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## Conceptual Analysis of “Architectural Space’s Sacredness” from the Quran and Islamic Wisdom Viewpoint (Case Study: Contemporary Religious Philosophers)

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Received 31 December 2023; accepted 12 January 2024

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### Research Article

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#### Abstract

“Sacredness/sanctity” means purity and “sacred” means a clean place which is associated with purity. There is no religion that is free from such central concepts and no religion is worthy of being called so without incorporating such concepts and meanings. Hence, the use of the terms sacred or sacredness is an important and valuable action. The main focus of this study is to explore the concept of sacredness in Quran and Islamic wisdom based on the relevant concepts and theories and through this analysis it seeks to explain the sacredness for the realization of sacred place. With such a foundation, the theoretical and practical meaning of sacred architecture can be understood and established.

This study is theoretical research that employs a descriptive method. The data are collected through library references or by referring to books and articles.

The results show that the use of space, human functions, a specific event, or the divine ontological will can destroy or create sacredness of place. Typically, physical form determines the way a space may be used. But this does not mean that physical form is the only determining factor. Intentions, motivations, and actions taken by people are also effective in this regard. The authors believe that sacredness of a place can be considered as an innate and adaptive concept. But depending on the type of formation, it receives varying degrees of sacredness. This means that sacredness may be created the divine ontological will or the human legislative will.

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Publisher: Islamic Azad University, Yazd Branch.

**Keywords:** Quran; Islamic Wisdom; Sacrament; Innate and Adaptive Sacredness; Sacred Space and Architecture

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## 1. Introduction

A “symbol” in general sense refers to something that is representative of something else and can help us to understand the original concepts or create some mental associations with it. Symbols typically include everything that is used in the communication process between humans, such as images, words, and signs, and meanings are transmitted through these symbol-based communications (Moeini Alamdari, 2001).

“Mysticism” is a science that emerged and evolved in the context of Islamic culture. Muslim mystics have provided many definitions of mysticism and Sufism. Mysticism is defined as the knowledge of God Almighty regarding his names, attributes, and manifestations, and also the knowledge of the origin of the universe and resurrection and the truths of the universe and how these truths are returned to a single truth which is the unified essence of God Almighty. It also refers to the knowledge of the path of conduct and endeavor in the way of religion for the liberation of the soul from the impasse of particularism and joining his own origin and connecting to the attribute of universality and generality (Qaysari, 751 AH: 7).

“Sacredness/sanctity” means purity and “sacred” means the righteous and competent. Similarly, “sacred” means a clean place which is associated with purity (Rahbarnia et al, 2006: 102). In fact, the interpretation of sanctity and sacredness is applicable entering the realm of ethics. But, the term itself is not derived from ethics and is not specific to the field of religion. There is no religion that is free from such central concepts and no religion is worthy of being called so without incorporating such concepts and meanings. In the Bible, the term sacred is associated with the Hebrew word of Qadosh which is equivalent to the Greek word of Ayios and the Latin word of Sanctus and its more accurate equivalent is sacra. All these words have a meaning beyond goodness and translating them into “rationalization” or “moralization” is mistranslation. Also, Kant’s interpretation of a will which obeys ethical laws based on moral obligations and a commitment does not provide the comprehensive meaning of this concept. Hence, the use of the word holy or sacred is an important and valuable action. Rudolf Otto recommends the word numinous which is derived from the Greek word Numen (Otto, 2001: 47-48).

The term “holy science” refers to a metaphysical interpretation, in other words, to traditional science, which are the application of metaphysical principles in the natural world. If these sciences are separated from their own metaphysical context, they are misleading, but the great attention in the modern age to these sciences implies the great need for them. Traditional sciences must be restored in the new era. The evidence in support for the possibility of the religious and sacred science is the existence of traditional sciences that were fostered in traditional civilizations. Although these sciences were completely different from religion and philosophy, there was a close relationship between them and religion and philosophy. The look of these sciences to the nature differs from the look of new sciences, and the traditional sciences because of their inner and symbolic insights reveal the unseen and obscure aspect of the nature, a feature which has been forgotten in the new era (Nasr, 1999: 176).

“Place” and its position in Islamic art and architecture have been always subject to different discussions by Islamic philosophy thinkers and scholars. The interpretation provided about spatial identity is effective in the formation of location and desirable Islamic architecture and paves the way for recognition, analysis, and valuation (Wathiq et al, 2009: 93-94).

“Traditional knowledge” has a close relationship with the sacred knowledge. In a system of perceptions, the form is equivalent to the truth in the system of rationality because of its qualitative value, and this is what implied by Greek concept of *eidos*. According to Coomara Sawamy, the existence of a mystery is the same of the existence of what is suggested by that mystery, and that’s why the traditional mysticism is never free of beauty, as according to the spiritual insight of the universe, the beauty of a matter is the same as the transparency of its existential and material layers. Real art is beautiful because it is real.

The power of tradition is the creator of the style of the traditional civilization. This style, which cannot be mimicked from the outside, is established and becomes stable without the need for making any effort thanks to its own spiritual power. One of the essential conditions for happiness is to know that whatever we do entails an eternal sense (Burckhardt, 1993: 83-82).

The interpretation of H. Corbin of “phenomenology” as the unveiling of the inner meaning of the truth (the interpretation that favored by Islamic sources) and some of the earlier works of Mircea Eliade are close to the traditional perspective, while there are a number of Scandinavian scholars of religion who call themselves phenomenologist but whose perspective is, the least, very far from the traditional perspective with its concern for the reality of revelation and the particular universe that each revelation brings into being (Nasr, 1989: 262).

In the book “Knowledge and Spirituality”, the sacred matter, knowledge, and sanctity have been studied in detail (Nasr, 1989). In the paper “The position of identity in the mental image of Iranian Islamic city” (Nasr, 2013), the components affecting the perspective of Iranian Islamic cities as well as spiritual and epistemic components affecting the construction of such cities have been discussed.

In the paper on “Norms related to holy places and times in three holy books” (Mohsenian Rad et al, 2011), sacredness and sanctity are seen as an interpretive and valuable category in the realm of religion. The purpose of this paper was to evaluate the normative statements about holy places and times in three holy books of Quran, Torah, and Bible and to determine their similarities and differences through deep content analysis (as a quantitative-qualitative mixed method). Finally, the authors calculated and plotted the symmetry model of the five themes of place and time contained in the three holy books. Also in the paper entitled “Reinterpretation of concepts and properties of sacred architecture” (Sadeghi et al, 2010), the authors believe that the culmination of flourishing and the growth the Iranian art is manifested in sacred field of Islamic art; an art that made it possible for the transition of human being from the material life to the spiritual world by relying on spirituality as the only identity maker element for human. Therefore, using a descriptive-analytical method, the present study tries to recognize concepts and themes related to sacred architecture.

The main focus of this study is to explore the concept of the sanctity in Quran and the Islamic wisdom by considering the relevant concepts and theories in this context.

### 1.1. Research Questions

The questions addressed in this study are as follows:

What is the meaning of the word sacredness/sanctity?

Among the concepts related to “sacredness”, which one be studied theoretically and practically for objectifying and creating the sacred space?

Does sacredness have an intrinsic or acquired manifestation at time and place?

## 1.2. Research Hypotheses

It seems that it is possible to explain a sound concept of sacredness by exploring the relevant theories based on the Quran verses and the Islamic wisdom. It seems that the manifestation of sacredness in the architectural space is adaptive and the divine ontological will and human actions play a role in creating and forming the place.

## 1.3. Research Objectives

The aim of this study to explore the concepts related to sacredness in the Quran verses and interpretations based a comparison with the Islamic wisdom and scholars' opinions and provide a sound concept for objectifying and creating the sacred place.

With such as foundation, it is possible to provide a theoretical and practical concept of sacred space.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

### 2.1. Sanctity

From the perspective of sociology, a sacred thing is the one that evokes awe and reverence among those who are believers of a certain set of religious beliefs (Giddens, 1989: 748). These sacred objects have such a reputation that the primary man does not touch them with the same negligence he handle his ax, but he they have such a supernatural force that can be a source of good or evil (Noss, 2003: 15). Emile Durkheim defines religion in terms of the distinction between what is holy and unholy. In religion, things that possess divine attributes and qualities are sacred. They represent the values that are essentially important for a group or community. The reverence that people give to sacred things is due to the respect that they give to fundamental social values. Durkheim tries to prove that all religions involve regular ceremonial and ritual ceremonies in which a group of believers comes together to perform them; (Figure 1). In ritual ceremonies, the sense of solidarity and belonging to the group is reinforced. Rituals turn people from the matters related to an unholy community and enter it to a sublime territory in which the group members feel they are associated with transcendental forces (Giddens, 1998: 493).



**Fig 1** Kaaba, a church, and a synagogue

### 2.2. Scientia Sacra

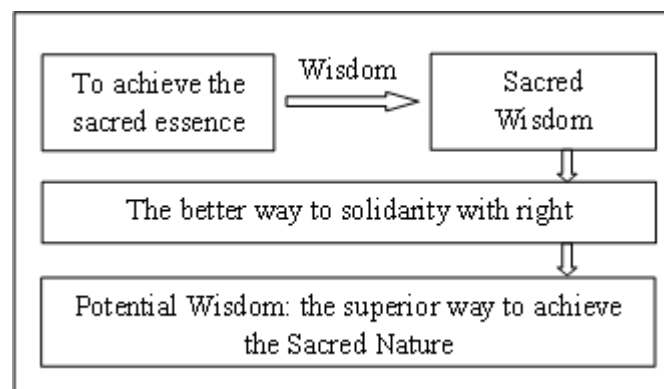
Scientia sacra is nothing but the sacred knowledge which lies at the heart of every revelation and its center is a circle which encompasses and defines tradition. The first question that comes to mind is how the attainment of such knowledge is possible. The answer of tradition is that the mutual sources of this knowledge are revelation and intellection or intellectual intuition which requires the illumination of the heart and the mind of man and the presence of an immediate and direct

knowledge which has been experienced by him. Sapience is a faculty which has been referred to as “presential knowledge” by the Islamic tradition.

Man is able to know things and this knowledge corresponds to some aspect of reality. Ultimately, knowledge means knowledge of “Absolute Reality” and the intellectual power possesses this miraculous gift of being able to understand what existant is and what possess the existence (Nasr, 1989: 119).

Scientia sacra is not the product of thinking or human intellectual power about the content of an revelation or a spiritual experience which itself is not of an intellectual character. Rather, what is received through revelation is itself of an intellectual nature; that is sacred knowledge.

Wisdom is a tool to achieve the sacred essence and sacred wisdom still is the better way to solidarity with that right in which, wisdom, existence, and ecstasy are united. Potential wisdom is the superior way to achieve the sacred nature; (Figure 2).



**Fig 2** Sacred Wisdom (Source: authors)

### 2.3. Sacred Space

Sacred space is a place in where, the relationship between our world and the other world, the lower and upper world, macrocosm and microcosm is possible. In other words, passing from a stage to another stage and in particular, from the earth to the sky in the first instance is possible only in the sacred space of the temple. This means the transition from a particular existing quality to another existing quality, the transition from the mundane situation to the sacred situation. In fact, the purpose of sacred architecture is creating sacred and spiritual spaces (Sattari, 2002, 179-180). In sacred architecture, the space finds a qualitative aspect by metaphoric and symbolic statements. Indeed, a sacred center polarizes (not giving sacredness) its surrounding space, just like Mecca (that in the Muslim’s opinion it is a point on an axis that joins the earth and sky to each other and on this basis, it itself is the center of the earth) that polarize all the spaces to perform the highest Islamic rule (Ardalan et al, 2001: Prelude L).

In fact, the space of a temple whether small and glorious essentially is a sacred space that a common, limitless and relatively unknown space surrounded it. The surrounding area is an abyss space and because it is unorganized and not well known, its range and structure are not specified and known. Common space is clearly in conflict with the sacred space; because the sacred space has a well-structured range which is called centered and focused (Ardalan et al, 2001: 177). But, it is not the temple that gives sacred to a space, because the temple’s space is only a tool or possibility for praying and it cannot give sacred to a work. But also, it should have a sacred concept that is located along and between the other concepts. That a space is sacred is not a reason to say that

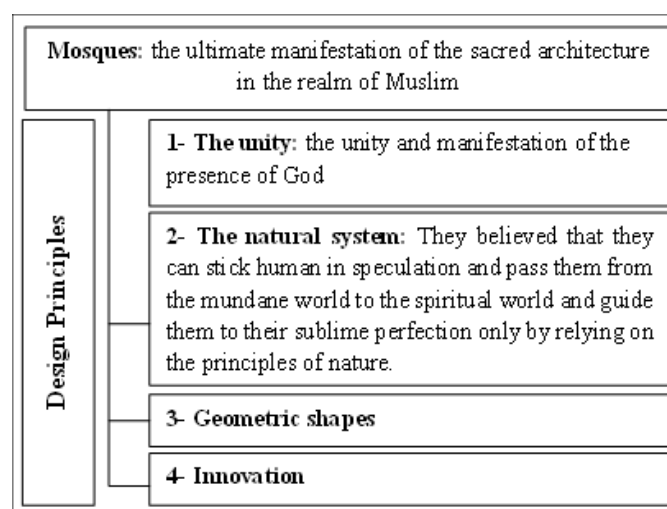
everything around it is sacred, but also, its sacredness is because of its implied concept. As the expression of the sanctity of the holy Ka'bah space means a superior presence in that place (Rahbarnia et al, 2006: 105).

#### 2.4. Sacred Sites

Sacred sites are one that encompasses ideological elements of a certain society and possesses high ecological and natural values. Most sacred sites protected by its inhabitants are those that contain one or more ideological elements of that society. These sites consist of sacred natural and man-made elements.

In his article about sacredness, Cairns write: “The serious relationship between man and land based on the belief in the sacredness of the land that surrounds he man needs to be compiled so that its stability is guaranteed. He also points out that such relationship not only protects the environment but also contributes to the reconstruction of the damaged natural regions (Cairns, 2002). Sacred sites have perhaps been the oldest method for protecting settlements on the earth, and there is currently an extensive but unknown network of sacred things around the world. Some scholars believe that there are a great number of sites that are protect based on sacredness (WWF, 2005).

There are also many sites in Iran that are protected based on ideological principles and the culture of local communities. Sacred trees and waters and physical elements such as mountains that have been sanctified have been considered by Iranians for many years through in various cultures and religions. Giving sanctity to natural elements as a context in which human is born, lives, and dies is an unconscious and inevitable matter that sometimes has external manifestations (Irani Behbahani et al., 2011: 162-169). A mystic architect tries by constructing a mosque and gives tidings and warnings to people by inscription some Quranic verses on its entrances, walls, and altar. He does not invite people to worship God using an ordinary language but he attracts people to God by using a symbolic language (Anagheh et al, 2012: 166). It is clear that the ultimate manifestation of the sacred architecture in the realm of Muslim is displayed in physical and semantic structure of mosques which represents the harmony, balance, order and visualization of the Unity of God; (Figure 3).



**Fig 3** Mosques: Manifestation of Sacred Architecture (Source: authors)

### 3. The Term Sanctity in the Verses of the Holy Quran

The term sanctity and similar words have been used 10 times in the Holy Quran on the whole; three times for the Holy Land, four times for the Holy Spirit, and three times for God Almighty; (Table 1). The use of the word sanctity for the Holy Land is related to the scope of this study, as will be discussed in the following sections.

**Table 1** The study of the term sanctity in the verses of the Holy Quran (Source: authors)

	Quran verse	
Holy Land	His Lord called to him in the Sacred Valley of Towa. (The holy Quran, Chapter 79: AN-NAZIAT (THOSE WHO DRAG FORTH), verse 16)	إِذْ نَادَاهُ رَبُّهُ بِالْوَادِ الْمُقَدَّسِ طُوًى (سوره ٧٩: النازعات ١٦)
	I am your Lord. Take off your shoes, for you are in Towa, the sacred valley. (The holy Quran, Chapter 20: TA-HA (TA-HA), verse 12)	إِنِّي أَنَا رَبُّكَ فَاخْلَعْ نَعْلَيْكَ إِنَّكَ بِالْوَادِ الْمُقَدَّسِ طُوًى (سوره ٢٠: طه، ١٢)
	Enter, my people, the Holy Land which Allah has written for you. Do not turn back in your footsteps, lest you shall turn to be losers. (The holy Quran, Chapter 5: AL-MAEDA (THE TABLE), verse 21)	يَا قَوْمِ ادْخُلُوا الْأَرْضَ الْمُقَدَّسَةَ الَّتِي كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَرْتَدُّوا عَلَى أَدْبَارِكُمْ فَتَنْقَلِبُوا خَاسِرِينَ (سوره ٥: المائدة، آيه ٢١)
The Holy Spirit	Of these Messengers, We have preferred some above others. To some Allah spoke; and some He raised in rank. We gave (Prophet) Jesus, the son of Mary, clear signs and strengthened him with the Spirit of Purity (Gabriel). Had Allah willed, those who succeeded them would not have fought against one another after the clear verses came to them. But they differed among themselves; some believed, and others disbelieved. Yet had Allah willed, they would not have fought against one another. Allah does whatever He will. (The holy Quran, Chapter 2: AL-BAQARA (THE COW), verse 253)	تِلْكَ الرُّسُلُ فَضَّلْنَا بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ مِنْهُمْ مَنْ كَلَّمَ اللَّهُ وَرَفَعَ بَعْضَهُمْ دَرَجَاتٍ وَآتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَيَّدْنَاهُ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ (سوره ٢: البقرة، آيه ٢٥٣)
	Say: "The Holy Spirit (Gabriel) brought it down from your Lord in truth to confirm those who believe, and to give guidance and glad tidings to those who surrender. (The holy Quran, Chapter 16: AN-NAHL (THE BEE), verse 102)	قُلْ نَزَّلَهُ رُوحُ الْقُدُسِ مِنْ رَبِّكَ بِالْحَقِّ لِيُثَبِّتَ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَهُدًى وَبُشْرَى لِلْمُسْلِمِينَ (سوره ١٦: النحل، ١٠٢)
	When Allah said: '( Prophet) Jesus, son of Mary, remember the favor upon you and on your mother; how I strengthened you with the Holy Spirit (Gabriel), to speak to people in your cradle and of age (when he descends and dies); how I taught you the Book and Wisdom, the Torah and the Gospel; and how, by My permission, you fashioned from clay the likeness of a bird, and breathed into it so that, by My permission, it became a living bird. How, by My permission, you healed the blind man and the leper, and by My permission you brought the dead forth; and how I protected you from the Children of Israel when you brought them clear signs; whereupon the unbelievers among them said: "This is nothing but plain magic". (The holy Quran, Chapter 5: AL-MAEDA (THE TABLE), verse 110)	إِذْ قَالَ اللَّهُ يَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ اذْكُرْ نِعْمَتِي عَلَيْكَ وَعَلَى وَالِدَتِكَ إِذْ أَيَّدْتُكَ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ تُكَلِّمُ النَّاسَ فِي الْمَهْدِ وَكَهْلًا وَإِذْ عَلَّمْتُكَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ وَالتَّوْرَةَ وَالْإِنْجِيلَ وَإِذْ تَخْلُقُ مِنَ الطِّينِ كَهَيْئَةِ الطَّيْرِ بِإِذْنِي فَتَنْفُخُ فِيهَا فَتَكُونُ طَيْرًا بِإِذْنِي وَتُبْرِئُ الْأَكْمَهَ وَالْأَبْرَصَ بِإِذْنِي وَإِذْ تُخْرِجُ الْمَوْتَى بِإِذْنِي وَإِذْ كَفَفْتُ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ عَنْكَ إِذْ جِئْتَهُمْ بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ فَقَالَ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْهُمْ إِنْ هَذَا إِلَّا سِحْرٌ مُبِينٌ (سوره ٥: المائدة، ١١٠)
	To Moses We gave the Book and after him We sent other Messengers. We gave (Prophet) Jesus, the son of Mary, veritable signs, and supported him with the Spirit of Purity (Gabriel). Will you then become proud whenever any Messenger comes to you with that which does not suit your fancies, and you belied some (Prophet Jesus) and killed others! (The holy Quran, Chapter 2: AL-BAQARA	وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا مُوسَى الْكِتَابَ وَقَفَّيْنَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ بِالرُّسُلِ وَآتَيْنَا عِيسَى ابْنَ مَرْيَمَ الْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَيَّدْنَاهُ بِرُوحِ الْقُدُسِ أَفَكُلَّمَا جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ بِمَا لَا تَهْوَى أَنْفُسُكُمْ اسْتَكْبَرْتُمْ فَفَرِيقًا كَذَّبْتُمْ وَفَرِيقًا تَقْتُلُونَ (سوره ٢: ٢٥٣)

	(THE COW), verse 87)	(البقرة، ٨٧)
Sacrament	He is Allah; there is no god except Him. He is the King, the Pure, the Peace, the Confirmer, the Watchful, the Almighty, the Compeller, and the Sublime. Exalted is Allah, above all that they associate! (The holy Quran, Chapter 59: AL-HASHR (EXILE), verse 23)	هُوَ اللَّهُ الَّذِي لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ السَّلَامُ الْمُؤْمِنُ الْمُهَيَّمِنُ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ الْمُتَكَبِّرُ سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ (سوره ٥٩: الحشر، ٢٣)
	All that is in heavens and earth exalt Allah, the King, the Pure, the Almighty, and the Wise. (The holy Quran, Chapter 62: AL-JUMUA (THE CONGREGATION), verse 1)	يُسَبِّحُ لِلَّهِ مَا فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَمَا فِي الْأَرْضِ الْمَلِكُ الْقُدُّوسُ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ (سوره : الجمعة ٦٢، آيه ١)
	When your Lord said to the angels: 'I am placing on the earth a caliph, ' they replied: 'Will You put there who corrupts and sheds blood, when we exalt Your praises and sanctify You? 'He said: 'I know what you do not know. ' (The holy Quran, Chapter 2: AL-BAQARA (THE COW), verse 30)	وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَنْ يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ (سوره ٢: آيه ٣٠)

#### 4. The Holy Land in Quran

The Holy Land or Palestine is the utopia of the people of Israel, and according to the teachings of the Holy Quran, it has been described by Moses (AS) as a utopia for the people of Israel so that they would migrate from Egypt as the land of immorality, slavery, enslavement and captivity to a land that is the center of freedom and independence, the rising place of the great divine prophets and the place of fulfillment of God's will for the advent of the monotheistic community through a transcendent movement. According to the Torah teachings, this land has been introduced as the ultimate destination for the transcendental movement of the people of Israel.

The characteristics of the Holy Land have been mentioned in several directions in the Qur'an (Table 2), including the geographical area, blessedness, and its magnificent influence in human history, the efforts of Prophet Moses (PBUH) to enter this land and confirm the divine goodness in this land (Nemati Pir Ali, 2010: 140).

**Table 2** Study of the Holy Land in the Holy Qur'an (Source: author)

	Quran verse	
Geographical area	Exalted is He who carried His worshiper (Prophet Muhammad) to travel in the night from the Sacred Mosque to the Furthest Mosque which We have blessed around it so that We might show him some of Our signs. He is the Hearer, the Seer (The holy Quran, Chapter 17: AL-ISRA (ISRA'), verse 1)	سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي أَسْرَى بِعَبْدِهِ لَيْلًا مِنَ الْمَسْجِدِ الْحَرَامِ إِلَى الْمَسْجِدِ الْأَقْصَى الَّذِي بَارَكْنَا حَوْلَهُ لِنُرِيَهُ مِنْ آيَاتِنَا إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْبَصِيرُ (سوره ١٧: اسراء، ١)
Blessedness	We gave the persecuted nation dominion over the eastern and western lands which We had blessed. So the Word of your Lord, the finest, was fulfilled for the Children of Israel because of their patience; and We destroyed the edifices, and towers of Pharaoh and whatsoever they manufactured (The holy Quran, Chapter 7: AL-ARAF (THE HEIGHTS), verse 137)	وَأَوْزَنَّا الْقَوْمَ الَّذِينَ كَانُوا يُسْتَظَفُّونَ مَشَارِقَ الْأَرْضِ وَمَغَارِبِهَا الَّتِي بَارَكْنَا فِيهَا وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَتُ رَبِّكَ الْحُسْنَى عَلَى بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ بِمَا صَبَرُوا وَدَمَرْنَا مَا كَانَ يَصْنَعُ فِرْعَوْنُ وَقَوْمُهُ وَمَا كَانُوا يَعْرِشُونَ (سوره ٧: اعراف، ١٣٧)



	We sent down blessed water from the sky with which We caused gardens and the grains of harvest to grow (The holy Quran, Chapter 50: QAF (THE LETTER QAF), verse 9)	ونزلنا من السماء ماءً مباركاً فأنبتنا به جناتٍ وحباً الحصيد (سوره ٥٠: ق، ٩)
	Had the people of the villages believed and been cautious, we would have opened upon them the blessings from heaven and earth. But they belied, and We seized them for what they earned (The holy Quran, Chapter 7: AL-ARAF (THE HEIGHTS), verse 96)	وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَهْلَ الْقُرَىٰ آمَنُوا وَاتَّقَوْا لَفَتَحْنَا عَلَيْهِم بَرَكَاتٍ مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَلَكِن كَذَّبُوا فَأَخَذْنَاهُم بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ (سوره ٧: اعراف، ٩٦)
<b>The efforts of Prophet Moses (PBUH) to enter the Holy land</b>	(Remember) when Moses said to his people. 'Remember, my people, the favors which Allah has bestowed upon you. He has raised up Prophets among you, made you kings, and given you that which He has not given to any one of the worlds. Enter, my people, the Holy Land which Allah has written for you. Do not turn back in your footsteps, lest you shall turn to be losers (The holy Quran, Chapter 5: AL-MAEDA (THE TABLE), verse 20-21)	وَإِذ قَالَ مُوسَىٰ لِقَوْمِهِ يَا قَوْمِ اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَةَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ جَعَلَ فِيكُمْ أَنْبِيَاءَ وَجَعَلَكُمْ مُلُوكًا وَآتَاكُمْ مَا لَمْ يُوْتِ أَحَدًا مِّنَ الْعَالَمِينَ. يَا قَوْمِ ادْخُلُوا الْأَرْضَ الْمُقَدَّسَةَ الَّتِي كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَلَا تَرْتَدُّوا عَلَىٰ أَدْبَارِكُمْ فَتَنْقَلِبُوا خَاسِرِينَ (سوره ٥: مائده، ٢٠-٢١)
<b>Proving the divine grace</b>	We saved him and Lot, and brought them to the land which We had blessed for all the worlds (The holy Quran, Chapter 21: AL-ANBIYA (THE PROPHETS), verse 71)	وَنَجَّيْنَاهُ وَ لُوطًا إِلَى الْأَرْضِ الَّتِي بَارَكْنَا فِيهَا لِلْعَالَمِينَ (سوره ٢١: انبيا، ٧١)

A careful look at the Quran verses indicates that the examples related to the term blessedness are not limited to material bounties and, according to the Qur'an's revelations, the Holy Land, or Palestine, is considered as the land of blessing for the enjoyment of the world's blessings, heavenly descents and terrestrial fruits, the rise and dissemination of divine and prophetic movements during the history of mankind (Nemati Pir Ali, 2010, 143).

In fact, verse 71 of Sura Anbia indicates the role of this land in human history. This land is the place of the prophets like Abraham and his elder son, the birthplace of Jesus (PBUH), and the place of his uprising. Also, the temporary Qibla of Muslims was located in this land (Sadeghi Tehrani, 1419 AH) it is therefore called the holy and blessed land.

## 5. The Concept of Place in Islamic Wisdom

According to the Islamic insights, the world consists of matter, form, and number. Place and time is the container of this content and shape it and make it understandable. Therefore, place is an objective reality in which physical objects find form, action, and movement. But what establishes the religious identity of place is its sacred ground. Sacredness here means the presence of the supreme and the presence of the center of the whole environment. Therefore, the sacred place represents the presence of a supernatural being in the human environment. The world itself is a reflection of an eternal place that is seen in the form of different places. This divine revelation is formed as sacred attributes and essence, and spatial concepts can be recognized through these hypostases. Accordingly, place in Islam is based on the principles of goodness, integrity, and lack of loneliness, which provide the place with features such as centrality, continuity, and divine manifestation. Therefore, place is a space in which divine attributes are embodied.

Manifestation is a multifaceted concept in one sense and thus place is associated with different qualities that enable human being to understand or construct spatial identities while maintaining the

sacred essence of place in terms of human conditions. By this definition, place is the location of divine manifestation and is a microcosm that is linked to the macrocosm and metaphysics. The difference between the concepts of land and the divine dominion and given their identical linguistic root representing the material and immaterial worlds make clear the Islamic orientation toward the concept of place. Land refers to the natural world and the divine dominion implies a subtle and soulful world, both of which represent degrees of presence and place in the divine creation is characterized as a location for the reflection of God in the universe. In the Shi'a prayers, like the Komeil Prayer, this claim is confirmed in a statement implying that “No one can escape from your dominion”. The qualitative place is limited by the presence of a sacred entity and its directions and characteristics are not the same. This place can be featured at the special points of the earth, which are related to religious duties and include a wide area from the house of God to the sanctuary and the garden, and in general places are considered as material constructions, whether natural or artificial, as long as their sanctity is respected. In the same vein, the heaven, the earth, and man, as the three divine manifestations possess distinct capacities, and where these beams of being are resulted in creation, the place emerges. An ideal place is also where it unites its constructive elements, and represents the manifestation of profound meaning of the divine reality (Wathiq et al, 2009: 94).

#### 5.1. Sacred Attributes in Spatial Identity:

By preserving identity for all places, Islam values the place on the basis of the divine manifestations of sacred qualities, which in this way places will take different degrees of Islamic identity. Among the most important features of the holy place in Islamic thought are: 1- submission, 2- meaning orientation, 3- centrality and unity, 4- higherarchy, 5- justice and equality, 6- geometry, 7-proportion (Wathiq et al, 2009: 96-96).

### 6. Holy Place in the Views of Thinkers

There are different opinions about the holy places. The authors of this study have investigated the holy place from the perspective of Rudolf Otto, Mircea Eliade, Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Abdollah Javadi Amoli who are introduced in the following sections. The summary of scholars' views has been expressed in Table 3.

#### 6.1. Rudolf Otto (1869-1937)

Unlike many of his contemporary theologians, this German philosopher and theologian also became interested in non-Christian religions. Otto pointed out that the term “sacred”, which should be used in the context of religious meaning, has lost its original and primary meaning, and implies moral and spiritual piety. According to Otto, the original meaning of the word rejects any conceptual perception and mental interpretation. Therefore, he used a new word “numinous” to convey a sense of holiness, void of any moral and rational aspects. The term numinous now implies a certain religious meaning, according to which the holy matter is beyond what is usually understood as a rational and ethical matter.

Otto does not have any reference to the objective aspects in the book of the holy, but also, he emphasizes on the aspect of subjective perception that was also observed in the discussion of space and place. This mental aspect was the most important characteristics of the place which gave the capability of memorizing to it. He considered the perception of the holy place in achieving certain mental states based on the personal perceptions, while he did not consider the external influences as

the originator factors of these states. The role that he considers for the external influences is maximum a guide or assistance to understand the experience of the holy. In his opinion, this experience comes from the depths of the human soul and external factors can be experienced as a stimulus to achieve this experience. This mental state will occur in two states after this experience: One state is a transient state like experiencing an amazing and scary event that cannot be explained due to uncertainty. But, the next state occurs in deeper and more explicit mode in which, the human receives the presence of a noble and sacred thing and starts revealing it. After revealing the holy in form of place, it continues its presence there and it gives sacredness to that place with its awe presence. By this means local and traditional rituals and ceremonies of worship start there. He named such a residence and seizing by the holy Shekinah, which is based on the translation of the eighth verse of part twenty-six in Mazamir; where it says “the places seized by you are eligible to your greatness.” Also, in the twentieth verse of the second chapter in the book of rights the Hebrew word of Shakan is come in the phrase of “the Lord lives in his holy temple that refers the residency and intimidating presence” (Shaghaghi, 2005: 54-55).

This shekhina is the manifestation of God in certain places, where Allah has sanctified them with His presence. Like a blazing bush through which God spoke with Moses or in the holy tent (Ghanbari et al, 2011: 58), in the Jewish Talmudic literature, shekhina means the presence of God in the whole universe and his act, especially among the people of Israel. The presence of God which has been described in the Old Testament as the image of God is nothing but shekhina to the Rabbani (Shari’atmadari, 2010: 97). Table 1 summarizes the similarities and differences in the views of these thinkers about holy place.

## 6.2. Mircea Eliade (1907-1986)

Another scholar who has addressed the issue of the holy place is Mircea Eliade that his view about on issue is somewhat different from the view of Rudolf Otto. Eliade adopted a new approach to the interpretation and analysis of religious phenomena, and he maintained that religious symbolism was the best manifestation of the creative response that human beings give to the awe and presence in the limitless cosmos. Man is ultimately aligned and co structured with the cosmos (the same harmony between the microcosm and the macrocosm, which is rooted in ancient religious and mystical thoughts), and ancient myths that accounts for forms of eternity or fixed essences, still penetrate into the minds and lives of the new human being. It is worth noting, however, that as part of his attitude, he considers sanctity or sacredness which is the common essence of all the manifestations of religious life and culture as something original, simple, unobtrusive, inseparable into other facts, affairs, elements, experiences, and sciences (Eliade, 1993). In the last decade of his life, Eliade involved in planning and supervising the compilation of the Encyclopedia of Religion in English in 16 volumes and about eight thousand pages containing 2750 articles in collaboration with 1,400 researchers from fifty countries.

Eliade in his book, “The SACRED And The PROFANE”, believes that place is not homogeneous for a traditional human and it is not that all places have the same features. He pointed to the example of meeting Moses with God in Mount Sinai and concluded that places are sacred and unsacred and also, the only real place and really existing is the holy place and other places (unholy places) are formed around it. This problem somewhat refers to the polarization of the place by the holy (Eliade, 1963).

He believes in the inherent sacredness of a place and considers the other factors in the revelation of these inherent characteristics. In other words, he thinks that the sacredness of a place is not because of experiencing the holy, but also, he defines a holy place with sacred pleasures and he

considers the experience of the holy only as a sign for a holy place. Although, in this view he clearly approaches a traditional view and surveys the problem with this attitude. Also, he tries to discuss the cosmological place of the holy place as much as possible and observe the issue by a phenomenological look". In other words, Eliade does not know the sacredness of a place limited to the holy, but also he believes that the emergence of a sign is enough to be referred as a holy place. This sign can be displayed by objects and inanimate creatures and with the help of animals. Thus, Eliade concludes that people are not free to choose the holy place. People just look it up and find it with the help of verses (the signs) (Shaghaghi, 2005: 55-59).

### 6.3. Seyyed Hossein Nasr (1933)

Seyyed Hossein Nasr introduces himself as a follower of the tradition of traditionalism or *sophia perennis*. Among the characteristics of the new era, the traditionalists emphasize de-religionism, which has led them to support tradition and the struggle against modernity. They regard tradition as a divine principle with a divine origin that is revealed and inspired into the entire cosmic territory. In a broader sense, it can include the principles that make the man subordinate to the divine kingdom and religion, and in a narrower sense, it is considered as the effects of these principles (Nasr, 2004: 57-58). Nasr considers the foundations of his traditionalism to be the "hierarchy of truth", the concept of linear time and separation time (Nasr, 2000: 84), and symbolism. In his view, in traditional realms, religion and mysticism are dominant on various fields of knowledge, including the science of nature, and therefore the sciences were religious.

Of special significance among cosmological symbols which are related to the contemplation of the cosmos as theophany and the experience of the presence of the sacred in the natural order are those connected with space. Space and time along with form, matter or substance, and number determine the condition of human existence and in fact of all existence in this world. Tradition therefore deals with all of them and transforms all of them in order to create that sacred world in which traditional man breathes. Qualitative space is modified by the presence of the sacred itself. Its directions are not the same; its properties are not uniform. While in its empty vastness it symbolizes the Divine All-Possibility and also the Divine Immutability, it is the progenitor of all the geometric forms which are so many projections of the geometric point and so many reflections of the One, each regular geometric form symbolizing a Divine Quality. In all these and numerous other instances what is involved is the application of a traditional science of space which makes possible the actualization of a sacred presence and also the contemplation of an element of the cosmic reality as theophany. It is through this science of qualified space that traditional science and art meet and that cosmological science and experience of the sacred become wed in those places of worship, rites, cities of pilgrimage, and many other elements which are related to the very heart of tradition. This science is closely associated with what has been called "sacred geography" or even "geosophy," that symbolic science of location and space concerned with the qualitative aspects of points on earth and the association of different terrestrial sites with traditional functions, ranging from the location of sanctuaries, burial sites, and places of worship to places for the erection of gardens, planting of trees, and the like in that special form of sacred art associated with the Japanese garden and the traditional art of the Persian garden with all its variations, ranging from Spanish gardens to the Mogul ones of India. The science of sacred geography ranges from, on the one hand, popular and often folkloric practices of geomancy in China to the most profound sensitivity to the grace of the Divine Presence which manifests itself in certain natural forms and locations on the other (Nasr, 1989: 177-178).

#### 6.4. Abdollah Javadi Amoli (1933)

Ayatollah Javadi Amoli, a philosopher, theologian, mystic and jurisprudent, the teacher of Qom Divinity School, and the Shiite Marja, is one of the prominent contemporary thinkers and commentators of the Qur'an who has a comprehensive knowledge in the Islamic intellectual and transcendental sciences because of his genius and scientific creativity and the use of prominent professors in knowledge and spirituality. The depth of his thoughts, his actions, his ethics, his strength and behavior serve as a model for disciples in the field of science and action. His great familiarity and longing for the Holy Qur'an are evident in his constructive and culture-expanding teachings and guidelines.

According to the following contents, Tour Wadi (Tour Land) and The Land of Mecca which are mentioned in Quran are adventitious and creational issues as the highest level of the holy place and they are not innate. In this case, the lower level of the holy place is adventitious and creational. Tour Wadi: "Allah introduced Tour Wadi as a holy place. Tour Wadi is a symbol of sacredness and glory of God, because it is glorified from idolatry. Since, Tour Wadi is the expression of unity; it is the epitome of beauty and blessing of God... The holy secret of this land is that since, God's invitation is reached and will reach the worlds and goodness will be achieved for societies until resurrection, because, the truth of Mussa's religion is alive today and the Prophet and our divine saints are heirs of Moses Kalim... In the holy Sura of Naml it is said: (so when he came to it a voice was uttered saying: 'blessed be who is (Moses) in the fire and (the angels) who are around it! exaltations to Allah, lord of the worlds!)(The holy Quran, Chapter 27: AL-NAML (THE ANT), verse 8).

Anybody who is in the fire and beside the fire is blessed. However, blessing (around the fire) is not inherently and only blessing (who is in the fire) is inherent that is the emergence of the truth... Thus, the sacredness of that territory is because the fire that was kindled in that land and the sacredness and holiness of that fire is because of the advent of divinity in it and receiving prophecy and revelation. Prophecy and revelation have blessing and the source of this blessing is the Lord of the worlds: (blessed is he in whose hand is the sovereignty) (The holy Quran, Chapter 67: AL-MULK (THE SOVEREIGNTY), verse 1). Therefore, if a territory is cleared of idolatry and unity be appeared in it, it will be sacred and blessed"(Javadi Amoli, 2000: 125-127, V.7). The Land of Mecca: "sacredness of the Prophet Abraham (PBUH) was such that the Islamic communities were assigned to follow his dignity and make his place as the Tawaf prayer. The verse: (so follow the religion of Abraham, the upright) (The holy Quran, Chapter 3: AL-E-IMRAN (THE FAMILY OF IMRAN), verse 95) is a clear proof of the necessity to adhere the tradition and religion of that Prophet and the verse (and take ye the station of Abraham as a place of prayer) (The holy Quran, Chapter 2: AL-BAQARA (THE COW), verse 125) is a clear evidence to have commitment in preserving that place and its consecration" (Javadi Amoli, 2000: 365-366, V.6).

**Table 3** Holy Place from the perspective of scholar (Source: authors)

<b>Holy place</b>	<b>Rudolf Otto</b>	Emphasis on the subjective aspect of the place
		Sacred space perception based on personal reception
		External effects (physical), the maximum guidance and assistance to understand the holy
		After revealing the holy place in the form of place, it continues its presence there and gives sacredness to that place by its awe presence. In other words, personal reception in a place gives it sacredness.
	<b>Mircea Eliade</b>	Referring to the polarization of a place by a holy place

		Trust in the inherent sacredness of a place
		Experience of the holy, merely a sign of a holy place
		People are not free to choose the holy place. They only search and find it through its signs .
	<b>Seyyed Hossein Nasr</b>	The qualitative place has been constrained because of the presence of the sacred essence itself .
		Nevertheless, the extension of the null place is the embodiment of the absolute divine possibility and the absolute divine stability .
		The place itself is the inventor of geometric forms that are multiple extensions of the geometric point and the multiple reflections of the absolute unity.
		Each regular geometric shape is the manifestation of a divine attribute.
	<b>Abdollah Javadi-Amoli</b>	Allah introduced Tour Wadi as a holy and holy place.
		Since, Tour Wadi is glorified from idolatry; it is the symbol of sacredness and glory of God.
		However, blessing (around the fire) is not inherently and only blessing (who is in the fire) is inherent that is the emergence of the truth
		Sacredness of the Prophet Abraham (PBUH) was such that the Islamic communities were assigned to follow his dignity and make his place as the Tawaf prayer.
		Therefore, if a territory be cleared of idolatry and unity be appeared in it, it will be sacred and blessed

## 7. Findings

### 7.1. Sacred Place and Time in Mysticism

It becomes clear that the concepts of place and time, or placelessness and timelessness, and their holiness exist in mysticism and all places and times is the manifestation of God in the view of a mystic. Whether these categories are objective such as monastery or subjective such as the heart, it is important to pay attention them. This holiness also manifests itself in other fields, especially religion. Religious places such as mosques and churches, etc. and special occasions for prayers and religious practices are examples of this sanctity and sacredness.

Based on what was mentioned, it can be concluded that the concept of sacred place and time in mysticism has a special place and function such as abandonment of the world, divine intuition, courtesy, return to the eternal and imaginal time and place, the feeling of security and peace, refinement of the soul, perception of presence of God, and demanding wants and needs that are manifested consciously or unconsciously. Blessed mystical places that may be anywhere in the world, such as mountains, deserts, and monasteries have a value beyond the worldly credibility and have their own rituals and customs such as purity, being free from material affairs, physical and spiritual readiness for fulfillment of certain actions. Places in mystical texts sometimes have a subjective and abstract meaning, like the desert of life, whose holiness is manifested in this way. Sacred time in mysticism is such that the mystic dwells in timelessness and beyond the worldly time. The sacredness of time and place, in addition to mysticism, is also evident in other domains such as religion. These times and places each have a sacred reason their establishment and construction, which may be accidental, eventual, inspirational, dreamful, or insinuating (Goodarzi et al., 2017: 242).

## 7.2. The Holy Land

The Holy Land which refers to Palestine based on the evidence in the Holy Qur'an and the Torah is a fertile land with material blessings, and this is one of the reasons for characterizing it with holiness and blessing. However, according to the Holy Qur'an and the Torah, the main reason for sacredness and sanctity of this land is its effects on the rise and spread of prophetic and divine movements throughout human history. In the verses of the Qur'an, the divine blessings have been given to the people of Israel in order to fulfill the providence of God in pursuit of the line of the previous prophets and the creation of a monotheistic society. This can be clearly explained in the many abundant verses of the Torah. However, because of the emergence and dominance of the idea of racial superiority among the Israelites, the sacredness of the holy land has changed in the schemas of the people of Israel and has degraded to “the settlement place for the superior people of God” (Nemati Pir Ali, 2010: 139).

Based on what was stated, three attitudes are inferred as follows:

The first attitude, which is based on traditionalism, assumes that since the essence of God is a sacred essence, then everything created by him is his manifestation and inevitably sacred. Consequently, there is no unsacred matter in the entire universe, and the distinction between being sacred and unholy loses its justification. From the point of view of the followers of this attitude, human being which has been created by God is a sacred creature. Similarly, what is created by the human mind because it is mediated by the influence of God is sacred. Moreover, every design that a designer as a human being on paper is a sacred design, and any designed space that can be established in the form of a place is a sacred place regardless of the type of its applications and dimensions.

But the second view, which is more based on an interpretive look, considers holiness solely in the essence of God or the origin of creation, but believes that God can provide this sanctity in a completely limited manner to another person or object in the form of manifestation and give it a sacred form. Followers of this attitude about the holy place are divided into two categories:

The first group (Mircea Eliade being a member) considers holy places as the ones that are inherently sacred, and this feature has been in existence since the beginning of creation, and they will preserve it until the end of the world. The only problem that remains is the discovery of these places in various ways, such as the occurrence of various miracles in them and being detected by other beings or other natural and supernatural powers in the form of revelation, inspiration, and dream that occur without the human intervention. For this reason, the intrinsic nature of sacred places (according to this attitude) eliminates the possibility of creating a sacred place, and the designer can only use the known sacred places, then by distinguishing it from the surrounding environment, provide a design appropriate to the culture or religion prevailing in that area for that sacred place.

In contrast to this group, the second group (Rudolf Otto being) does not consider sacred places to a certain time and place, and since they regard holy places as the venue of manifestation of a holy matter, they believe that this manifestation at any moment and in every place can be placed on a person or place and give it a holy form. It may also be transferred from one person or place to another making it unholy (Shaghaghi, 2005: 7). All things, humans, and spaces that are of a nameless quality have reached the realm of immortality. Some of them are unexaggeratedly immortal. They are so strong, balanced, and self-contained that do not simply disappear and are almost immortal. Others only get a moment to that quality, and then return to a lower position where the inner contradictions dominate (Alexander, 2002: 32).

Therefore, this is the existence of that person or place that must create the competency for the manifestation of a holy thing within itself so that the holy thing can belong to it. In other words, this group considers the manifestation of a sacred matter as an acquisitive matter in the sense if a person or place is qualified it will become a recipient of it and if it does not there will be no manifestation. The issue of the possibility of acquiring the manifestation of the holy thing in this attitude, to some extent, allows the designer to create spaces or places, so that they can exhibit the features of the capacity for the holy matter and establish the ability to create sacred places (Shaghghi, 2005: 8).

In the third view that seems to be supported by the Islamic mysticism, by preserving identity for all places, the place is valued as the basis of the divine manifestation of sacred qualities. Accordingly, in this way, places are assumed to have varying degrees of Islamic identity. The world is a divine manifestation, so the earthy world is under a holy realm. The requirement for occurrence of a sacred identity is not the location of its physical structure, but the spiritual atmosphere of the space makes it ready to accept this concept. The identity of each spatial area is related to the level of its functional relationship with the way the divine bliss-centered orders or the rulings of the Sharia of Islam are executed, and the possibility of the existence of place and, as a result, its identity depends on the divine nature and the true religion. The evilness of a place is defined accordingly, and the place depending on this definition has varying degrees of reality and identity.

In the same vein, heaven, earth, and man as three divine manifestations have capacities for distinction and where these beams of being are turned into creation, the place emerges. An ideal place is also where it unites its constructive elements, and represents the manifestation of profound meaning of the divine reality (Wathiq et al, 2009: 94). Examples are Mount Sinai and Mecca.

God Almighty introduced Mount Sinai as a holy and blessed land. Mount Sinai is the manifestation of sanctity and divine glory since it is free from polytheism. Of course, the blessing “from around the fire” is not intrinsic, and the only blessing “from within the fire” which is the emergence of the truth, is intrinsic. In the case of the Land of Mecca, the sanctity of Abraham (PBUH) is so much that the Islamic nation was commissioned to follow his placeness and appointed his place (Ka'bah) as a place of prayers and Tawaf. Therefore, if a land was free from polytheism and monotheism is manifested in it, it would be both holy and blessed (Javadi Amoli, 2000: 127, vol. 7). The intrinsic sanctity of all the acts of God and along with it the sanctity of human actions as the divine caliph is fulfilled provided that the caliph obeys his predecessor (God). Table 4 summarizes the findings of the study.

**Table 4** Different attitudes about the identity of Holy Places (Source: authors)

Identity of Holy Places	Traditionalism	The intrinsic sacredness of all God's actions and consequently human's actions	
	Interpretative	Intrinsic	Limited and specified holy places
			The goal is to discover holy places
			There is no point in constructing holy places and the designer has to identify them.
		Acquisitioned	Not limited to time and place
			A holy place is a manifestation of a sacred matter.
			It somewhat enables the designer to create holy places.
			External (physical) effects provide the best clues for understanding the sacred matter
	Islamic Wisdom	The universe is the divine manifestation. Therefore, the earthy world is controlled by a sacred territory.	
		Places are valued based on the degree of divine manifestations and holy qualities.	
		The identity of each place depends on its functional communication with the Islamic	



		Sharia.
		Accordingly, places have varying degrees of Islamic identity.
		In this vein, the heaven, the earth, and the man as three divine manifestations have capacities for distinctiveness.
		An ideal place is also where it unites its constructive elements, and represents the manifestation of profound meaning of the divine reality.
		Examples include Mount Sinai and the Land of Mecca.
		Mount Sinai as a holy and blessed land as it is the manifestation of sanctity and divine glory and free from polytheism.
		The sanctity of Abraham (PBUH) is so much that the Islamic nation was commissioned to follow his placeness and appointed his place (Ka'bah) as a place for prayers and Tawaf.
		Therefore, if a land was free from polytheism and monotheism is manifested in it, it would be both holy and blessed.

## 8. Conclusion

At the end, it can be said that there are four different aspects of the word sacred that they cannot be combined: The first aspect is that the holy matter is beyond time and place, which means it is not contractual and is not ordained by human beings, but it has been existed from the first day of the creation of this world. The second aspect is that sacredness is created the divine ontological will or the human legislative will. The third is its ability to be perceived by humans. That is, the man in his spirit, perceptive power, and in his subconscious has the ability to recognize and understand sacred things. Fourth, it refers to the essence of being and the essence of the unique divinity, pointing out that he himself is the creator of this world and has laid down these rules. That's why people have the ability to understand, perceive, and create it. But in the case of the sanctity of the place, there are different opinions that the writers in this study have examined them from different perspectives and have come up with some conclusions about it.

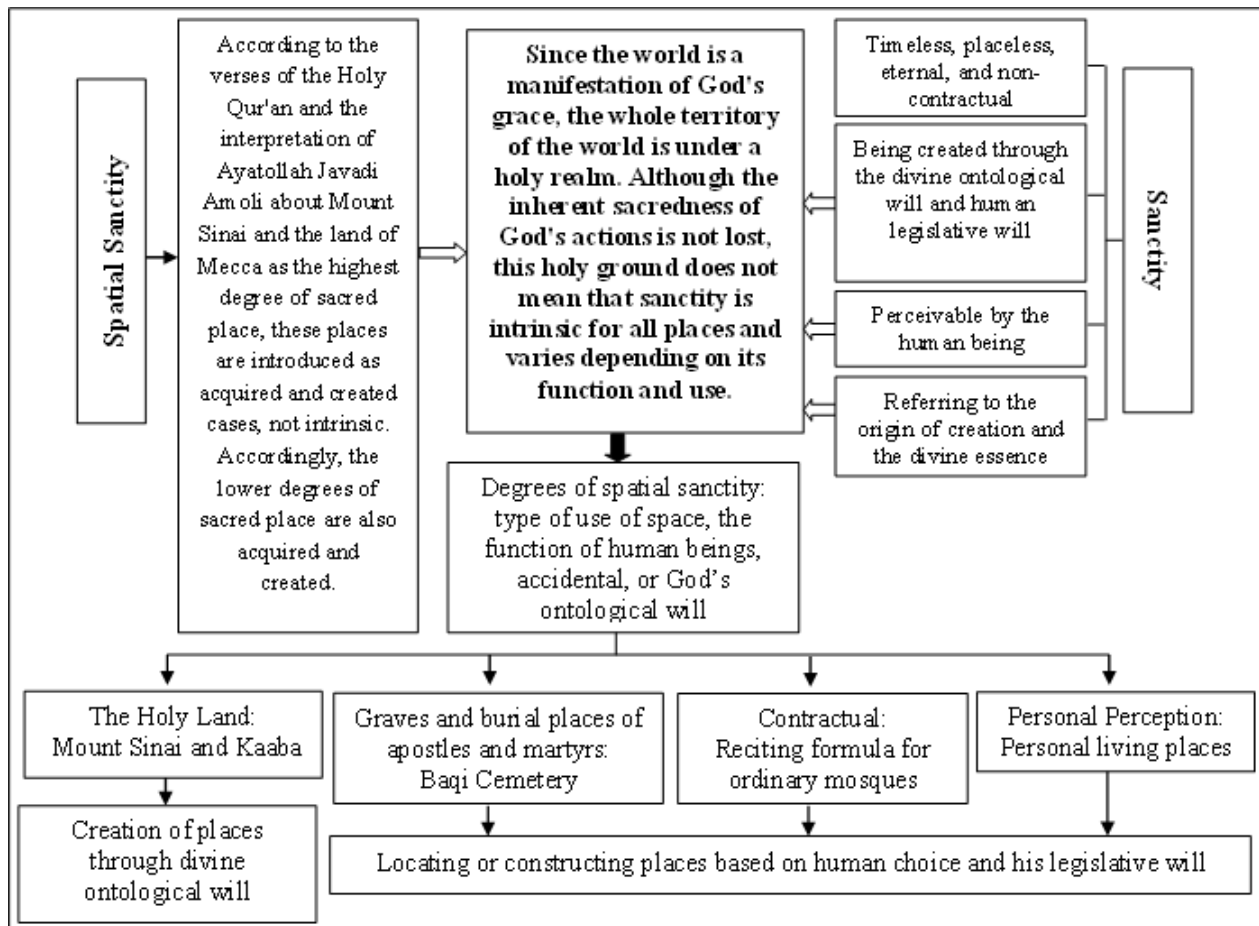
According to the verses of the Holy Qur'an and the interpretation of Ayatollah Javadi Amoli about Mount Sinai and the land of Mecca as the highest degree of sacred place, these places are introduced as acquired and created cases, not intrinsic. Accordingly, the lower degrees of sacred place are also acquired and created. Since the world is a manifestation of God's grace, the whole territory of the world is under a holy realm. Therefore, this holy ground does not mean that sanctity is intrinsic for all places and varies depending on its function and use. With regard to what has been said, the authors believe that the sacredness of the place is an acquiring and creational phenomenon, in the sense the God's ontological will has created it (sending revelation to Moses in Mount Sinai) or by mankind's legislative will (recitation of the mosque formula).

The type of use of space, the function of human beings, certain events, or God's ontological will may obliterate or create the sanctity of the place, and, depending on the nature of the creation, obtain the degree of sanctity. Accordingly, the sacredness degrees of places can be divided into four general categories: (1) Personal perception: personal living space, (2) Contractual: recitation of formula for ordinary mosques, (3) Grave yards and burial places of apostles and martyrs: Baqi Cemetery, (4) the Holy Land: Mount Sinai and Mecca. The first three places have been created based on human choice and his legislative will. The fourth case has come to existence through the divine ontological will.

Typically, physical form supplies the type of performance and utilization of space. But, this does not mean that physical form is the only factor. Intentions, motivations and performance of people are effective in this relation. In discussion of the sense of place, physical form is the most important

and activity and meaning are important. This means that if the body does not exist or is not appropriate, activity and meaning do not form or do not work correctly. On the other hand, if the activity and meaning be assumed at the highest level of desirability, when there is no physical form, it cannot be actualized. The summary of the research results is presented in Figure 4.

**Fig 4** Perceiving Sanctity in Time and Place (Source: authors)



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