



## The influence of architecture on society in the thought of Akhwan al-Safa

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### ABSTRACT

Attention to architecture in the thought of Akhwan al-Safa is based on the recognition of the place of geometry and numbers in their intellectual system. Akhwan al-Safa believes that geometry and numbers have priority over all other sciences. Their approach to geometry and architecture is such that it gives an identity of It is considered to be the accessories of their thought, therefore it is placed in the opposite point of modern and postmodern architecture, which, relying on the foundations of positivist philosophy, create works whose identity is obvious. propose that it displays the function of inducing pure mystical concepts such as the annihilation of multitudes in unity, and in the form of a symbolic language, conveys high Islamic concepts, some geometric shapes and some numbers in the intellectual system of the Brotherhood have a special value and property The forms do not have this characteristic, in the upcoming research, the criteria of Islamic architecture will be examined first, and then the Brotherhood's thought will be investigated and a correlation between the Brotherhood's thought and Islamic architecture will be made, in this research, with the descriptive and analytical method of library sources, The works of Akhwan al-Safa will be examined and the research questions will be answered.

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## 1. Introduction

Like the Platonists, Akhwan al-Safa considers the triangle to be the principle of geometric shapes and believes that the number "three" is related to the human soul. (Plato, 1988; Akhwan al-Safa, 1984, 1:91) This theory is based on the fact that the number "one" is the principle of all numbers, and they also consider all "lines" to be composed of "points" and also consider "surfaces" to be composed of lines and all bodies are composed of are from the surface. (Akhwan al-Safa, 1984, 1:91; Ashtiani, 2018: 5) In the pre-modern era, man had a "single identity" that was sent to him by God, but in the modern era, by asking about his "identity", he moved himself towards finding out the divine identity. (Hujjat, 2005: 58-60) Therefore, the "identity" in the pre-modern era was single and completely divine. For this reason, the pre-modern world is also called the world of "unity ."In accordance with the society's demand for identity, architecture, which is one of the signs of the emergence of thought in society, became divine and assumed a "state of unity" and was not pluralistic as it is today. Also, architecture in the pre-modern era was more functional and had a reliable and beautiful function for human dignity.

In the modern era, the search for "identity" is different from the pre-modern era. Modern man changed his way of looking at the world and existence, his way of looking at "himself" and "universe" also changed, so his way of looking at economy, industry and religion also changed. We call these principles the principles of modernism. The big change that occurred in the view of man in this era was that "man" was changed to "substitute for God." (Naghizadeh, 2000: 81) The famous theory which believes that the crisis of "identity" is the crisis of "inversion of the world" and "shifting of man and God" also belongs to this period. (Hujjat, 2005: 60) Considering that "identity" becomes a crisis when it undergoes serious changes, the issue of society's transition from traditional to modern can be one of these factors. (Qutabi, 2007: 80) Modern reason should be at the service of man, but it captured him in "machine life" and turned his human characteristics into something secondary and unreal. (Mahdavinejad, 2009: 9).

## 2. Methodology

The problem investigated here is to extract the opinions of Akhwan al-Safa about the influence of architecture on society, and in order to clarify their views on this issue, as an introduction, the position of architecture in Islamic thought will be investigated, and then the influence of architecture on society will be investigated. The idea of Akhwan al-Safa will be discussed. In this research, the research problem has been investigated using the analytical method and using library tools.

## 3. Findings

Akhwan al-Safa believe that geometry has two parts: sensory and intellectual. They started the first booklet of the collection of works on the subject of mathematics with the title "Number".(Akhwan al-Safa, 1984, 1:48) They believe that the science of numbers is ahead of all sciences due to its impact on all sciences. They believe that the science of numbers is the way to reach God's monotheism and supernatural wisdom, and as numbers are formed from the number one, all numbers return to the number one. (Ibid, 3: 200) They also believe that the creation of beings is based on numbers and the number system, and just as all numbers are based on the number one, they believe that the entire creation system is based on the number one. They know the nature of things based on numbers. Therefore, the number is also considered the origin of knowledge and the first science. (Ibid: 13) Also, like the Platonists, they consider the triangle to be the root of all geometric shapes and believe that the number "three" also represents the human spirit in a way. (Plato, 1988: 1869; Akhwan al-Safa, 1984, 1: 91) Akhwan al-Safa believes that the geometric shape of "triangle" is the basis of all straight lines. This theory is based on the fact that the number "one" is the principle of all numbers, and they also consider all "lines" to be composed of "points" and also consider "surfaces" to be

composed of lines and all bodies are composed of They know about the surface. (Akhwan al-Safa, 1984, 1: 91; Ashtiani, 2018: 5) The same problem has been influential in the architectural geometry of Akhwan al-Safa. Two types of thinking have influenced the thinking of Akhwan al-Safa on this issue. One is the schools of thought of the Pythagoreans, Neoplatonists, and Hermesians, and the second factor that has made an impact is Islamic monotheistic thinking. In every influential factor, the world is considered as a "integrated whole" that there is no way of separation between meaning and nature, and human spirit and body. (Delavari, 2004: 118) In the modern period, the architect's attention to the appearance of the building caused the separation of architecture and building from "meaning". (Nesbit, 2016: 73) This type of architecture was called "International Style", which is related to function and destroys human identity. Ignoring cultural differences in the world is one of the characteristics of modern architecture. (Mahdavinejad, 2009: 8) The harmony of this type of geometry with the "identity" of man makes the relationship between "man" and "environment" continue and is effective in the spiritual growth of man. Akhwan al-Safa believes that the whole world was created on the basis of geometry and a special order has coordinated all the parts of the world with each other. He starts his statement from the creation of the primary elements and until the creation of the four vital elements of the human body, they consider everything based on a precise geometric system. (Akhwan al-Safa, 1984, 1: 250-254)



*Picture No. 1 - modern architecture (international style)*

The relationship between geometric shapes and meaning is very strong. Every art and every geometric shape shows the concept and meaning that leads to the artist's intention of that composition. If the architecture does not have geometric balance, its impact is different from the architecture that has balance. The connection between the art of architecture and religious thoughts is shown in some forms and architectures of the Islamic era, which not only does not distract the viewer from thinking about the order of the universe, but also evokes the system and order of the creation of creatures from the Almighty God. The manifestation of the system of creation, from God to the weakest level of existence, can be seen in Islamic art, the motifs and shapes that have concentrated geometry express the issue of "many" from "one" and the need for "many" to "unity", these shapes in Islamic architecture are Wide faces are seen.



Picture No. 2- Islamic architecture

#### 4. Conclusion

From the perspective of Akhwan al-Safa, Islamic architecture is said to be an architecture that instills meaning and identity. It means to have the conditions to instill sacred concepts into the society. The architecture of the Islamic period also qualifies for giving religious meaning. There are examples that Akhwan al-Safa consider them to give meaning and instill religious identity in architecture. The shape of "triangle", "point", the representation of "multitudes around the axis of unity" and the shape of "bee nest" are among the things that can be a good tool in inducing religious identity. Akhwan al-Safa's way of looking at numbers is the quality of the number, not its quantity; Therefore, it is also consistent with Islamic mystical thinking. They start education from numbers and believe that due to the similarity of the existence system with the number system, the best starting point is the number system. Their way of looking at geometry and its place in the educational system shows that they do not separate geometry from other sciences and they consider it a theological nature. This issue is related to the fact that they believe that learning geometry and the science of numbers is a way to know nature and the universe, ultimately leading to the knowledge of the Almighty God. His way of looking at "architecture", "geometry" and "science of numbers" has caused architecture to be fundamentally different from modern architecture in this type of thinking. Influencing society is one of the functions of geometry and architecture of Akhwan al-Safa. The concepts of "equality", "privacy" and "privacy" are among the concepts that have their roots in ethics, geometry and mathematics of Akhwan al-Safa.

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