THE ISLAMIC HOUSE

“A Mystic ‘Sufi’ Interpretation”

イスラムの住宅
神秘（スフィーズム）の解釈

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Unfortunately most of the modern studies about the traditional houses, especially the Islamic house, deal only with the physical aspects of the research neglecting the inward dimension. As an example, this paper is an attempt to disclose the mystical ‘Sufi’ interpretation of the Islamic house shedding lights on the importance of the relationship between the Islamic house and the inward realm of Islam. It posits that forms are symbols that reflect inner meanings and celestial archetypes. Few comparative points, between the Islamic and Japanese houses, have been presented to enrich and widen the prospect of this paper. It should be mentioned also that this paper is a summary of one part of a wide study that hold a comprehensive spiritual and physical comparison between the Islamic and Japanese architectures, arts, societies and philosophies written by the author as a fruit of six year of intensive academic work.

Keywords : Islamic house, Sufism, Religio-architectural comparison
イスラムの住宅, スフィーズム, 精神の建築的比較

The Initiation

The house is not a machine to live in; it is rather a living sanctuary that reflects and portrays the innermost realm of man’s belief and social structure! For the Eastern religions, particularly Islam, worship is not limited to a few rituals that performed at a definite time or place, instead the concept of worship is very wide that covers all life’s activity, therefore any action becomes a worship! A house, hence is the whole life’s temple of a traditional man, whereas the official sanctuary is for a time-limited official rituals, “Exactly like the city or the sanctuary, the house is sanctified...by a cosmological symbolism or ritual...The house is not an object; it is the universe that man constructs for himself by imitating the paradigmatic creation of gods, the cosmogony,” Mircea EliadeⅢ.

The method of approach adopted considers architectural forms and spaces as symbols impregnated with meanings that reach far beyond their functional uses and historical implications. They are the media, through which man was able to externalize his belief, and fuse his built-form with higher cosmological realities. Coomaraswamy concluded: “Religious art is simply a visual theology.” Ⅲ

Undoubtedly the traditional house is a piece of religious art more than anything else. The nature, rituals and philosophy of any traditional belief deeply affect the form and style of its house, to the extent that one can understand, for example, Islam, Christianity, or Buddhism in the housesⅣ of their followers!

1. PrototypeⅤ

The basic form of Islamic houseⅣ issues out of a central fountain (water) that is surrounded by an open
Fig. 1 The similarity between the prototypes of the Kaba and the Islamic house.

space (court), then by a portico or directly by perforated wall, after that by a closed space (rooms), and finally by an outside bare wall. Therefore, it is essentially a source of water 'Essence' that captures 'Heaven', surrounded by a central 'Void' that speaks about 'Nothingness' or 'Inwardness', which is veiled by an introverted space 'Corporeality' or 'Outwardness' reflecting the realm of 'Being'. In other words, the house is a mass and a space, or 'body' and 'soul'. The inhabitants represent 'spirit' which is the locus of Divine's revelation and manifestation. The 'soul', 'void' or 'court' animates the entire 'body' or 'mass'. The 'soul' links 'body' to nature and to Divine at the same time; without these two kinds of links 'body' or 'mass' is dead. Allah says: "The first house appointed for men was that of Mecca: full of blessing and of guidance for all kinds of beings." This Quranic verse and the basic layout of the Kaba draw our attention to the clear similarity between the prototypes of the Islamic house and the Kaba. The Kaba is an inner 'Void', veiled by a primeval cubic of stone, then surrounded again by a discernible 'Void', to be finally enclosed by a closed space. The central cubic and its veiled 'Void' symbolizes Allah's Transcendency and Presence, which are veiled by a stone wall that represents the essence of 'Being'. The platonic form of the Kaba is reflected in the central, regular court and its fountain which reflects heaven on its twinkling surface, "His Throne was over the water."  

The Surrounding space, perceptible 'Void' of the Kaba is reflected in the central open space of the Islamic house which symbolizes the realm of 'Inwardness', in Arabic 'Al-batin'. The realm of 'Inwardness' is fathomable only by those how are allowed to enter. The surrounding closed space of both the Kaba and of the Islamic house is the corporeal veil 'al-Zaher' of the realm of 'Inwardness' and of the Presence of Allah. That is to say that Allah's Omnipresent Presence (Unity) is veiled by the realm of His creation (Multiplicity). Man in order to know Him has to trascend the realm of illusional outwardness. The closed corporeal space of the house symbolizes the whole creation or 'Multiplicity'. As well, the position of the 'Void' or 'Unity' at the very center of 'Multiplicity' reflects the symbolic central Presence of Allah before His creation. Allah says in a famous Tradition "Neither my Throne nor my Heaven could dwell me, but the heart of my sincere believer does dwell Me". Man's heart here stands allegorically for the 'Void' of the Kaba and the 'Void' of the Islamic house, alluring the fact that for every 'Outwardness' there is an 'Inwardness' that veils a more essential truth. Fig. 1.

2. Development and Style

The basic concepts of the Islamic house, such as the concepts of 'Introversion', 'Unpretentiousness', 'Inner Compartmentalization', 'Centrality', 'Aniconism', 'Spatial Subdivision', 'Multi-Uses' or 'Unfurnishing' have witnessed no essential changes during history, since they are the outcome of some
basic religious concepts which remain without change from the beginning of Islam. Nevertheless the
details of the Islamic house, such as the techniques and use of building materials and structural system,
the patterns of decoration, the style of the vaulting or the arches, or the form of openings have been
subjected to many developments all over the Islamic world, since only the details of the Islamic
teachings 'Jurisdiction', 'Fiqh' in Arabic, are allowed to be developed according to the differences of
region, or time.

Although the Islamic influence spread over a large number of countries, nowhere did it attempt to
forcibly impose one rigid style of architecture, while the Roman or Greece architecture did. It is almost
impossible to find two identical mosques or houses all over the Islamic world, while it is very common
to come across many similar Roman or Greek temples and houses all over the world. Everywhere Islam
went it took the fullest advantage of the useful regional architectural practices and heritage. Nevertheless
this tolerance never created an unlinked style of architecture, on the contrary Islam, by unifying the
basic principles, managed to create an art and architecture that are unmistakably distinguishable as
Islamic in spite of its bewildering diversity.

In a brief comparison, Japanese house\(^1\) and architecture showed a high degree of stereotypy and
typicality all over Japan. This architectural repetitiveness is evident and universal at the level of basic
concepts, and as well as at the level of architectural details. It developed because the government set
and enforced all the architectural details and concepts for each class in society. In fact, all aspects of
Japanese life were completely regimentized during the authoritarian period of Tokugawa.

That comprehensive standardization of life uniformed all aspects of life, down to the smallest detail of even
closing or speech. Stereotypy or repetitiveness became a national trait of the Japanese and their
products\(^2\). Whereas Islamic stereotypy is evident only at the level of general concepts, the details,
always, have shown a great individualistic diversification. There were no strict building regulations for
Islamic architecture. It is the responsibility of every individual to decide by himself the shape and
design of his house, but without violating the general rules of Islam and the right of others. The role of
authority is to guarantee the righteous application of the Divine Law and the non-violation of the right of
others by any citizen. In order to understand the spiritual justifications for that allow me to use these
expressive words: \(^3\) "Islam requires that each individual stand on his own merit and be responsible directly to
the Supreme God. There is no intermediary in this process, and individuals must make decisions on their own and
also must take the consequences of the decisions alone. It is this attitude of life that permeated the individuality of
architecture within the overall commonality of forms. This has a direct bearing on why standard dimensions or
standard forms of spaces and plans have never been developed for everyone to follow."

3. The Introversion\(^4\) or Inwardness

Geometrically the process of creation started, according to Sufi cosmology, when the 'Point'
 exteriorized itself by engendering the 'First Line', and later the 'Line' rotated to define the 'First Circle'
or 'Plane', after that the 'Circles' or 'Volume' (Multiplicity) created. Initially, the centrifugal power of the
'Point' was the cause of the exteriorization, and this in itself is a manifestation to its presence,
livelihood and power. This geometrical process is the reflection of a famous Tradition "Allah says, I was
a Hidden Treasure, I wished to be know, therefore I created the world to be Known." Symbolically, the
universal central fountain of the Islamic house, or the courtyard itself, is a reflection to the 'Point'. The
water of the fountain, which is the essence of livelihood, "From water We made every living thing."
\(^5\), is always gushing forth centrifugally; Fig. 2. The symbolic centrifugal power of water specifies first, a
surrounding 'Void', then a corporeal existence, that is to say a courtyard surrounded by rooms. This
manifestation speaks, like any other Islamic manifestation, about the centrality or introversion of
Islam. Everything is engendering from the Center and is returning, at the same time, to this Center,
"To Allah we belong and to Him is our return."\(^6\) The Islamic house starts from its center, and is wholly
looking back to its center. It takes its light and air from its center 'courtyard', similar to the dependence
of the 'First Line' and 'Circles' on the 'Point.' Without the courtyard or the 'Point' their dependents would cease to be exist. Moreover the effect of the centrifugal power of the house's center dose not only affect the overall arrangement but it also exerts its internal pressure on the spaces and the walls of the house. It pushes out every wall creating different kinds of external and internal protrusions\(^{29}\). The higher the wall, the deeper the protrusion is. Fig.3.

By creating various kinds of protrusions and recessions in every space, the Muslim builder has tried to soften or subdivide the challenging effect of any standard geometrical volume. The huge spaces of mosques have been subdivided by introducing a large number of columns, arches, and other motifs. The interior spaces of rooms have been also subdivided by creating a lot of recessions and projections on every wall. The overall urban forms of Islamic cities are avoiding the supremacy of single standard forms. Even the vertical spatial effect of any interior or exterior facade is softened by covering it with aniconic, subdivided patterns of decoration. Muslim's spiritually feels that the large standard geometrical space is too corporeal, blatantly challenging, and inhuman, therefore he has saved no effort to subdivide it, to humiliate it, to reduce it to 'Nothingness'. Fig.3.

In a comparative glance, the Japanese builder has demonstrated, almost, the opposite concept of space. He has created standard geometrical spaces wherever he built. He has tried to emphasize the purity and distinctness of the standard geometric forms of space by all kinds of means. He has deployed sliding doors, screens and windows everywhere, that start from ceiling to end at floor, so the geometrical purity remains whether they be open, ajar or closed, unlike hinged openings which destroy the geometrical exactness when ajar. He has hidden every closet or recession in a room by using sliding doors that look exactly like any other wall to keep overall spatial standardization. He is overwhelmingly inclined to show a perpendicular net of strait lines on all the interior and exterior facades of space accentuating, therefore the exactness of volumes. There is no doubt that the nature of the wooden structural system has lead to such an approach of design, but also the basic philosophy of Buddhism has given the spiritual interpretation and motivation for this two-dimensional, pure and contemplative atmosphere.

These two different approaches of spatial comprehension in Japanese and Islamic cultures clarify the linear motion of Buddhism as a contradiction to the introvert, Unitarian centrality of Islam. Buddhism starts its way essentially from the realm of Multiplicity, therefore its movement has to assume the shape of line in order to reach, after that, higher realms of realities. The line to be exteriorized needs two-dimensional realm. Whereas Islam starts from the central 'Point' and is returning to it in order to reach higher realms of realities, therefore its movement dose not needs any manifestations; it is from
‘Oneness’ to ‘Oneness’, or from ‘Nothingness’ to ‘Nothingness’. It is the realm of sentimental and contemplative naturalism which creates the ideal space for Buddhist contemplation and enlightenment. While the realm of inward, ‘unnaturalism’ or ‘aniconism’ creates the Islamic space of worship and meditation. As well as, the strict social stratification of the Japanese society has lead to the use of strict geometrical forms in Japanese city’s urban form and in the design of space. But the basic equality of Islamic society produced the spontaneous, biological shape of Islamic city and its urban forms.

4. The Unpretentiousness of The Exterior
Allah says: “Verily Allah loves not the arrogant.” (8) “Soon will Allah produce a people whom He will love as they will love Him, lowly with the believers.” (9) The teaching of Islam has rigidly rebuked all kinds of arrogance and ostentation and assured the virtue of humility and humbleness in all aspects of life. One direct consequence of this ideal is the universal unpretentiousness of the Islamic architecture in general and the Islamic house in particular. One may find many exceptions to this trait at some public buildings but almost never in residential architecture. Houses should show no exterior ostentation because they represents directly their owners who should be lowly with all other members in society(10).

The Japanese house, in comparison, is neither pretentious nor humble, it is logical, frank and honest. It shows clearly its structural members and hide not the properties of its building materials. Nevertheless, it retains some external parts, such as the entrance, which express the identity and status of its owner. Spiritually, Buddhism and Islam emphasize the virtues of simplicity and humbleness, and the evils of ostentation and arrogance. However from an architectural viewpoint those precepts have been generally more preserved in the Islamic world, regarding the exterior, since the individualistic interior is decorated whereas they have become more emphasized in Japan, regarding the interior, by adopting the policy of interior fixture’s standardization, i.e. the use of standard mats, screens, modules and the likes.

5. The Harmony of Opposites

“The harmony of opposites is the principle of this world,” Al-Rumi(11) The form of the courtyard ‘house’s soul’ is always regular ‘archetypal’ in contrast with the usual irregularity of its mass ‘house’s body’. The regularity of the courtyard reflects its static, archetypal and introverted nature; it reveals space while fixing time. Whereas the irregularity of body symbolizes its corporeality, temperance and motion; it compresses space and implies time. The house in its completeness shows a unique harmony between its regularity and its irregularity; it gathers the opposites reflecting the universal unity and harmony of the Yin and Yang principles of beings. Through this notion the house reminds us more of Allah in accordance with the famous Sufi saying by Al-Kharraz “I have known God by His gathering of the opposites.” Always we should remember the essential Islamic doctrine that everything created by Allah, or made by man, should reminds man, before all, of Allah and makes man’s journey towards Allah more steady and perceivable. The most fundamental testimony in Islam “No god but Allah” gathers two opposites a ‘negation’ and an ‘affirmation’. Allah attributes also gathers opposites, He is ‘The Inward’ and ‘The Outward’, ‘The First’ and ‘The Last’, ‘The One Who Folds’ and ‘The One Who Unfolds’ and so on. Similarly, the realm of Allah’s creation gathers opposites since it is a manifestation of His Names. Fig. 4

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Fig. 4 From the regularity of Divine’s manifestation to the irregularity of the world.

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6. The Archetypal Folding and Unfolding of Space

The Arabic term of 'courtyard' is 'al-fana' means 'annihilation'. In Sufi terms 'al-fana' is the highest state which should be attained by any seeker of Allah. It is the state of complete 'annihilation' or 'nothingness', wherein spirit can feel the Presence of Allah most profoundly. Symbolically the court is simultaneously the point of 'annihilation' of all space and time and the 'return' to primordial reality; while at the same time being the point whereof space and time unfold. It is the point of unfolding the unity of the house and folding it back up again, reflecting the Sufi notion of the instantaneous eradication and recreation of all Beings, and the doctrines of 'Unity in Multiplicity' and 'Multiplicity in Unity'.

7. The Tranquility of Yin-Yang Integration

"It is Allah who hath given you in your houses an abode of peace and tranquillity." The Arabic word for 'house' is 'Sakan' or 'Maskan' which carry the meanings of tranquillity, peace and integration. These characteristics of the Islamic house is boasted upon it by Allah according to the previous Quranic verse, It is a kind of sanctification of house, or a kind of injecting it by the Divine Mercy. Moreover this tranquillity is also achieved by the symbolic and physical integration or unity of the masculine and feminine principles of its constituents. It is an integration between the feminine soul of the court and the masculine body of the mass, which reflects the unity between wife and here husband. Peace and tranquillity can be achieved by the integration of the two separated, anxious poles of any duality; Allah says "And among His Signs is this, that He created for you mates from yourselves, so that ye may dwell (integrate) in tranquillity with them, and He has put love and mercy between you: verily in that are Signs for those who reflect." Therefore we should understand that the tranquillity and peace of house are special grants from Allah that spiritualize the residential space. The Islamic house becomes the ideal place wherein a Muslim can contemplate, worship, and feel the Presence of Allah in his very life. In Islam the life should be a kind of continuous worship of Allah, and should be conducted according to Allah Law. Any action, whatsoever, can be a kind of prayer depending on the intention of the doer.

8. The Presence of Man

The Quran has repeated the use of the words 'Sakan' and 'Bayt', which mean 'house', and their derivations several times. These words were usually accompanied by the meanings of tranquillity, peace, revelation and integration. They frequently repeated to indicates their residents, not their physical existence as structures, making the inhabitants essential constituents of their houses. If they are just and on the Straight Path of Allah their houses become alive and flourish. The unjust houses are doomed to ruin since piety is the way to survival. In a word, "The house is its inhabitants." The presence of man is also important at the Japanese house. The geometrical bareness of the Japanese space make it lifeless without human participation. Man physical attendance gives space its meaning and essence. Space is not designed for itself, as the case with modern architecture, but man becomes the essential essence of space. One is inclined to say that the integrity between man and space is outwardly important for the Japanese house, whereas it is inwardly essential for the Islamic house.

9. The Biological Compactness of Residential Fabric

Prophet Mohammed said: "The relationship between believer and believer is like the closely packed buildings of a city fabric, supporting one another." and said "None of you has right to prevent his neighbor from inserting the wooden joists of his house in the wall of his neighbor." These teachings have directly encouraged and praised the compactness of the urban fabric. Houses of all kinds of people are packed with each other reflecting the equality and the brotherhood of community. "A single residential unit does not have any meaning on its own, it takes its meaning only within the group, a result which speaks for itself about the social meaning behind the urban form." From outside, houses are compacted, unpretentious and widely
similar to each other, reflecting the basic equality of all members of society. People are equal bondsmen of Allah, and each of them will stand for his account equally and individually before Him. However the overall shapes of houses are different, since they reflect the different personality and needs of every individual. This is the basic factor for creating the biological shape of the urban fabric. It is also a prove to the absence of building regulations, caste system or governmental regimentation of society, in contrast with the Japanese case. Fig. 5.

10. The Accretive Nature of House

"Proverbially, the Islamic house is never complete; as each extended family grows, so does the house, thereby reflecting the history, accumulated growth and family structure of a number of generations." House construction usually starts by building a high wall around the plot, then by deciding the place and size of the central courtyard, and lastly by erecting rooms around the court. The number of the built rooms is related with the size of the family at the time of construction, but with the gradual increase of members, the number of rooms increases.

In comparison, the Japanese house, like the Islamic house, is also never completed. It grows with the increase of wealth or members, but the form of growth is not central, like the Islamic house, it is a linear or step-like increase. However both of them reflect the social concept of the extended big family wherein family’s members live together in harmony and full cooperation. Again here the fluent step-like growth of the Japanese house indicates the linear motion of Buddhism, while the central compartmentalized growth of the Islamic house hints at the introverted motion of Islam. Fig. 6.

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Fig. 5 The biological compactness of the urban fabric.

Fig. 6 The central growth of the Islamic house and the linear growth of the Japanese house.
11. The Question of Privacy

The rooms of the Islamic house are designed as independent cells to assure the complete compartmentalization and privacy of every single room in a house. Privacy is praised not only between the family and the outside world, but also between the members of the family itself. For example it is religiously ordered that parents have to hide their private life from children's sight, husband's guests should not see or mix with house's women, female children are not allowed to sleep in one space with male children, and every adult in a family should not expose his or her complete body to others. This individualistic, religious privacy has lead to the full compartmentalization of the Islamic house to create private enclosures for every individual.

Comparatively, the previous characteristic stands in total contradiction with the concept of a single open space of the Japanese house. Space in the Japanese house is fluent, unprivat and unifying. All spaces can be made one single space in accordance with the wide authority of the head of the family, and due to the insignificance of exterior or interior privacy. "Nobody knocks before entering, for there are but paper panels against which audible knocking would have destructive consequences. No vices nor virtues can be hidden, for there is absolutely nowhere to hide them. Relationship between members of the family necessarily has to be very frank with little regard for the difference of sex, either in undressing or sleeping or in taking the hot bath. Homes of the middle and lower classes open upon public streets and, whenever weather permits, the fronts and perhaps even the sides are literally removed, leaving the interior widely open to the air, the light, and the public gaze. It appears almost as if the exposure of private life, have been experienced from infancy on, has never made the individual feel a need for privacy, and it is therefore not surprising that no word exists for 'privacy' in the Japanese language."

From another viewpoint, the Islamic house is designed basically for women, to protect her and to provide her with most of her life necessities, therefore it has a clear feminine atmosphere. On the contrary the Japanese house is designed basically for man and for answering his work and life needs, therefore it has an evident masculine atmosphere. We have to remember here that women is the symbol of inwardness 'al-batin', or 'spirit', whereas man is the symbol of outwardness 'al-zaher' or 'body'.

12. The Multiple-Uses and Unfurnishing of Space

The rooms of Islamic house are functionally polyvalent and can be used interchangeably for eating, sleeping or recreation. This flexible use of living space is reflected in the absence of cumbersome items of furniture. Niches, consoles, built beds and divans, and stored chests replace most of furniture articles. The residents use rags, carpets, mats and cushions for sitting, strawtrays for eating, and mattresses for sleeping. All of those items of furniture are stored when the time of using finished. The ritual of communal prayer in Islam, which needs a large open space to be fulfilled, has contributed to the development and preference of unobstructed rooms.

The residents eat, work, write and...while assuming different sitting postures. This practice developed because the most important ritual in Islam, prayer, does include different sitting postures which make them the preferential attitudes in all activities of life. The residential space, regarding the above points, is designed to provide for man spiritual anxieties more than his physical needs. It is interesting to notice drastic similarities, at these points, between the Islamic and Japanese houses. The similarity between the Islamic and Buddhist teachings of the virtue of simple and abstinent life has lead to the fantastic resemblance from the viewpoints of sitting attitudes, unfurnished spaces, and multi-useability of spaces.

13. Final Comparative Glimpse

In general, the basic design concepts of Islamic house are: centrality, introversion, unpretentiousness of the exterior, the importance of privacy, and the environmental, climatic and regional adaptability. These characteristics, almost, stand in complete contradiction with the basic traits of the
Japanese houses, which are: the step-like, asymmetrical or linear overall allocation, exteriority or openness, the pretentiousness of the exterior, the unimportance of privacy, the non-regional adaptability, and the semi-climatic responsiveness. The differences between the basic characteristics of the Japanese and Islamic houses are resulted not only from environmental differences but also from religious and social differences. Islam is the religion of 'Center', 'Unity' or 'Oneness' and thus centrality is a universal phenomena that engulfs everything; whereas Buddhism is the religion of 'Line' or 'Multiplicity' and therefore the phenomenon of linear motion covers every Buddhist product. In other words God in Islam is 'Nothingness', while Buddha is every 'Thingness'. Therefore Islam's motion has to be towards the central Inwardness, while Buddhism motion has to assume the shape of two-dimensional 'Line' to be able engulf, contemplatively, the realm of 'Multiplicity'. Islam is something from Heaven to earth then back to Heaven, while Buddhism is something from earth, aspiring for Heaven. Islam is a spirituality that is looking for an earthly credibleness; Buddhism is a philosophy that is striving to have a spiritual confirmation.

In conclusion I hope that I shed some lights on the important relationship between the house of traditional man and the inward philosophy of his belief. Islamic house, here, has been brought as an example, whereas the comparative remarks have been presented, not to fully disclose the symbolism of the Japanese house, but rather to give some hints and suggestion, and as well to increase the challenge and the uniqueness. This paper is an appeal for every modern architect to view architecture not as a mechanical process but as a spiritual process that affects man's inner being before anything else.

Notes
3) This study is a summary of one section of a wide research written by the author titled: [THE ISLAMIC AND JAPANESE ARTS, ARCHITECTURES, SOCIETIES, AND PHILOSOPHIES; A MYSTICAL ENCOUNTER], Kyoto Institute of Technology, 1993. This paper have only concentrated on the Islamic house without fully explaining the spiritual properties of Japanese house, save few comparative remarks brought as explanatory conclusions.
4) This paper is a prototypical or archetypal presentation of facts. It is a conclusion to an actual field-study that covers many existed Islamic and Japanese houses. However for the sake of briefness and comprehensivity this paper has not brought any examples, since it thinks that almost any common Islamic or Japanese town-house is appropriate to be an example for the discussed archetypes.
5) For more accuracy, this study is handling the courtyard style of the Islamic house which basically prevails in the middle Eastern and South African regions.
6) In the Islamic cosmology every existence is divided into three parts: 1-the outward part represented through 'form'; 2-the inward part represented by the 'soul'; and 3-the Divine part represented by 'spirit'.
7) The Quran 96/2.
8) The Kaba is a cubic stone structure situated in Mecca. It is the universal liturgical direction of prayer in Islam.
9) The Quran 8/11.
10) Sufi cosmology has deeply dealt with the notion of the ontological hierarchy of existence.
11) The reason for the choice of the Japanese and Islamic worlds for comparison out of all others have been widely explained at the introduction of the wide mentioned study, however to mention just a one reason one may say that both of the of the worlds represent the extreme poles of the East, from an artistic, theological and social view points, a fact makes the comparison very interesting, and useful in bridging the gap between the two worlds.
12) See for example, Anesaki, Masaharu [ART, LIFE, AND NATURE IN JAPAN], pp. 144—145, Tuttle, 1984.
15) The Quran 21/30.
16) The Quran 1/156.

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和文要約

本稿は、「スフィズム」の神秘性の解釈を通して、イスラムの住宅とイスラムの精神世界との関係を見極めることを目的とする。イスラムと日本の住宅との比較を、考察の方法として採用した。

イスラムの住宅の基本構成は、中央の泉とそれを囲む中庭、そのまわりのポーティックあるいは開口部を持つ壁、その外側に配置された諸室、さらに最も外側の壁によって成立する。これらは核となる中央の水が天上界を写し出し、それを囲むオープンスペースが「无」あるいは「内面性」を表現しており、その外側を「存在」の領域に対する「物質的」あるいは「外的」な空間が囲んでいると理解できる。すなわち住宅は「実体」と「空間」、または「肉体」と「精神」という相対すると二項から成るということができ、住人は神の啓示が顕われる場所の精神を体現できる者と位置付けられよう。

スフィズムの世界観によれば、大地創造の過程はある時が包まれることに始まり、その点より生じた線分が回転することにより平面を生み、最後に空間が作られたと説明されている。イスラムの住宅における中央の泉はその「点」を象徴し、それを囲む庭園は線分の回転によって生じる平面を象徴する。住宅の「精神性」を象徴する中庭の規則正しい形態は、その周囲の「物質性」を象徴する歪んだ空間と相対関係を成すが、これは陰と陽、女性と男性の対応関係に似た相互補完的な関係を成し、これにより住宅は調和を保った統一を成功させている。

イスラムの住宅の特徴である中心性・精神性・ひかえめな外観・プライバシーの重視・宗教的整合性・環境適応性などの考え方は、日本の住宅における空間の階層性・左右対称性・直線的な部屋の配置・開放性・外観の装飾性・プライバシーの軽視・宗教的非整合性・環境に対する不完全な整合性などと比較すると対照的である。これらの基本的性質の相違は、環境的差異だけでなく宗教的かつ社会的差異の結果である。すなわちイスラム教は、中心性・統一性・絶対性を特徴とし、宇宙のあらゆる現象を内包しているのに対し、仏教は直線的であり多様性を特徴とする。イスラムの神は無であるのに対し、仏陀はあらゆる实在性を表す。イスラム教の信仰が中心に対する内向性を指向するのに対し、仏教の信仰は現象によって、多様性の領域を内包する三次元の直線的な形態を取る。

これらの考察を通じて、イスラムの住宅における建築形態と象徴的要素が、イスラム教的天上世界と精神性の反映であるとする仮説を提示した。