

The Beautiful Shadow

The location of Iranian plateau enables great portion of solar absorption. A few similar habitable places like the Iranian plateau exist on Earth. Hence, this feature can be considered a significant factor in formation of the ancient Persian civilization.

In Persian beliefs, the sun symbolizes blessings and grace while water represents generosity. These two elements are crystalized into Persian myths and appreciated as the sources of life. The sun and the moon symbols manifest the significance of these two myths in Persian beliefs in the Persian language and culture.

Since the Persians immensely benefit from the sun and daylight, a specific type of art is created by using shadows. Being functional in some seasons of the year, the shadows are highly considered in Persian beliefs. They are constantly observed in Persian landscape and architecture, and they are clearly recognized due to being in contrast with the light. The shadows are used so repetitively in cultural works that they are considered equivalent to elegance and beauty.

Being located in the mountains, plains and gardens, the courtyard of a rural house must not have a significant functional role. However, it seems that it is aimed at a more specific goal since it is integrated with the residential part. In this picture, the courtyard of a rural house in Toroq village, which is not bigger than the interior space, is covered with shadows of the grapevines that are spread over the trellis. A combination of light and shadow is also observed over the outer corner of the wall created by the beautiful thatch wall.

The environmental conditions of the house can be vividly observed in this picture; a pristine mountainous area where the indigenous shrubs have grown at the foot of the wall.

There is no particular façade decorations except for the shadows that create a harmonic texture, the edges on the corner of the wall, the windows of the gutter beams and the wooden beams cantilevered from the ceiling.

Excluding that, the trellis is the main landscaping element at this house; either for the residents and for the passersby. Built at a high level, the trellis provides climatic comfort in hot seasons. Meanwhile, a pleasant shading pattern is created on the floors, walls and windows from the structurally intersecting formed lines during cold times which beautifies the scene and delivers a dynamic landscape in the courtyard.

This situation is regularly experienced in most times of the year. As a result, the insistence of Persians on the use of such an element should be related to their aesthetic views that consider shadows beautiful, rather than being shaped due to the climatic constraints.

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