

**An Introduction to the Recognition of Facets of
Beauty in the Quran with an Emphasis upon
Manifestation of Monotheistic Beauty in the
Characteristics of the Islamic City**

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ABSTRACT

There is a deep, mutual relationship between quality of beauty and the set of other qualities of the Islamic city in such a way that manifestation of any quality of the Islamic city is a symbol of beauty. On the other hand, a city is beautiful in which other qualities of the Islamic city are manifested both outwardly and inwardly. Nonetheless, in researches made on the Islamic city and its qualities no special attention is made to the quality of beauty. The main purpose of this essay is to investigate and expound analytically the mutual relationship of beauty and other qualities of the Islamic city. Hence, notion of beauty is surveyed first; synonyms of beauty, levels of recognition of

beauty, source of beauty in the Islamic culture, and the said relationship are analyzed secondly; and an analysis is presented concerning the beauty caused by manifestation of some qualities of the Islamic city in traditional cities finally.

Key Words: beauty, qualities of the Islamic city, tradition, modernity, opposites of beauty, opposites of qualities of the Islamic city.

In Arabic, terms used in the meaning of beauty are numerous. It is said that, "In Arabic, there are three hundred terms all used in the sense of beauty thirty of which being more important. There are terms used in the meaning of beauty in Farsi language too. Of course, meanings are more extended in Arabic than in present Farsi" (jowzi, 9).

This indicates that *beauty* is used for several states, appearances, and inner senses; that is why they should necessarily be distinguished. Since their value, depth, and influence can be different, they should be classified and analyzed.

Since the primary purpose of this essay is to survey and expound the analysis of relation of quality of beauty with other qualities of the Islamic city, synonym and similar concepts, the hierarchy, and its opposites are researched remarkably in

detail. Other topics would be discussed briefly merely to satisfy the needs of our main topic.

1. Concept of Beauty in Literary and Philosophical Schools

One can say that there are definitions for beauty as many as those who have spoken of it. Indicating difficulty of defining beauty (to which man inclines naturally), that fact recommends that we should expound its characteristics and levels instead of defining it. In fact, difficulty of defining beauty along with its self-evidence is like a child who has just learned to speak and understands tense of verbs quite well but is unable to define “tense” and “Grammar”. Besides, that fact reflects the influence of worldview, insight, and culture of humans and societies in defining beauty.

Author of *Encyclopedia of Art* holds that although all people are familiar with characteristics of beauty, it seems that beauty itself is indefinable. He treats the nature of comprehending beauty as being literal than semantic, and argues that: First, opinion and taste have a hand in comprehending beauty; secondly, agreement in aesthetic experience does not necessarily lead to agreement in the concept of beauty; and thirdly, aesthetic experience includes both beauty of nature and that of art, while those two kinds of beauty have both similar and different characteristics (Pakbaz,

287). Kant believes that beauty can be defined as “what is generally pleasant without having a concept” (Leland, 85). Leland asserts, “It is not possible to determine a materialistic definition for beauty. The subject of theoretical aestheticism is definitely determination of character or set of common characters of what is explained by such a description” (Leland, 86).

In ancient Iranian culture, beauty was accompanied by blessing and happiness being inseparable from them, while all propositions referred to beauty. Such a consideration of beauty not only appears in this world with such characteristics as beauty of mixture, health, and comeliness, but in the world to come deeds of the righteous man will appear on the bridge of Cheniyud in the form of a maiden whose elegance is the collection of all beauties and who says to that man, ‘I am the body of your good deeds’. On the contrary, when evil man reaches there, his deeds will appear as an ugly witch” (Naghizadeh, 78).

A definition of beauty presented from ancient sources is that of the Egyptian poet Ibn Farid, who says, “Beauty is the perfection of manifestation with the quality of equilibrium and compatibility, whether outside of man or inside of him.” Concerning the meaning of equilibrium and compatibility, Jowzi says, “Here, equilibrium and compatibility mean

harmony, which is a component of the beautiful affair too. Compatibility means anything that is in accordance with man's nature, that does not destroy it, that does not cause its deviation, and that man finds naturally pleasing and desirable. Any beautiful affair that has such qualities is lovely" (jowzi, 1380).

Allama Ja'fari defines beauty as this, "Here is the first step. If we intend to define beauty in this step, it is the appearance or the colorful, limpid curtains which cover the perfection. By that theory, which is perhaps the most comprehensive one concerning beauty, we would conclude that it is not the case that beauty satisfies merely a specific sense as drinking water quenches the thirst, but rather beauty in that definition is a way to comprehend the perfection. It means that through deliberation upon an effect, such as beauty of creation, while man's sense of beauty-seeking is satisfied he would attain the comprehension of perfection too" (*Ibid.*, 163).

What was said clarifies the impotence of presenting a definite, clear definition of beauty. Therefore, using scientific method (in the experimental, quantitative sense), i.e., collection of proofs and evidences, classifying them, and then law-making, would not lead to the comprehensive, desirable conclusion in defining beauty, especially the spiritual one. Man's spirit has two stable and variable aspects. Those two

aspects play some role in comprehension and definition of beauty. While beauty manifests itself to the variable aspect of man's spirit as a relative affair which is dependant upon man's mental situation, for which no specific criterion and law can be presented, consideration of the stable aspect of man's spirit results in the intellectuality and analysis and, despite being complicated, if one thing is in compatibility and harmony with man's spiritual characteristics, it would be introduced as beautiful. In fact, such a discussion emphasizes the necessity of man's keeping in touch with beauty in order for the spirit to have the possibility of remaining calm in the material world. Thus, in spite of man's natural tendency to the beauty, environmental condition, mental situation, cultural values, and structure of man's desirable life have a hand in comprehending and expounding the concept of beauty in man's mental state.

2. Beauty and Its Synonymous and Ambiguous Concepts in the Islamic Culture

2.1. Beauty and Synonymous Concepts

In Arabic, *husn* and *jamal* are used for beauty. Those two terms are used for goodness as well. In *Qamus Quran* we read, "According to the Quranic verses, both meanings of beauty and goodness can be accepted. Al-Raghib says that *Hasan* (something having *husn*) is any pleasant, cheerful thing; and

his assertion includes both meanings, for pleasant is used for both beauty and goodness. Also, for *jamal* such concepts as abundant beauty, handsomeness, and ornament are used.” In the Islamic culture, especially Quranic verses, the term mostly used for what is good with God, which should be treated as good with man too, is *husn*. That term includes all material, spiritual (formal, conceptual) kinds of goodness. In most verses, satisfaction of God is announced by the term *hasan*, which means the most fair (and not more fair). “*Hasan* is any pleasant, cheerful thing. Generally speaking, it is of four dependant meanings of: beauty, goodness, perfection, and truth.”

In the Quran, God has introduced Himself as having *hasan* attributes, “To God belong the Names Most Beautiful; so call Him by them (7, 180).

A term used in the Quran for beauty is *jamal*. “*Jamal* is used for being handsome and of good conduct, beauty, fairness, outwardly and inwardly goodness. It is said in *Bahr al-jawahir* that ‘*Jamal* is used for two meanings: one is that familiar sense for people like clearness of color of skin, softness of skin, and so on which is of two types: essential, and possible. Another meaning of *Jamal* is the real *jamal* in the sense that any human organ is created in the best way in nature and composition. For Sufis, *jamal* is heavenly inspiration to the heart of wayfarer.

God's *jamal* is His Sublime Attributes and Good Names in general and attributes of mercy, knowledge, blessing, benefit and the like in particular. Some other Divine Attributes are both attributes of *jamal* and *jalal*. Let it be known that although God's *jamal* differs, it is of two types: spiritual *jamal*, which is the meaning of Divine Names and Attributes and is restricted to God's knowledge of Himself, and formal *jamal*, which is the universe and all creatures. This universe and whatsoever lies in it are absolute *jamal* and manifestations of God. All creatures are manifestations of His *jamal*" (Dekhoda, 7845).

Allama Tabatabaee believes that, "*Husn* is compatibility of one thing with its desirable purpose. Parts of this order of creation are in absolute compatibility" (Tabatabaee, 15).

The relation between *husn* and *jamal* is so close that Suhrawardi asserts, "You should know that among *hasan* Names of God are *jamal* and *kamal* (perfection). It is said that the Almighty God is *jamil* (i.e., is of beauty) and loves *jamal* (the beauty). All existents, whether spiritual or bodily, are in search for perfection and you see nobody who is not tended to *jamal*. Then, if you think carefully, you will realize that all are in search for *husn* and attempt to attain *husn*" (Suhrawardi, 245).

Other terms used for beauty can be mentioned as follows:

Baha': Goodness, *husn*, beauty, luminosity, clarity, grandeur, perfection, and splendor are some meanings of *baha'*. Like *jamal*, *baha'* is attributed to God. That term is cited in supplications of holy Imams.

Husn: It is used as synonymous with beauty.

2.2. *Beauty and Ambiguous Concepts*

The foundation of beauty, especially in divine worldviews and religious cultures, is a spiritual affair, and that is why it is absolutely different from its seemingly synonymous terms (like prettiness and the like). In accordance with realms of life, some levels of beauty are considered by man, with which we will deal later. In fact, in discussing beauty (and any other discussion) it must be considered that seemingly synonymous terms should not to be used instead of the principal word. This point should necessarily be taken into consideration that there are differences between seemingly synonymous words whose neglecting may weaken foundations of research. Concerning beauty, such terms as prettiness and the like, which are mostly concentrated upon material sensory aspect, can somehow declare themselves as being synonymous with beauty and thereby harm the latter's genuineness and comprehensive meaning. Having *jamal* as an equivalent in the Islamic culture (which is penetrated into Farsi as well), beauty considers a

facet which is chiefly directed to the immaterial world, which is genuine. Even if one thing is called beautiful, it is for its spiritual facet.

Zina: In opposition to genuine beauties (absolute beauty and divine *jamal*, natural beauty, beauty produced by art), some phenomena are introduced as beautiful which are not included in the levels of beauty and it is better to call them pseudo-beautiful. Pseudo-beauty is in fact beautification of ugly, evil phenomena through covering and hiding their ugliness. Being a satanic action, pseudo-beauty uses fallacies in the meaning and application of beauty in order to deceive man presenting what is ugly and evil in the form of beauty and *jamal*. Dehkhoda defines *zina* in this way, “Embellishment, beautification, deception, jewelry, cloth, and anything which covers nakedness.” Allama Ja’fari believes that *zina* cannot reflect the beauty existing in the existents themselves, but rather is used abundantly in the spiritual, immaterial goodness. Even when it is used as an equivalent to the sensible beauty, it reflects the concept of appearance, and that is why it is used even for beautified ugly, evil things.

Man’s concentration upon material life, apparent beauty, and *zina* of this world is among most fundamental factors which prevent men from attaining truths and enforcing their reason and faith - as said by Imam Ali in Nahj al-Balagha,

“Embellishments of this world corrupt weak reasons.” Formal beauty or *zina* is a means for examining, as the verse 7 of sura 18 asserts. The verse 28 of the same sura advises to call one’s soul to patience in the case of encountering *zina* and beauty first, and then asserts that *zinas* of this world (such as wealth and children) are *zina* of this-worldly life.

Mentioning that by *zina* of actions is meant making them pleasant, Allama Tabatabaee holds that *zina* is any beautiful, beloved thing which is attached to another thing in order to make it beautiful and pleasant. One who is in search of *zina* moves toward it eagerly and thereby benefits from it.

Since that term is frequently used in the Quran in some different, opposite cases, it would be of use to mention some of its applications briefly:

“By God, assuredly We sent Messengers to nations before you, but Satan decked out fair to them their deeds; he is their protector today, and there yet awaits them a painful chastisement” (16, 63).

“And do not let your eyes turn away from them (the poor), desiring the adornment of the present life” (18, 28).

“Say: ‘Who has forbidden the ornament of God which He brought forth for His servants, and the good things of His providing?’” (7, 32).

“But God has endeared to you belief, decking it fair in your hearts, and He has made detestable to you unbelief and ungodliness and disobedience” (49, 7).

“We have set in heaven constellations and decked them out fair to the beholders” (15, 16).

A review of those and many other verses alluding to *zina* and its derivations indicates that value and capability of *zina* are absolutely dependant upon its founder and ground. For instance, whenever *zina* is attributed to God or believers it presents a desirable notion, but whenever its agent is Satan, corrupt people, or evil deeds (such as squandering) it is considered undesirable and destructive. Of course, even in the second state it is infused into the mind by Satan or man’s soul that *zina* is a good affair, and thereby attracts man to itself.

Lazza (Pleasure): It is another confusing term mentioned as a sign of beauty in its absolute sense. *Lazza* is of three types: one is that whose pleasure concerns the nature of the object of pleasure. Second is mental pleasure, which both reforms this-worldly life and is harmless to the world to come. Those two kinds of pleasure are related to the Almighty God. Third is illusionary pleasure, which is in harmony with lusts and causes misfortune in both worlds. Such imaginations are satanic infusions and illusionary pleasures caused by various kinds of sins. Such a pleasure is attributed to Satan in the Quran, “Said

he (Satan), 'My Lord, for Your perverting me I shall deck all fair to them in the earth, and I shall pervert them, all together'" (15, 39).

Wonder: Wonder, especially when caused by new phenomena, is a main cause for confusion. In so many cases, many human beings treat their feeling caused by a phenomenon as a result of beauty of that phenomenon, considering their feeling as beauty feeling. In fact, wonder is to feel or observe something which is opposite to what mind knows, and knowledge can remove the wonder.

Attractiveness: Attractiveness of things and phenomena, caused by various reasons, can also be treated as beauty, The rate and kind of attractiveness are absolutely dependent upon the realm considered by any individual. Thus, those who concentrate on the material aspect of life would easily be attracted to material things considering them beautiful, while one who seeks spiritual perfection and is directed to the spiritual realm of life rejects this-worldly affairs and would be attracted to spiritual objects.

Benefit: The phenomenon being of benefit and value is a category which can most probably be confused with beauty. Such a probability is strengthened or weakened especially in connection with the nature and rate of response of the desirable object to the specific needs of different individuals.

3. Source of Beauty in the Islamic Culture

What was said earlier clarified that according to Islam and Quran the source of everything is God, and everything would end in Him. He has created the world and created human beings in such a way that they can conceive the world. Thus, He is the source and originator of all goodness, and all sensible beauties are created by Him. Also He is the source of all beauties connected to reason and heart. All beauties related to ethics, behavior, and intuition refer to Him, and He is the base for any ethical affair.

Man's nature tends to perfection, finds perfection joyful, and dislikes imperfection. As Suhrawardi says, "Any lower light is of yearning and love to the higher. Then, the Light of lights does not love but Himself, for His perfections are apparent to Him. He is the most beautiful thing. His appearance to Himself is stronger than any appearance of anything to itself and others... Pleasure is nothing but to conceive the actualized perfection as such, when it is actualized to him. Therefore, one who is ignorant of perfection actualization is not joyful, and joy of any joyful is as much as his perfection as well as his awareness of his perfection. There is nothing more perfect and more beautiful than the Light of lights, for all perfections and beauties are produced by Him.

Thus, He has all perfections and beauties, and He is aware of His perfections and beauties” (Suhrawardi, 246).

It is seen that according to Suhrawardi, knowledge of source of pleasure is more important than its nature. Also jowzi believes, “A source for knowledge of beauty is *Taiyya* poem of Ibn Farid. He says there, ‘Beauty of any beautiful thing is borrowed from Him and will be returned to Him finally. Any intelligent fellow who is clear-sighted and knows the truth and beauty, will realize that all effects are from Him.’” (Zowzi, 11).

In Mawlawi’s opinions, beauty is the direct and immediate manifestation of God in this world, and is the best means for awakening man and familiarizing him with the spiritual world. According to Nasr, proof of God’s existence from Mawlawi’s point of view can be summarized in this short sentence, ‘Beauty exists, so God exists’” (Nasr, 128).

4. Levels of Beauty Comprehension and Conception

Allama Ja’fari divides states of comprehension and conception of beauty into three, and in another case into five phases whose third phase is, in turn, divided into three levels. Those five phases can be presented as follows:

4.1. Superficial Look or Contact (Primary Feeling)

In that phase, only relation between inward and outward facets is established, but the inward facet is still inactive and that is why it has made no reaction.

4.2. Watch (Precise Look)

In that phase, the inner facet of essence, through its specific mentality reacts actively to the outward pole of essences which may appear in the form of pleasure or ecstasy.

4.3. Judgmental Beholding (Analysis)

In that state, reason, with the aid of inner pole of essence (taste and intuition), compares beauty with its contents and analyzes it.

4.4. Beholding through the Second Feeling (Insight and Universal Conception)

In that state, this particular beauty is related to the universal conception of the universe, that is, one takes another look at the object of beauty through channel of inward pole of his essence as well as his conception of the whole being and sees it in an organic relation with them.

4.5. Passing through Beauty to the Perfection (Intuition)

That look is the most penetrating observation which inquirers depth of beauty into its source. Such a look cannot be taken by the inner pole of essence of ordinary people (Ja'fari, 255-85).

Some Muslim philosophers hold that man's life has three main structures – physiological, psychic, and spiritual – each conceiving the beauty of its own level. Thus, based on the realms of life, three levels for beauty can be considered above which being the absolute beauty – i.e., man's main purpose.

5. Levels of Beauty Conception from Motahhari's Perspective

5.1. Sensible Beauty

When encountering beauty, the first level is to feel it. "Who is the one who does not perceive beauty of flowers? So many people may perceive only the good smell of flowers, but those whose eyes perceive beauty will perceive beauty in flowers more than their smell. There are a thousand kinds of sensible beauty in the nature, such as beauty of trees, jungles, seas, mountains, sky, horizon, dawn, sunset, and the like which are related to vision, while there are beauties which may be perceived by other senses such as touch, smell, and taste. Generally speaking, 'good' in any sense means beautiful; good

in the eye is the beautiful for eye, good in the ear is the beautiful for ear, and so forth (Motahhari, 101).

5.2. Imaginary Beauty

The next level is the imaginary beauty, which is the first level of insensible beauties. “Absolutely sensible beauties may be perceived by almost all people. Are there insensible spiritual beauties too? Yea, there are plenty of them, at least beauties related to man’s imagination, i.e., mental forms. What is the beauty of eloquence? Those who perceive beauties of imagination may sometimes be enchanted by hearing poems in such a way that they may go into raptures” (*Ibid.*, 102).

5.3. Intellectual Beauty

“There is one issue, which is perhaps raised primarily by Muslims, and that is the issue of intellectual *husn* and *qubh*. *Husn* means goodness and beauty, and *qubh* means badness and ugliness. There are natural beauties both in human beings and animals. But what does intellectual beauty mean? Intellectual *husn* and *qubh* means goodness and badness of such things that cannot be seen by eyes. Those things themselves are perceived by intellect, and their goodness or badness should also be perceived by intellect” (*Ibid.*, 342).

5.4. *Hearty Beauty*

“Indeed, the deepest meaning of beauty is observed in the heart. Man’s spirit unconsciously perceives the whole beauty and the source of beauty, which is God; and as a result finds His wishes and wills, which lead to our happiness, beautiful. In fact intellectual beauty and intellectual *husn* and *qubh* refer to hearty *husn* and *qubh*. Intellect is of category of perception and not of that of feeling. *Husn* is beauty and *qubh* is ugliness, and they both are of category of feeling which is related to heart, and not of that of perception which is related to intellect. Feeling is in fact concerned with heart. Since man perceives the beauty of what God wants from him in his inside, he finds whatever comes from God beautiful. Sa’di says in his poem:

‘I am happy in the world, because the world is happy of Him.

I am in love with the whole world, because the whole world is from Him” (motahhari, 131).

6. Relation of Beauty with Other Qualities of the Islamic City

If we classify qualities of the Islamic city according to the Islamic texts, in addition to “the Islamic city: the city of beauty”, to the twelve qualities of: city of manifestation of monotheism, city of servitude and worship, city of piety, city

of guidance, city of remembrance and thinking, city of justice, city of reform, city of gratitude, city of lesson, city of security, city of charity, and city of moderation, we can realize the relation of those twelve qualities with the quality of beauty in the Islamic city.

In other words, manifestation of each of those qualities in the Islamic city would manifest a facet of beauty - something with which we will deal more precisely later.

Islamic city is the city of manifestation of monotheism. There is a difference between *ahad* and *wahid*. For manifestation of monotheism in the Islamic city, one can speak of unities similar to *wahid* and not to *ahad* (Naghizadeh, 1378). Unity of nature, unity of society, unity of body of city and the like are of unities whose presence in the Islamic city is necessary in order to guide the society to the principal unity. Unity, however, is one manifestation of beauty; for, as an example, actualization of unity in the society is impossible without harmony, cooperation, agreement, and unanimity of people in the Islamic *umma*. Thus, such qualities as harmony, cooperation, and unanimity are synonymous with beauty and are considered as manifestations of beauty.

In surveying the quality of servitude and worship as a quality of the Islamic city, special consideration of ritual elements of the city, such as mosques and *hussainiyyas*, are

specifically emphasized (Naghizadeh, 1378). To achieve that purpose, it is necessary to take into special consideration such affairs as suitable space for mosques in planning the structure of city in such a way that identity of mosques is preserved. In survey of that quality of the Islamic city, it is also realized that a main way for actualization of servitude in the Islamic city is establishment of such qualities as harmony, symmetry, and symbolic architecture with a celestial spirit (which are all concepts of beauty) in the ritual elements and structure of the Islamic city.

Another quality of the Islamic city is piety. Piety can be defined as the agent of destroying the ground for committing sins (Naghizadeh, 1378). Concerning meaning and necessity of piety, Motahhari writes, "Piety in its general sense is a requisite of life of any individual who wishes to be a real human and follows the reason as well as specific principles. Religious, divine piety means that man should preserve himself from committing what is treated as fault, sin, and evil in the religion." Thus, it is clarified that a very notable way of expanding piety in the Islamic city is to avoid creating grounds for contact with fault, sin, and evil. It means that whatsoever contradicts beauty should be removed from the Islamic city.

Another quality of the Islamic city is remembrance and thinking. Naghizadeh holds that manifestation of that quality in

the Islamic city is possible through three following ways: a) continuous, close contact with the nature and natural elements, as well as consideration of God's unlimited power which cause remembrance in man; B) using Quranic verses alongside other arts in various places in the city; and c) applying such symbols that reflect spiritual meanings in the city.

Unconditional relation of those cases with beauty is considerable. Nature, with all of its beauties and wonders, indicates the absolute power of God. In addition to the beauty, establishing better relation between man and nature, as well as using Quranic verses in the city would be a cause for remembrance.

The concept of beauty exists in other qualities of the Islamic city such as justice, harmony, reform, security, charity, and moderation too. In other words, definitions presented for beauty contain such qualities, and that relation is so obvious that observation of the principle of mutual, unconditional, and deep relation between beauty and other qualities of the Islamic city is necessarily accepted. It means that for the actualization of an Islamic city, manifestation of the desirable beauty in Muslim's city necessitates manifestation of all recommendations and necessities of other qualities of the Islamic city.

7. Opposites of Beauty

Naturally, a very good way for knowing concepts and phenomena, especially those whose clear defining is impossible, is to introduce their opposites. Should we expound opposites of beauty on the basis of qualities of the Islamic city, more manifestations of opposites of beauty would appear. In other words, if we consider any act leading to the manifestation of an Islamic quality in the city as a synonym of beauty, its contrary will be an opposite of beauty:

Quality of Islamic City	Contrary to Quality of Islamic city
(Manifestation of Beauty)	(Opposite of Beauty)
manifestation of	diversity, hypocrisy,
monotheism	polytheism (Unity)
harmony	Disharmony
Gratefulness	Ingratitude
remembrance and thinking	Negligence
guidance	misleading and egoism
Servitude	polytheism and humanism
security	fear and insecurity
reform	Corruption
Justice	Injustice and cruelty
moderation	going to extremes, wastefulness

Piety	sin, evildoing
simplicity	ostentation, self-glorification
goodness	wickedness

Beauty in Traditional Cities

One quality of the Islamic city is “lesson.” Allama Ja’fari holds that separation from history and past is a very dark point in man’s life.

In learning lesson from the past, it should be noted that one should learn lesson from principles and values of the city in the past and not from its appearance; for, by using available methods and materials one may, and certainly can, find better ways for consideration of principles and values.

Manifestation of all qualities of the Islamic city (on the basis of Islamic teachings) in both inward and outward facets of the city manifests a feature of Islamic utopia to the mind. A city with those values has never appeared in any historical period, but by searching into traditional cities one can recognize many of them and learn lessons from them. In the past, they did not teach architectures, but trained architectures who were wayfarers too.

To clarify why recognition of high-leveled beauty recommended by Islam (which explains existence and manifestation of so many qualities of the Islamic city in both

inward and outward facets of the city) needs research into concepts, principles, and values remained from traditional cities, it seems necessary to compare “tradition” with “modernity”.

Since the purpose of this essay is not concentration on those concepts and their comparison, such a comparison would be made briefly. Contrary to those who consider tradition as being synonymous with oldness and obliteration, tradition means what is related to metaphysics and is rooted in the spirituality.

Defining tradition, Guenon says, “We absolutely avoid applying that name (tradition) to any affair with merely human characteristics” (Guenon, 38-9).

Nasr holds that tradition is perception of a truth which has a divine, eternal source and is continued throughout a human era through conveying the message of revelation. It also contains an inward truth which lies in the heart of various sacred forms, and also is unique (Nasr, 136).

On the contrary, modernism means negation of man’s spiritual, God-seeking dimensions. In their patterns, modernist thinkers, who hold humanistic thoughts, always try to hide and negate the relation with metaphysics and thereby make human-pivoted suggestions. That is why in most of their works, negation of spiritual dimension becomes evident sooner or later.

A comparison between traditional architecture and modern one clarifies fundamental differences of those two thoughts and, in addition, manifests the sublime beauty of traditional city-planning which is rooted in its spiritual, God-seeking teachings.

9. Comparison between Traditional and Modern Architecture and City-planning

Factors	Traditional Architecture & City-planning	Modern Architecture & City-planning
Inward	nature consideration people consideration God consideration	Mechanism humanism ego consideration
Outward	subtle Ordered simple	majestic Disordered complex

Existence of thriving gardens in the cities, benefiting from water and other natural manifestations in any space of the city, and religious buildings are some signs of traditional cities (especially those of Muslims). On the contrary, in modern cities it is machine that shapes dimensions, color, and everything else in the city without taking into consideration

spirituality and relation with the supreme world. That is why buildings and spaces in modern cities, built upon technology lacking God-seeking methods (in order to exaggerate man's power), lack spiritual beauty and only reflect transient beauty associated with wonder, which disappears very quickly.

Traditional cities are people-pivoted and the essence of cooperation and unity, including unity of man and natural environment, that of man and artificial environment, and that of nature and man-made objects, is absolutely observable in them. On the contrary, cities built upon modern thoughts are humanistic and lack qualities of cooperation, unity, and harmony; hence, they are not in conformity with criteria of the monotheistic city.

On the other hand, based upon spiritual, monotheistic thought, traditional spaces have a center or pole which refers to the eternity, heaven, and Creator of the universe, while, based upon a thought which negates centrality of metaphysics and proves humanism, modern spaces lack a spiritual center and refer merely to this-worldly powers and man's mundane needs.

Another difference of traditional and modern spaces is the mode of relation between man and his products. In traditional spaces, man is free from his products and reigns over them, while modern spaces are symbols of reign of products over man. Because of unity of their principles and essentials,

traditional spaces lead minds to the One and thereby cause concentration and peace of mind – something observable in simplicity and order of their subtle products. On the contrary, modern spaces cause disorder and anxiety of mind, for each part of them calls to itself.

In the end, it may be said that the main cause of beauty of traditional spaces is their closeness to man's nature. Traditional spaces awaken man's spirit to realize that there is an inward facet underneath this outward one, while modern spaces capture man and make him sink into materialistic appearances, whose result is nothing but negligence of the meaning of human life and nature.

Conclusions

What was explained in detail clarified the deep, mutual relation between quality of beauty and set of principles and values circulating in the Islamic city. In other words, each of qualities of the Islamic city is a manifestation of beauty on the one hand, and only a city can reflect the quality of "beauty on the basis of monotheistic principles" that contains all qualities of the Islamic city on the other.

According to that rational, mutual relation, it is concluded that whatever contradicts manifestation of those qualities in the city is considered among opposites of beauty. That is, qualities

of “diversity, hypocrisy, polytheism,” “disharmony, ingratitude,” “negligence,” “misleading and egoism,” “polytheism and humanism,” “fear and insecurity,” “corruption,” “injustice and cruelty,” “going to extremes, wastefulness,” “sin, evildoing,” “ostentation, self-glorification,” and “wickedness” are opposites of beauty, or of qualities of the Islamic city which are “manifestations of monotheism (unity),” “harmony,” “gratefulness,” “remembrance and thinking,” “guidance,” “servitude,” “security,” “reform,” “justice,” “moderation,” “piety,” “simplicity,” and “goodness” respectively.

In order to observe the quality of “lesson” in the Islamic city, it is recommended to study and research values and concepts hidden in traditional cities, for most qualities of the Islamic city are manifested in most Muslim, traditional cities whose research would assist us in knowing the beauty.

The Islamic city is of connection with nature; unity and cooperation are actualized among people throughout the city; peace and the beauty caused by them reign over the whole city; each building alongside its parts is in harmony with the natural environment and draws attention to the heavenly world; elegance of objects reflects perfection-seeking thoughts of city builders; beauty in the Islamic city is reflected in simplicity, sincerity, and equilibrium; and equilibrium in colors, visual

affairs, and sounds is another sign of that city. Finally, the Islamic city is the city of beauties, for God's remembrance is actualized in its planning and buildings. It is the city of beauty, for beauty is hidden in all qualities of the Islamic city both inwardly and outwardly.

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