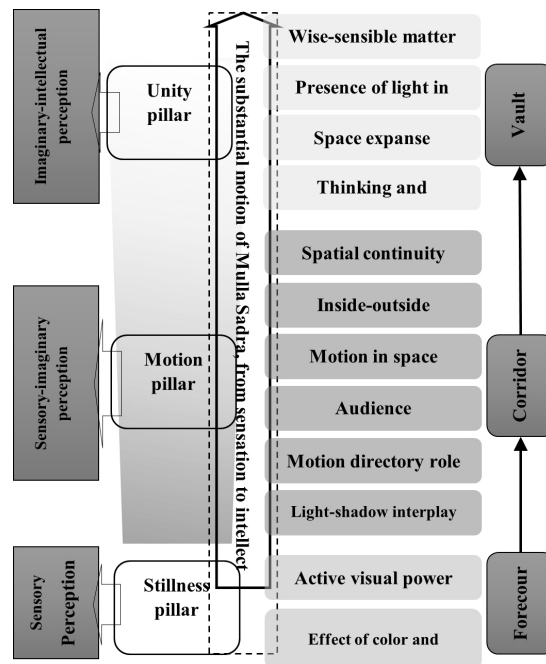


Fig. 4. Perceptual Hierarchies in Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque based on Mulla Sadra's Views

6. CONCLUSION

It is not possible to understand the esoteric meanings of religious monuments, especially Mosques of the Safavid Era (due to their Shiite thought history that was common at that time) just by using matter and body. Therefore, the perception of space truth in mosques requires a journey in perception from the material to the spiritual level. Mulla Sadra defines

different hierarchies of perception based on the substantial motion of matter from its existence to non-existence. He believes that the more perception moves towards lower hierarchies, the higher the integration with material issues. In contrast, the more the perception moves towards higher hierarchies, the more innate and spiritual it will be. Accordingly, this study defined three pillars for the position of matter in the perceptual hierarchies of Safavid mosques:

A) Sensory perception in stillness pillar: the lowest hierarchy of perception subjects to material subjects in which, the audience deals with sensory issues watching decorations designed on the body of mosques, which is just a material experience. In this pillar which is in line with perceptual hierarchies introduced by Mulla Sadra, perception deviates and the audience cannot perceive the truth of meanings.

B) Imaginary perception in motion pillar: meaning perception in mosques is at a higher hierarchy rather than sensation and matter. Although matter exists in middle hierarchies, the substantial motion theory of Mulla Sadra indicates that the meaning perception of

a mosque's body is done through imagination power, and meaning associations. Because matter does not exist in the divine innate, appearance attributes are reflected in the architectural body and its decorations. People who deeply pay attention to the body and decorations of the mosque through their perceptions can achieve an abstract perception of the material phenomenon through an ascending trend. Imaginary perception is the outcome of this process. following substantial motion, this motion is a factor that helps to perceive the meaning of the mosque's body and decorations on it gradually.

C) Intellectual perception in unity pillar: Mosques of the Safavid Era represent numerous meanings that can be perceived through intellect power, not sensation. According to this pillar, transparency appears after removing the matter and allowing light to enter the space. In this pillar, the audience is united with the space regardless of the material body, reaches an intellectual perception, and perceives God's magnificent attributes.

Position of matter in perception (in philosophy)					Position of matter in perception (in architecture)			
Position of matter	Perceptual hierarchies	Position in perceptual hierarchies	Type of perception	Perception's tools		Perception in architecture	Impacts on architecture	
Non-existence of matter	Spiritual hierarchy	High hierarchies (intellectual perception)	In-person perception	Transparency and light allegory	<div><div>Abstract</div><div>Substantial motion theory (Movement from matter to abstract)</div><div>Material</div></div>	Meaning perception in architectural space (meaning perception of abstract affair)	Magnificent attributes	Noorich form
Existence of matter	Appearance hierarchy	Intermediate hierarchies (imaginary perception)		Substantial motion and association of meanings		Meaning perception in architectural body (meaning perception of material affair)	Appearance attributes	
		Low hierarchies (sensory perception)		Acquired perception		-----	Apparent perception of architectural body (captivated in material perception)	

Fig. 5. Position of Matter in Perception of Architectural Spaces based on the Perceptual Hierarchies by Mulla Sadra

ENDNOTE

1. Surah Al-Nur (The light), verse 35 of the Quran

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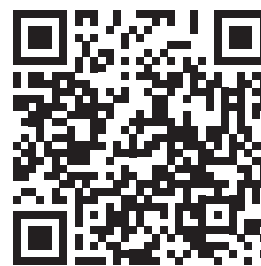
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HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE

Baniasadi Baghmirani, Mahdi, Seyyed Behshid Hosseini, and Azadeh Shahcheraghi. 2023. Explanation of Matter Importance in Perceptual Hierarchies of Safavid Era Mosques' Spaces based on the Mulla Sadra's Views; Case Study: Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque. *Armanshahr Architecture & Urban Development Journal* 15(41): 29-38.

DOI: 10.22034/AAUD.2022.294923.2539

URL: http://www.armanshahrjournal.com/article_168901.html



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