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Concept, Giving Form to an Idea

Parisa Dorraj[1*], Mortaza Farzaneh[2] and Nafiseh Salaji[3]

[1] *Member of Board, Department of Architecture, Islamic Azad University, Maragheh Branch, Iran*

[2] *Master of Islamic Azad University, Maragheh*

[3]*Member of Board, Department of Architecture, Islamic Azad University, Maragheh Branch, Iran*

*Corresponding author's Email: p_dorraj@iau-maragheh.ac.ir

ABSTRACT: Creation of architecture is a process in which an image changes into a project. The trend of the process and how it changes into an architectural space is always one of the concerns of the designers and the architects. To account for the mind manifestation and with regard to the fact that this field is a combination of art and technique, and today the technology and the digital media have joined it, and also combining of these subjects and the challenges that always exist between concept and idea and their definition and interaction between these two phenomena have led the scholars to different directions and everyone has given some strategies according to the subject and functions. Since, today, the subject of architecture especially in its theoretical process has changed into the Text and even in some stages has changed into the Context, therefore understanding these terms and studying the coexisting aspects of these subjects beside each other and paying attention to one special subject which is used in this field today are the main points of this paper. The Conceptual Art and on the basis of it , the Conceptual Architecture, is one of its indices whose formation and functions and effects on architecture in the today world have been analyzed and its comparative process has been assessed especially in the architecture of Iran.
Keywords: Image, Idea, Concept, Conceptual Art, Conceptual Architecture.

Technical Note

INTRODUCTION

Architecture formation is based on three principles: through theory (theoretical science), through experience and through idea and thinking. The theoretical and experiential methods have unbreakable ties because both of them develop an entity by following the special methods. The theory and experience seek for the solutions and answers for the problems. From the other hand in conceptual architecture, planning starts from the introduction. The conceptual architecture is mostly the analysis technique and proposing the philosophical questions rather than the answers to the questions. In the human civilization, the idea has played an important role in the social changes in different levels. From the point of view of John Lock, idea develops from the operation of the mind on the sensible things. The data that the senses gather from the world have great effects on the development and formation of the ideas (Falamaki, 2007). Le Corbusier describes the five stages of achieving an idea as following: a) watching   b) Observing   c) seeing   d) imagining   e) creation

The main task of the architect is to find the unique essence of each project to deal with it and in this way an idea is formed. The ideas are the definite thoughts which are resulted from the observing sensible things and meditating about them. In architecture the ideas include a lot of things like the direction of the buildings, the method to get use of the

air current, the value of the energy and saving and preserving energy, using and considering the special materials, the durability, the interaction between spaces, the appropriate spatial relationship and so on. Therefore building and its designing entail a lot of small decisions and naturally getting the skill and enhancing the skill to create ideas and concepts able to account for the vast expanse of the affairs enjoy a great importance. The designing process indeed is a set of stages which a designer takes consciously or unconsciously to achieve a solution for the problem. In fact, what is important is not the designing itself but the process to do it is important (Godarsi, 2002).

METHODOLOGY

Concept in The Process of Designing

Thinking on the basis of form and space is the foundation of the definition of concept in architecture. How the thinking of the architect form in the language of the architecture is the architecture concept. The concept of the idea is the internalized image. The concepts are the ideas which gather different elements in one place. These different elements can be represented in writing, thoughts, imaginations and observations. In architecture, concept is the path through which the physical needs, the environmental conditions and beliefs join together and in this way concept comprises an important part of the

process of designing of the architecture. Maybe, the origin of the concept can be considered as three things: First, it can be formed of the main essence of the problem and the subject. Second, the external limitations, environmental factors or the field of the project can serve as the source for the emergence of the idea of the designing. Third, the architect and his/her dealing with subject of the project can be considered the background for the development of the concept. The designer uses the creative thinking and developing the innovative solutions for solving the problem to reach the ideas and achieve the concept of the project (Falamaki, 2007).There are three main obstacles in the process of architecture designing before the architect:

How to Deal with the Subject and Make Relationship with it

The most difficult task is not how to introduce one's concept to others, but the most important point is how to explain it to oneself. For this reason, the designers learn to develop some kind of dialogue in their mind before explaining their ideas to others. The other problem is to maintain a graphical communication. In architecture what is to be made should be sketched first. The sketching and designing process should be started in the first stages of the work so that the proposed project could be criticized and reformed all the time (Godarsi, 2002).

The Shortage of the adequate Experience in Designing Process

The second background for the problems and for the obstacles is indeed the developed form of the first part. The method for the representation of the concepts is in the form of the pictorial representation. Therefore, the required experience to better representation of the intended concept of the designer is some of the important items (Godarsi, 2002).

Not maintaining the Continuous Relationship between the Hierarchies of the Designing Process.

The architect can have a deliberative judgment. Generally, in the relationship among the ideas, images and the concepts and developing a proper relationship among them form the designing process. Concepts are more like the ideas from the point that they are the thoughts resulted from the understanding of the architect. In architecture the concept determines the effectiveness of the different aspects of the needs according to designing and its construction through gathering them in one special thought and concept is an objective subject in architecture. It can be stated that it is the concentrated and innovative attempt in unifying the elements apparently not similar (Godarsi, 2002).

The five kinds of concepts

2-1 Analogical Concept

From the five kinds of the mentioned ones, comparing is probably the most common way to form a concept. Comparing reveals the objective relationship between the objects. If a subject contains all the intended features in itself, then it can be considered as the pattern for the project designing. Till the emergence of the modern school, it was supposed that all the architecture masterpieces have been developed in cities and the task of the architect was supposed to find out which of the old building can serve as the pattern for the project under designing. Once the acceptable pattern for churches, colleges and universities was the Gothic style and for banks it was he Greece Doric style and for governmental headquarters it was Saint Peter. These kinds of assessments or comparison can't happen with regard to only one building. Louis Kahn states about his concept designing in the medical research building of Pennsylvania University that he has used comparison in several cases. He explains that making relationship and mental participation is of the basic needs. Therefore he compared the first research centre with a place for gathering, meeting and sharing the information about each other's activities. Louis Kahn also compared his second concept around the images of the medical researchers in their laboratories with the work of the artists in their studios, after seeing that they are scattered in an unsuitable way in all over part of the campus of the Pennsylvania University.

2-2 Metaphorical Concepts

Metaphors like the comparison reveal the relationship between the objects, with the difference that these relationships are mostly of abstract type not objective one. In fact the Similes are the metaphors that the terms such as 'like ' and 'as' are used to show these relationships. The similes and the metaphors are the recognition of the possibility of relationship between the patterns but the comparisons take into account the objective relationships. Charles Moor confesses in a discussion that he likes t the building to be like Geode. Geode is an example of conceptual metaphor that shows how a building can possess two images in the outer facade suitable with the features of the neighbouring environment and in the inner facade has a different image like delightful or dramatic according to its usage (Godarsi, 2002).

2-3 Essence Concepts

Essences are in fact the abstract and concentrated aspects of different complex problems and are the reflections of the inner thoughts of these aspects. Every architecture' first task is to get plans and represent the spatial representation of those plans. Designers have a lot of methods to look for the essence of the project and state them in the form of concepts. This search is in fact an attempt to reach the ideas that join different parts of the concept of the project together and as Louis Kahn states they are the ideas that enable the designer to dominate the condition and achieve what should be done. A pragmatic way is to study and determine the hierarchy with the presupposition that the main essence is the one that is placed in the first rank of this hierarchy. At the end, the result of such a study can be presented in an analytical form of a program or a graphical diagram. The symbols are the sub-sets of the essences. The symbols indicate the facts that the themes can be embodied in the forms and images comprehensible for the public. Therefore, they are always in relationship with the expectations that we have from the building. A

building can simultaneously be a place for an activity and a symbol for that activity (Godarsi, 2002).

2-4 Programmatic Symbols

All the concepts are not in essence the portrait of the representation of the activity of the inside of the building. The concepts can be formed around the functional problems. But there are only a few people who can have a functional view along with the creativity to the process and to the designing process and mostly pay little attention to spatial relationship in introducing innovative solutions.

2-5 Idealist Concepts

Unlike the prior concepts in which the architect should look at the inside of the project to the similar projects to find a suitable concept, the architect himself/herself takes a new idea inside the project. If his concept is correct choice, it will be endorsed. If it is not, his competency and authority will be under question for this wrong presupposing. Ideals are in fact the extremes of the goals and dreams of the architecture. For example, the ideal concept of the architect can be the optimum consumption of energy in the building.

2. The hierarchy of the concepts

Understanding the priority and posterity relationship between the designing process and trend in fact, is the beginning of a trend to achieve a suitable concept for a building. This relationship is in this order: Image, Idea, Concept, Conceptual scenario. It is based on the complexity increase pattern, suitability and the depth of the thought. In the early stages of the project, there are always chances to imagine the ideas, especially when the mind possesses the ability and the tendency to accept the unusual creative and fictional thoughts, it can solve the problem of most of the needs. After this stage, the architects gradually identify some of the imaginations and ideas more important and suitable than the others by knowing the project and the issues related to the project. Finally, the potential similarities and attractions and categorizing of the ideas take place and on the basis of these considerations the definite path for doing the activities in the future will be ascertained (Godarsi, 2002).

3. Conceptual scenarios

With regard to the fact every building can have hundreds of needs unique to itself which are other than the needs and goals that the architect himself/herself adds to , therefore achieving a unit concept which correlates all of these elements to each other is a somewhat great and ambitious goal. Conceptual extends the content of the concept and includes more points in it and at the end puts more pictures before the eye of the architect. The conceptual scenario can determine how all the important ideas can be stated separately and be presented in a more complete way. A conceptual scenario like the cases mentioned is the product of a developmental process which originates from the inside of the development stages and the development of the concepts and is often the product of the ignitions in the thoughtful mind of the architect. A practical example for the increasing completion of the scenarios is the chariot three -stage process. In architecture schools, chariot means the attempt that is done at the latest time to do the works. The term has been taken from French word meaning the cart or wheel-borrow and refers to the carts or wheel-borrows that the students of the architecture of 19th century in France used to carry their projects to the place in which they gathered to have their works be assessed.Their projects often were completed along this path and on the same chariot. Chariot also is a method that the employers use it to include the different individuals and organizations in the trend of planning and designing of the project. A group chariot means a condensed work period that limits making of the decisions and presenting them to a time of several days. Different groups with different way of thinking and often in a competitive manner cooperate in forming of an idea and concept (Godarsi, 2002). The conceptual artists that started their activity in the late period of the modern era tried to define the art and aesthetic principles in a view other than the modernism with regard to the idea of the meaning of the art. The main elements of the conceptual art are "thought" and "language".

4. Conceptual Art

It is a way to introduce the contemporary art work in which a special thought and idea which is individualistic is complex and general and is developed on the basis of rejecting the aesthetic in a abstract and irregular way. The conceptual art is a form of artistic expression which tries to lower the physical and superficial aspects of the work as far as possible and instead strengthen the mental force coming out of the artistic effects. In this kind of art, the visual and light effects are considered insignificant in favour of the mental trend of intelligent understanding of the art work and it invites the addressee to accompany and discourse with the creator of the work. In this way the creation process of the art work is interwoven with its understanding. The conceptual art basically originates from a mental pattern and uses whatever tool and material which is compatible with the imaginations of the artist (Hunter, 2001). The term of the conceptual art refers to the searches that the American and the British artist in the second half of 1960s for the first time started. Conceptualism is a term that was used for the first time by Sol LeWitt in an article by the title of "Paragraphs and the Art of Conceptual". It was in the explanation of the story of a person that took place in the mid of 1960s among the artists like Joseph Kossuth. Victor Begin, Cyberman, Mel Rumson, English department of art and language and the supports of the French critics Catherine Mile (Linten, 2003).

Important features and characteristics of the Conceptual Art
1. The artists mostly deal with secrets and mysteries not with reasoning.
2. They repeat the reasonable judgments
3. The unreasonable judgments lead to new experience.
4. The lack of any kind of expectation for the art work to be meaningful before the observer is the feature of any concept.

5. The main element of conceptual art is "thought and language" (Lossi, 2001).
6. If the artist changes his/her imaginations in the middle of the creating a work, he/she accepts the result of the work and repeats the past results.
7. The concept and idea are different. The first indicate the general direction of the work, while the goal of the second is the components of the work. Idea realizes the concept (Hunter, 2001).
8. Ideas can be the art works themselves, the ideas are in the chain of the development and change which at the end create forms. It is not necessary that all the ideas are changed into objective form (Khiyabanian, 2009).
9. The ideas do not necessarily proceed with a special order. They can be to some degree in unpredicted directions, but an idea must be completed before another idea develops in the mind.
10. The general goal of the conceptual art is to give a wider domain and consider it not dependent on a specific object or on specific place.
11. Since no form has priority over the form by itself, therefore the artist can use to the same extent every form from the stating of the words (written or spoken) to objective reality.
12. All the ideas themselves are art if they are related with the art and are included in art rules (Lossi, 2001).
13. The rules change with the art works.
14. Understanding of the ideas result in the new ideas.
15. It is not necessary that the artist understands his/her art. His/her understanding is not necessarily better than the others'.
16. The concept of art work may get involved in the work subject or the trend through which the work is developed (Hunter, 2001).
17. There are a lot of elements that involve artistic work. The most important ones are surely the most obvious ones.
18. The usual ideas can't be saved by a beautiful creation (Linten, 2003).

The Conceptual Art in Iran

With regard to the point that the conceptual art has entered into our country forty years later, then our artists couldn't have a new approach to this art. Then they found themselves involved in the concepts of this art which are seen in the early period of it and created their works with a view on the native traditions and under the influence of the features of 60s-70s. The point of the works of these artists is their attention to the native, national and traditional concepts. In a way that the features of the contemporary art have also been attended to. But their being inspired by the works of the West artists can't be denied, to the point that some of the works are only imitations of the western ones. But there are some other works in this field which have something to state by themselves (Khiyabanian, 2009).Of course in the recent decades, samples of the works which could be categorized under the name of conceptual art have been performed by some of the pioneer artists, but this movement could not continue in the architecture field of Iran and because of the social and cultural changes after revolution it didn't catch the attention the architecture

society. The recent activities of the architects, despite their thoughtful efforts and attention to the thought of conceptual art and its combining with the native and national traditions and concepts have not been able to reach the proper unity. It can be stated that what has been done in west under the title of conceptual has been materialized in the artistic works of Iran. We have far distances with the current concepts in Iran which needs more thoughts and needs a careful and comprehensive study (Linten, 2003).

CONCLUSION

With regard to the current approaches in the world and the role of the concept in the formation trend of the architecture projects, it can be understood that the today architecture develops on the basis of concept oriented foundations, and as the role of these concepts are founded on artistic and imaginative bases, the work of the architecture will have more values to represent. As it was mentioned in Iranian architecture, this field which is using of conceptual ideas in the formation of the architecture structure has not found its real status and in most of the cases the movements in this field have been without any result. In this paper, with regard to items through which the conceptual architecture can be achieved, several solutions are presented to combine this process with the available beds in the architecture of Iran. They are:

- Clarifying the role and the status of the concept and especially the contemporary conceptualism in forming the mental ideas.
- Developing the necessary beds to highlight and give value to the works of conceptual
- Changing the view of the managers to the relationship of the concept with the performance in the architecture projects.
- Changing the view of the public to the role of the concept in the structure of the building
- Developing change in the understanding of the practitioners in understanding of the fundamental concepts in the structural and form fields of the building.

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