

# Performance in architecture according to the thoughts of Louie Kan and Walter Gropious

Esmaeeli Boukani Farid<sup>1</sup>, Golabi Bayazid<sup>2</sup>

1. Master degree of architecture, Islamic Azad University, Mahabad unit

2. Faculty member, architecture group, Mahabad unit, Islamic Azad University, Mahabad, Iran

**Abstract:** what nowadays we call performance is the result of theoretical definitions in the opinions and theories of architectures and pundits of the architecture theorizing history and especially in twenty century. Thinking in the quiddity of this concept and understanding its real meaning need to study its quiddity in the opinions of elders who have had main share in transformation of fundamental concepts of architecture theorizing. (Sofeh magazine/ the performance concept in Louie Kan thought/Gharibpour, Afra). This article tries that with studying the theories of ((Louie Kan)) and ((Walter Gropious)) about architecture, study and explain the quiddity of performance concept in their opinions. In the first part, the thoughts of Louie Kan about architecture are studied. In this part, according to the fundamental words and phrases that Louie himself has applied them and studying his theoretical views, philosophic substructure of his thought about architecture is interpreted and according to the thoughts of Louie Kan about architecture, it is tried that the performance concept to be interpreted and explained. In the second part, the thoughts of Gropious about architecture performance are studied. In this part, according to the theories of Gropious and the goals of Bauhaus school in the field of architecture performance and practical arts, also reconciling and relation of architecture with industrial designing are studied. And finally the differences and similarities of these two architects in their thought and style are studied.

**Key words:** architecture, theoretical bases, performance, Louie Kan, Walter Gropious, Bauhaus school

## Introduction:

The performance word is one of the most familiar words in architecture topics and a concept which is stated by this word is considered as the main governing on the quiddity of architecture. The meaning of what is called ((performance)) in architecture domain is debtor to the ancient history as old as the total of architecture theorizing history.

The performance not only is an independent and effective concept, but also it is a dependent concept and its quiddity is originated from the quiddity of architecture concept. Nowadays the necessity of proposing the question is not so clear from the quiddity of the performance meaning.

But thinking in this concept and a relation which is established with architecture proposes this question that truly what is the performance meaning? The first step in responding to this question is to return to the past of this concept and the opinions of the architecture elders and thinkers about this concept, because what nowadays we know in terms of performance is the result of theories and opinions of architects and architecture thinkers in protracted centuries. In studying the past opinions, thinking in the opinions of architects and thinkers of twenty century about architecture and performance concept is especially important, because these opinions have transformed the thoughts of architects and the constructed buildings (Sofeh magazine/the performance concept in thoughts of Louie Kan/ Gharibpour, Afra).

## The research questions

What is the meaning of performance in Louie Kan and Gropious architecture?

Is the performance like some ancient elements of architecture, a subject which has been replaced by today new concepts or from the main factors and architecture bases like space and place which is even fulfilled in the most abstract works: virtual architecture?

With what concepts Louie Kan and Gerpious thought about architecture is explained?

Is the main duty of architecture responding to the stated and not stated needs of people which are enjoyed of architecture or responding to the questions which are proposed themselves?

Is the purpose of Performance the same diagrams and tables to show the accessibility relations among the special units of a building or the relations between the figure and manner of using of the space?

What is the architecture quiddity from these two architects views?

### **Methodology**

Data collection was done by using of library method (by using of book, magazines, articles) and the methodology is according to the fundamental research goal and the collection time of historical research, data quiddity, qualitative and according to the comparative research problem.

### **Louie Kan thought about architecture**

Kan has applied special phrases in philosophic explaining of architecture, these phrases are the entrance key to philosophic thought of Louie Kan about architecture and this thought can't be searched unless through understanding the meaning and place of this word in relation with architecture. Only through this way his thought about architecture is occurred and with relying on this recognition, the performance concept in this thought can be interpreted and explained.

### **The ((finite)) and ((infinite)) affair**

Kan approach to the architecture is a philosophic approach, but it is not due to his interest to the philosophy, rather in this way he tries to compile a theoretical substructure for architecture. The Kan's goal of philosophic sub structural explaining in architecture is to respond to a question and that question is from the ((quiddity of architecture)), his question is explained in this affair that ((how the architecture is our infinite incarnation?)). He in explaining his thought bases about architecture uses of two key phrases ((finite)) and ((infinite)) and introduces architecture as two infinite and finite affairs.

Architecture is a problem of a finite and infinite affair; nature, physical nature is finite.

Feeling and hallucination are infinite and don't have any language and the hallucination of each person is an individual affair.

What is constructed, anyway follows the nature rules, human is always higher than his works because he never can state his desires completely. Consequently, the way of stating self in architecture and music is accomplished through finite tool of combination or designing, Louie Kan believes that architecture is an infinite affair with this meaning that its origin is hallucination which is an infinite affair. Therefore architecture starts from infinite and passes through finite. What is constructed, follows the nature rule that is a finite affair; finally it reaches to the infinite again, because architecture is a visibility beyond nature and the rules governing on it.

### **((Silence)) and ((light))**

Silence doesn't mean very very quiet. Silence is a thing that can be named (lightless, without darkness). All these words are fictitious. ((Without darkness)), there is not a word such this, but why is not there? Without darkness, lightness, being will, stating.

From Kan view, silence isn't finite, but it has the ((will inclined to exist)) in itself. In this will inclined to exist, silence reaches to the ((light)). Each form has a ((existential will)) that determines its internal nature. Preform is according to the existential will which is converted to the form. This existential will is fulfilled through designing namely incarnation of internal order and form is appeared. Therefore, the beginning of each form is in this fact that it wants to be what. (Schwartz/ a choice of meaning and place architecture, page 128).

Kan searches the origin of appearing the form not the form itself, rather its internal will of that form to exist, this will is an infinite affair, whatever wants to be anything is the beginning of the form and this is an affair that is beyond the will of the form creator, he distinguishes between the form's will for existing and the designer's will for constructing and creating.

Living and constructing nothing is unbearable, hallucination since before has the will inclined to exist and the desire of stating that will in itself. Thought is inseparable from feeling, so how can thought enter to the creation so that this mental will can be stated the more accurate?

Kan searches the origin of appearing the form not the form itself rather its internal will for existing. This will is an infinite affair. Whatever wants to be anything is the beginning of the form and this is an affair that is beyond the will of the form creator; he distinguishes between the form's will for existing and the designer's will for constructing and creating.

Kan defines the form in explaining the quiddity of architecture. But he distinguishes between the form and designing and knows this distinction in non-individuality of the form and individuality of the designing and its dependence to the designer. From this point, he introduces the position of form in a higher rank than the tact and choice range of the designer. Form is originated from an internal will that hasn't any dependency to the conditions governor on designing in that manner which was imagined more before. He in describing this point, explains this difference in defining the house. House is the abstract feature of the spaces which are suitable for living. House is form. It should be placed without shape or dimensions in beliefless mind. A house is a conditioned interpretation of these spaces. In my opinion, this is designing; the greatness of the architect more depends on his power in appearing the house (form) than designing a house that is an implicit action. Home consists of house plus its residents. House is changed with its residents.

Kan in explaining the ratio between the architecture and a human, who lives in the architectural work, knows this architecture relation in reflection of honesty that should be established between designing and form. In other words, human and his needs which are responded by architecture are the same connection point between designing and form in architecture. Form is as an individual affair and designing is an affair which is determined in relation with human's authority, they become related to each other in constructing the human needs in architecture. This means that designer or architect is placed in a position that should prepare a domain for eliminating the human needs in architecture. Only according to this knowledge, the form is appeared. The form that has the will inclined to exist in itself and this will doesn't rise from anywhere except the needs and wills of resident human.

Employer determines that needs what arenas. Architecture creates the spaces according to the required arenas. It seems that a house which has been designed for a specified family is suitable for another family. Designing in this form is the reflection of its honesty to the form.

## **Structure**

Kan in explaining the architecture concept brings also another concept and that is structure. He reasons that architecture states the human structures. The structures originate from the source, when human tries to fulfill his desires and wishes. The main wishes of human are learning, living, working, meeting, asking and stating. The main wishes form the structures. Kan introduces the school as a sample of these structures that the wishes of human are originated for learning.

The structure concept in architecture helps to explain the ratio of architecture, human and his needs. Kan with applying the structure concept tries to explain the existential will that in addition to explain the ratio of architecture and human, it is the origin of appearing the architecture form.

Kan also considers the primary figures of ((existence in the universe)) and this is the same phrase that Martin Hiedger has applied. Kan confirms this comprehensive view and emphasizes on sharing of wishes and structures. He believes that the designer designs not according to his will and decision rather according to the existential will which exists in the universe. He learns from understanding the hidden order in phenomena and only explores it. ((This is not a thing that you want, this is the thing that you feel in the phenomena order that tells you design what thing)). The human structures are common for all humans because their eternal will and wish is common. Therefore, the structures aren't formed according to the designer's decision and personal will of the humans. Kan for emphasizing on the presence of these eternal wills in explaining the human structures names them with specified words and says: Street definitely is the first human structure and meeting hall without ceiling.

School is the realm of places which are suitable for learning.

City is the place for joining the structures.

Such names ordinarily return to the building forms. Kan with this naming plans to connect the performance concept in architecture with eternal wills and wishes that refer to the human structures. ((Whatever that architect does before that being a building, responds to the human structure. Kan is completely

clear on the form of the structures. ((In the quiddity of space, there is a soul that wants to be in a special manner)).

The structures become the shack of the inspirations through their features. Inspiration is related to the ((light)) as understanding symbol and it is the first feeling on the verge of the confluence place of the silence and light. Silence is, being will and light, and the generous of all presences.

Kan believes that the building should also show the manner of its construction as the appearance of what wants to be. Therefore, the technological fulfillment is the incarnate sample of the structure. The building converts the light to an original reality and therefore expels the order of silence from veil. So the architectural work is presented to the architecture. Each building that reflects the tingle of the silence promises a returning to the beginning. According to this, Kan notifies that ((what is planned to exist always has existed)). This means that main structures of existence, come one time for always and only the situations change and therefore new interpretations of these structures are needed. Kan says: ((my attempt is to find a new statement of old structures)).

### **The architecture concept in the opinion of Louie Kan**

According to what was mentioned, Louie Kan in philosophic sub structural searching for architecture and compiling the theoretical bases applies the phrases that with the language of metaphor refer to the fundamental concepts. Applying the phrases like ((silence and light)) or ((structure)) and believing to the presence of ((finite)) and ((infinite)) affairs in architectural structure, all indicate Kan's belief to a kind of philosophic thought about architecture that knows the architecture not as an architectural work, rather the appearance of hidden and eternal will and wish for existing and fulfillment. Such thought has origin in the opinions which are seen in the thought of other elders contemporary with Louie Kan like Martin Hiedger.

What Louie Kan believes to it is an architecture in which the architectural work is a present to the architecture. Architectural work is a finite passage from infinity to infinity. Architecture itself hasn't any presence except with the help of architectural work. The existential will of the architecture is achieved in this fulfillment. Like a silence that reaches to the light. This existential will or the will inclined to exist is the same that Hiedger names it ((reality)). So the architectural work is the realm of appearing the reality or as Kan says, it is the respond to the internal will or infinite affair that should be presented. In such definition of architecture, architect should explore this internal will and the will inclined to exist not that creates architectural work according to his will. Therefore Kan distinguishes between the form and designing and defines the designing as an affair in which the residents of architectural work and their demands are proposed. Designing occurs according to the architectural decision-making; therefore it is an individual affair.

However, Kan with bringing the concept of ((structure)) knots the architecture to what is the quiddity of it and it is the presence of human and its ratio with architecture. He introduces the architecture as the fulfillment place of the eternal wishes and desires in human life. Therefore he calls the kinds of structures as the fulfillment context of these desires. Therefore, what has been called internal will or the wish of being form in the architecture connects the concept of structure to the eternal wishes and desires of humans. Therefore what the architect explores is a reality that itself says what it wants to be.

### **The concept of performance in thought of Louie Kan**

Also the concept of ((performance)) which has been more explained with the concept of structure in making its definition of architecture, a very fundamental meaning is necessary. What is called performance in relation with Louie Kan architecture is not the daily activities and needs of human, rather it is the fulfillment of eternal and common desires and wishes of human in architecture. In other words, architecture is an infinite affair that in its fulfillment fulfills its performance too and this fulfillment is nothing except fulfillment of the human life reality in constructing the architectural work. What is fulfilled in the architecture is the reality of human life which is explained in terms of human wishes and desires, like the existential will, he demands the architectural work and finally it is fulfilled in constructing the architectural work. In this way, architecture is an occurrence that makes possible the fulfillment of human desires and his life reality in constructing the architectural work. This fulfillment itself is the architecture performance.

### **The second part**

#### **Modernity**

Modern architecture was a dominant style in twentieth century.

The intellectual and social fields of modernity consisted of: humanism, scientism, religiosity and industrial revolution.

Each one of these transformations has had a significant and determining role in promotion of modern mental thought.

Modern architecture is divided into three primary, elevated and late periods that Bauhaus school is formed in high modern period.

High modern architecture or in other words the peak of modern architecture was proposed in the time between two first and second world wars and mainly in twenties and thirties A.D in Europe and America.

One of the key subjects in this period was the industrial and technological productions.

### **Industrial revolution**

During the sixteenth to nineteenth A.D. centuries, sub structural changes appeared in west worldview and the insight of western human was changed completely in relation with himself and the world around. Emphasizing on the thought power of human, experience and test created the conditions that science and following it technology developed quickly and one of its important consequences was the quick development of urbanization that transferred the immigrant population of village to the factories.

### **Walter Gropious**

Walter Gropious, one of the most effective modernity architects was born in 1883 in Germany. Gropious in 1910 with Adolf Mehyer established a company. They during this period constructed one of the primary buildings of modern style-Fagus factory. The glass curtain walls of this building became the indicator of one of the general rules of modern style in which form follows the performance.

In 1919, he with combination of beautiful arts academy and the school of arts and occupations, constructed the known architecture school, Bauhaus in Weimar. One of the most known works of Walter Gropious is the building related to this same (artistic school known as (Bauhaus)) that has been one of its co-constructors. This building which has been constructed in 1925 (eighty three years before) in Germany has become a form of a model for all modern buildings after that and all applied ideas in construction of it such as glass façade, mechanical windows, staircases, ceiling rails special for lighting of the studios, central heat system have been presented for the first time in the building.

He in his first statement combined the theory of William Morris about elevation of handy crafts with the thought of unity of all arts and rejected the boundaries between the decorative and practical aspects in the arts; the first Manifesto of it was decorated with wood engraving, the work of Lionel Fininger with the title of Cathedral and it begins in this manner: ((the final goal of all incarnation arts is the complete building)) and in continuation it has been mentioned: ((we seek to create a new society of artists so that the occupational prejudice that now like a high wall separates the artists from artisans can't be created)). In English socialist opinion, William Morris, Cathedrals of Middle Ages are an indicator of art and occupation unity, coordinated combination of brain and arm, individual and society. Gropious also announced the end of isolationism of art and returning toward craft through a great group attempt, Bauhaus ideology was in that primary years of romantic anti-capitalism.

### **Art at the intersection of industry; the achievements of 'Bauhaus School'**

(Keshmiri, Nazanin, an artistic journalist and criticizer, updated 15:55, Greenwich-Tuesday, 12th Jun, 2012)

Bauhaus is the name of the art and architecture school which was established in 1919 in Weimar by Walter Gropious, German prominent architect. Gropious established Bauhaus according to this concept that "form should be always affected by efficiency". Gropious has said that his inspiration source for establishment and formation of Bauhaus is the book of Frank Lloyd Wright designs, famous American architect which published in 1910 in Germany.

Gropious with establishment of Bauhaus wanted to fulfill a dream that could change the life of society by it. He in a statement which became known with Manifesto Bauhaus refers to the necessity of all arts unity for reaching to a modern art. He also in this statement rejects the boundaries between decorative and practical aspects in the arts. He invites to form a new guild of artisans and there are no class distinctions between the artists and artisans.

### **International style or international method**

It is the name of a modern method in architecture which was founded between the years of 1920 to 1930 A.D. in Europe and America. This phrase has been taken from the title of one of the artistic books-Rasel Hichkack and Philip Johnson which had been written for recording the information of holding the exhibition of modern architecture art in the museum of modern arts of New York city in 1932 and it identified, defined and classified the modernism features all around the world according to the common features that its result was more concentration on stylistics features of modern art.

They defined three different rules which consisted of:

Appearance of volume instead of mass.

Emphasizing on balance instead of prejudice on symmetry

Lack of applying the decoration and ornaments

The previous using of this phrase with the same concept can be related to Walter Gropius in the Internationale Architektur book: (in German language) and Ludwig Hilberseimer in Internationale neue Baukunst book: (in German language).

Lack of applying any kind of decoration and ornament in the designs of this style, applying light colors, and using of cubism ideas were the features of this style in primary years.

### **General goals**

The main feature of Bauhaus style was the more relying on functionalism, optimized using of the material properties and industrial materials, avoiding from luxe decorations in façade of buildings and industrial products. Reaching to a kind of coordination between the functional necessities and the quality of aesthetic, well constructing and combining the industrial products were the other goals of Bauhaus school founders.

Bauhaus was a movement that art is its significant foundation. The origin of formation of Bauhaus school has been in this manner that converts the craftsman to artist and this goal itself is a kind of art.

### **The orientation of Bauhaus school**

Fethorism\_ Dastyle\_ SupreMatiz\_Constructivism

### **Emphasizing on the manner of crystallization of worldview and Bauhaus methodology in designing the school**

What is the methodology??

Methodology is the method of analysis and designing the system.

Bauhaus analysis in designing the school:

In 1906, this school was established with the management of Van Douldeh.

After him, Walter Gropius became the manager of the school. He named the school, "Bauhaus" means "construction the house".

The designing of the school is industrial kind, because in addition to have cubic form, the windows have been designed in the form of strips, tandem and very elegant with glass and also the volume of the door has been somehow locked that this kind of designing is due to become contemporary with industrialization period and usually the feature of Walter Gropius work is to use of glass in the shell of the building. From performance and aesthetic aspects, the entrance element has been designed tactfully, because at first look it invites the individual to look.

### **Some practical and theoretical plans of Bauhaus**

Reconciling between the handy designing and machinery designing

Education of functional designing

Attention to simplicity and its philosophic relation with modern aesthetic

Geometric form-orientation with regard to the teachings of structuralisms

Attempt in eliminating the boundaries between structure and decorations in art

### **The architecture style of Bauhaus has the following features**

This new architecture had been created for the laborer class

This new architecture rejects anything related to noblesse

This new architecture returns to the classic rules of western architecture.

The Bauhaus school had devoted itself to the idealistic communal platform. It had chosen the Expressionism as a kind of Comoiism and also Maxism. And this belief that art is a pseudo-religion was a dominant belief. In addition to Bauhause school, other architecture schools (provident, constructive, depth-oriented) competed with each other to reach to the purest vision.

The buildings were converted to the constructed hypotheses in the form of concrete, iron, wood, plaster or glass.

A building should have a flat ceiling and its façade should be simple, without curvature or protrusion of the roof.

Because color was considered noblesse: the buildings were white, grey, crème or black. In 1924, constructing numerous houses has been the most important social subject of Germany in Weimer period. Until 1932, no other country had constructed house for its laborers as much as Germany. Most of the laborers' s houses had been constructed by tax money. Because most of the constructions followed Bahouse style. Its result was a social logic system in house constructing with open floor plans, white walls, practical furniture without curtain. Although the laborers didn't like these new houses, but the tact of architects was superior over the laborers tact and they believed that laborer should be educated in a manner that knows the worth of his new house. For example: Gropious designed apartments for the laborers of a factory in Berline that had a ceiling with the height of seven feet and were considered noblesse.

If a church was a holy place in religious periods, the houses of laborers would be considered a holy place for new socialist system. After the Second World War, the laborers went to the countryside, Of course except the south of the city which was remained in the same previous situation.

In 1995, Mizoyamasaki designed a project with Bauhaus style. High buildings constructed of steel, glass, concrete which were separated from each other by green spaces. In each floor, according to Li Korbouzieh suggestion, there was a covered way.

In 1972, this designer was defeated and this several million dollars experience was exploded by dynamite. The most effective role of Bauhaus school in designing is practical.

This theory that designing a kettle for the first time is more difficult than painting a picture for the second time , is correct and this philosophy was a significant help to justify the work of modern designers.

### **The summary of Bauhaus school goals**

Bauhaus school is the result of industrialization that at first step it is formed in England, then France and then Germany.

Bauhaus has chosen the international style and its goal was to change the aesthetic.

Bauhaus has prepared a kind of relation among the craftsman, artisan and artist.

The effect of this school is in designing and suitable and right using of basic and main forms like square, triangular,...and basic colors; It is a kind of architecture, a combination of form, color and lighting.

Bauhaus is a collection that in addition to have a complete performance, also has a form that has placed a performance in itself simply.

The entrance has been defined very well, also lighting has been considered for the building during the day, it has been a respond to the summers light of Desao that this helps to the completeness of the collection.

The pillar and entrance retreat that have created a kind of canopy.

Bauhaus school was a school in the field of architecture and practical arts which were converted to the center of new designing in German in 1920s and till 1933 which was disbanded and could create important effect in establishment of connection among the design, technique and usage. Due to this, nowadays it has significant importance for tracking the arts like graphic, edition, interior architecture and designing, recognition of created transformations in this school.

(Ramezan Mahi, Somayeh, references: the designing education/ Heler, Steven; Poumeri, Karen/ translated by Alizadeh, Reza; Zolfaghari; Mirhadizadeh, the designing history/ Bimaghz, Philip/ translated by Azam Ferasat, Nahid; Nourisi, Fathollah, the graphic designing era/ Craig, James; Berton, Brouce/ translated by Ghaderi, Malek Mohsen)

### **A summary of Bauhaus statement**

Architecture is the final goal of all creative activities of human. Completion and beautification of architecture in the past were the main duties of incarnation arts. These arts are the essential components of architecture and although each one has an independent life but the independency doesn't continue without cooperation of all persons who have artistic occupation.

Architects, painters, sculptors should perceive the comprehensive features of architecture again. Because only in this way they can revive the special features of architecture which have been disappeared with the appearance of stylish art.

The artistic schools couldn't create this coordination, moreover if we accept that art can't be taught, how should they succeed in this work? These schools should become in the form of workshop; and a world in which the persons are only designer or artist should be converted to the comprehensive architecture world.

Our architects, sculptors, designers, painters, all should return toward the craft.

There is not "pure art" and artist is only an inspired artisan.

Each artist has to be aware of the technique, because technique is the origin of creative thoughts of human. Then let's create a new guild, a guild in which class disputations don't put a barrier of selfishness between the artisans and artist. Let's all want, imagine and create a new architecture. The future construction in which painting, sculpture and architecture are a unique body and the hands of millions laborers will be risen toward the sky like a crystalized indicator of new belief which is progressing.

Art and the mass of people should be a unique element. Art shouldn't be from the special advantages of a special group anymore, rather it should be the source of prosperity for the life of all people.

Creating new civilization environment is a necessity for all nations and art and technique are a new collection. The goal of Bauhaus is combining all arts in a collection.

The goal of Bauhaus was to create art in twentieth century with this slogan that "art and technique" is a new unit of life. Education in Bauhaus has included explanatory designing, architecture, sculpture, theatre, wall painting, colored glass constructing, photography, metalworking, decoration, advertising, spinning and principally Bauhaus school in each one of these courses has had undeniable effect on today world.

Bauhaus not only has been a school for educating art and industry but also it was a big workshop and creator and supplier of art and industry and in many fields it was pioneer and initiator and briefly and generally "Bauhaus was a school with a special philosophy".

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