Behind the *Roshān*:
Visualising the *Roshān* as an Architectural Experience in Traditional Domestic Interiors

Faredah Mohsen Al-Murahhem

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In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful
Abstract

This research is important within the context of a distinct lack of detailed studies in the field, blended with the continuing disappearance of the roshān\(^1\) through relentless modern development. Yet the contribution of this study is timely. ‘Behind the Roshān’, unlike many other studies, focuses on the roshān’s habitation and the experience of being within it. It also tells the story of its terminology and its historical background, both within its original milieu and beyond. Moreover, the study emphasises the senses and the fluid meaning of the space at different times during the day and on special occasions. This work is particularly apposite, at a time when experience and understanding of the roshān is fast vanishing.

Visualising the roshān is a critical analysis that examines the roshān from different perspectives: firstly, from the Orientalists as non-native inhabitants, in their visualising of the roshān from outside, as well as their experience of being within it. Secondly, that of the indigenous inhabitants who experience their own senses; capturing various scenes within traditional interiors. ‘Behind the Roshān’

\(^1\) The roshān is the wooden projecting window in traditional houses in the Islamic world.

offers an understanding of the roshān in a holistic cultural context of nineteenth-century domestic interiors in the Islamic world. It also looks beyond the notion of the roshān, locating it alongside current essential aspects, such as the hijāb (veil), in relationship to architecture. The sensory experience within the roshān complements this cultural perception and offers an insight into the normal daily inhabitation of this element within the interior.

The final format of this project is significant in its documentation of visual evidence, a counterpart to the cultural, social and historical discussions that precede it. The written component is accompanied by a CD-ROM, with an interactive presentation of the heritage of the roshān. The complete study makes a comprehensive document of the roshān accessible to a wider audience, recording the visual language of its experience, in time and culture, in a digital format. There is currently no reference that offers an interactive document including text, still and moving images with aural elements to enhance the visualisation and the experience of the roshān. This endeavour therefore makes a major contribution to the originality of this research. Most importantly, it will reclaim the roshān for Islamic architecture in terms of definition and knowledge.
I dedicate this work with all its moments of sadness and happiness to:

My mother, the first heart, who hugs and holds me in all circumstances — the true love in my life: the one who always hides her suffering and a feeling of deep sadness of being away from me; the one who keeps encouraging me for the best, and the one who always said ‘this will be a story’ each time I thought about giving up.

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Declaration

I declare that the research contained in this thesis, unless otherwise formally indicated within the text, is the original work of the author. The thesis has not been previously submitted to this or any other university for a degree, and does not incorporate any material already submitted for a degree.

Faredah Mohsen Al-Murahhem

[Signature]

[Date]
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Section 1

Introduction
1. Background and Motivation:

‘Roshān’, pl. ‘rawāshīn’ is an old term used for a wooden projected window found in the Islamic world. The roshān was a well known and widespread architectural element in the major Islamic cities during the Mamlūk era (1248—1516). It was also documented as ‘roshān’ in planning and building regulation documents of the Islamic cities at that time. Makkah is one of these Islamic cities in which the roshān is a common feature. Traditional houses in Makkah are interwoven with this wooden architectural fabric where the term is still widely known and actively used today (see Figure 1). However, the word roshān has now been replaced by many local terms around the Islamic world. For instance, it is known as mashrabiyyah in Egypt and North Africa, shanāshīl in Iraq and kushk in Syria. A similar feature also exists in India, which will be highlighted in the following section.

The term *roshan* was reintroduced again in the 1900s, when Jean-Pierre Greenlaw\(^2\) studied Sawākin traditional buildings and focused on the *roshan* as a distinctive element in the houses and buildings of the Red Sea region. In terms of architecture and local heritage, the term *roshan* then became exclusively used for the Red Sea region. As a term, the *roshan* is still used in traditional houses in Saudi Arabia, more precisely, in the western province of Hijāz (the region that overlooks the Red Sea). Part of the motivation for this research is to help to recover the old terminology of the *roshan* and to emphasise its origins and historical background. More importantly, this research aims to document this architectural feature within its heritage context, and to bridge the lack of in-depth studies in the field.

The *roshan* has been previously studied by scholars, with the emphasis frequently placed on its terminology in Arabic and its form and uses in traditional houses\(^3\). Therefore, a number of studies devoted to traditional houses will be analysed to locate this study and to indicate the gap in the field of traditional architecture, and the *roshan* in particular. However, all previous studies are united in focusing on the history of traditional houses and the *rawāshīn* as features of national architectural importance. Sultan Khan’s study of *Manāzil Jeddah Al–Qadīmah — Derāsah fil Amārah Al–Waṭaniyah li Madinat Jeddah Al–Qadīmah*\(^4\), in 1986, is a common reference acknowledged in many other studies\(^5\). Khan focuses on the *roshan* and its terminology, and concludes with a comparison of some of the traditional houses of Yemen and Ḥadhr'amut\(^6\) in the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula. However, Khan also talks about a projected *roshan* and a plain one. This current study claims that a ‘plain *roshan*’ does not

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\(^5\) These studies, which will be analysed in the following discussion, are mainly unpublished Ph.D. theses.

\(^6\) This region is now under the Yemeni territory, not independent as before.
exist. Because, the roshān is a projecting window; otherwise it would not be called roshān. Therefore, if the wooden cladding is flat it will be classified as an ordinary window, which is called a shubbāk. The term `plain roshān` is also used in other studies of the rawāshīn of Jeddah, and these may be based upon Khan’s same reference. Khan’s study also stresses the significance of socio-cultural factors, privacy and Islamic traditions in relation to domestic architecture.

Michael Earls highlighted the etymology of the roshān in “The Sources of the Traditional Architecture of the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia”⁷. He calls these projected screens in the Hijāz region mashrabiyyat, and not ‘rawashin’. He also claims that these screens were introduced to the region as an Ottoman innovation. The region, in this sense, means the Arabian Gulf, including Al-Baṣra (in Iraq), and some of the eastern parts of Saudi Arabia. Earls claims that his assumption is based on

Gertrude Bell’s visit⁸, despite the fact that in Bell’s diaries the term roshān is used as a local term⁹. However, Earls’ study links the cases of the rawāshīn of the eastern part of Saudi Arabia and Bahrain to India. As he says, “[t]he long continuous, cantilevered galleries projecting out from the walls along the sides of the buildings, in their basic concept, may have had stronger affinities to India than Turkey, for such galleries appeared on Moghul palaces”¹⁰. This research presents an argument against Earls’ assumption regarding the terminology of the roshān and the claim that it is an Ottoman innovation. Another issue that will be underlined in this research is the link between the Arabian Gulf and India¹¹.

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⁸ Gertrude Bell (1868—1926) was an archaeologist and a diplomat. Her travels included Mesopotamia, a voyage in 1913 to Ha’il, to Najd (in the North and middle of Arabia) and Asia Minor. She was a British traveller and spy in Arabia and the Gulf. See Billie Melman, Women’s Orients: English Women and the Middle East, 1718—1918, Sexuality, Religion and Work, 2nd ed. (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1995), 319, and Charles Foster, ed. Traveller in the Near East (Oxford: Stacy International (Association for the Study of Travel in Egypt and the Near East) ASTENE, 2004), 219—301.


¹⁰ Earls, 385.

¹¹ See Section Two.
Some other studies on the *roshān* by Arab scholars, mostly from Saudi Arabia, use the term *mashrabiyya* instead of *roshān*. Questions could certainly be raised about why they did not use the local term *roshān*. The issue is hard to ignore, as these scholars come from the region where the term *roshān* still exists and is in common use. For instance, Majdi Hariri\(^\text{12}\) studied the *roshān* in 1991 in the article “Taṣāmīm Al-Roshān wa Ahamiyatahu li Almaskan”\(^\text{13}\). This study focuses on the *roshān*’s parts, its construction and other related aspects, and the local terminology used for each part of the *roshān* is also discussed. However, no distinct definition between the *roshān* and the *mashrabiyya* is made in this study; there was little discussion of the root of the *roshān* as an old term either.

Some of these studies have taken palace away from the Arab regions, for instance in the United Kingdom (UK). In these instances, the *roshān* is frequently studied in the form of academic theses, usually written in English and not in Arabic. One of these studies, which is relevant to the current research, was in 1996, “Natural Lights Control in Hedjaz Architecture: An Investigation of the Rowshan Performance by Computer Simulation”\(^\text{14}\) by Faisal Al-Shareef. Although Al-Shareef’s study stresses the use of the *roshān* to control the natural light entering the house, it also stresses the origin of the *roshān* and compares it to the *mashrabiyya* as a term. Al-Shareef claims that the *mashrabiya* may be used to cool water jars, and that its function is actually in response to climate. In the summary of his debate, he concludes that the *roshān*’s origin is Islamic, as it is more common in most of the Islamic countries, with no emphasis being placed on its function as an environmental solution. Al-Shareef classifies the *roshān* merely as a product of climatic conditions; despite his claim that privacy is a requirement in Islam and the *roshān* is a means to fulfil it. He writes, “[t]hey are astonishingly

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\(^{12}\) Majdi Hariri is a Saudi architect, who built his house, in Makkah, with rawāshīn.


suitable solutions to maintain the required privacy”\textsuperscript{15}.

It seems that Al-Shareef has taken for granted the findings of previous studies in architecture\textsuperscript{16} without referring to Arabic dictionaries. He states, “[f]or the purpose of this work, the term Rowshan rather than Masharabia will be adopted since the former is more common in Hedjaz”\textsuperscript{17}. The final argument in his debate between both terms concludes that the roshān is similar to the mashrabiyya, but the former is used in humid areas whereas the latter is common in hot, dry climates. This study will argue against this concept, and try to fill the lack of comprehensive coverage of the roshān etymology\textsuperscript{18}.

In 2000, Amjad Maghrabi studied the roshān in “Airflow Characteristics of Modulated Louvered Windows with Reference to the Rowshan of Jeddah, Saudi Arabia”\textsuperscript{19}. The study focuses solely on the rawāshīn of Jeddah and their construction, and no attention is paid to the debate of the roshān etymology; despite the repeated view of similarities between the roshān and the mashrabiyya. Maghrabi’s study also refers to the plain roshān as mentioned previously in Khan’s study\textsuperscript{20}. He claims that the roshān is primarily an Islamic technique that has since been modified and adapted by many other cultures, both Islamic and non-Islamic. He then adds that the rawāshīn are more generally known as mashrabiyyat\textsuperscript{21}. This generalisation of these two terms is another concern, and one that will be addressed in this study through the search for the existence of the roshān in relation to Islamic architecture\textsuperscript{22}.

\textsuperscript{15} Al-Shareef, 116 and 122.
\textsuperscript{17} Al-Shareef, 100.
\textsuperscript{18} Makkah, for example, is in a hot, dry climate zone and the roshān is the main feature of its traditional architecture. See Section Two, for more details.
\textsuperscript{20} See Maghrabi, “Airflow Characteristics”, 34.
\textsuperscript{21} Maghrabi claims the existence of cases of the roshān as far east as India and as far west as South America. See Maghrabi, “Airflow Characteristics”, 42, 45.
\textsuperscript{22} See Section Two — The Roshān in the Islamic World.
It seems that none of these studies investigates the reasons behind these different terms, despite their claim that the *roshān*, in any of the terms used, is an Islamic feature in architecture. However, even studies that focus on the Hijāz region, including Makkah and Jeddah, use the term *mashrabiyya* as the common, widely known term. Scholars tend to call the *rawāshīn* of the Hijāz region *mashrabiyyat*. This usage is not accurate, because the term *roshān* is still used in this region today. Perhaps these scholars tend to rely upon the commonly known term used in the UK, where most of the studies have taken place. That is, they use the term *mashrabiyya* as a general term without considering the implications of generalising the terminology, in order to avoid exploring its complex etymology.

There is no definitive explanation to justify why scholars call the *roshān* a *mashrabiyya*; this overlapping of terms causes confusion in traditional architecture. The consequences of this ignorance of referring to the *roshān* as an old term may lead to the complete disappearance of its tradition and authenticity, including its etymology. The term ‘*roshān*’ ought to be restored and documented for the coming generation. ‘Behind the Roshān’ aims to investigate the confusion of these terms and to raise the awareness of their history. The current research also argues that the term ‘*roshān*’ is used more widely than just locally in the Hijāz region, as mentioned in previous studies. Other studies that have been conducted in some major cities of the Arab world will be analysed, where traces of the old term of the *roshān* still exist: in Rashid in Egypt, in Sawākīn in Sudan and cases in Iraq.

Retrieving the etymology of the *roshān* is not the only motivation that drives this research. Being a teacher of interior architecture in Makkah, I (the author) have recognised the lack of Arabic

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23. See Section Two.
27. Because subjectivity and native and feminine experience is the core part of this research method, I will refer to myself and to my own experience in the first person.
References covering Islamic and Arabic interiors in general and traditional domestic in particular are very limited, if in existence at all. Geoffrey King claims that records of domestic architecture and of interiors are rare, especially in Saudi Arabia, because of the difficulties of accessing private houses. Rarely have students of Arabian architecture had a degree of access to traditional Arab houses that allows them to make a detailed description of interiors. Although some studies cover traditional houses and the roshan in particular, they do not investigate the interior spaces in depth. Additionally, they are kept as research reports or theses, mostly in English. It is hard to find reliable Arabic sources on traditional domestic interiors. There are no studies of traditional domestic interiors and their inhabitation for the new generation to refer to. The lack of these descriptions in Arabic is serious and evident. As a result, the loss of traditional houses and their cultural fabric means a great loss of the rawâshîn as well.

Architectural restoration movements are occurring in some countries of the Arab world, but not in the city of Makkah. The city needs constant enlargement to accommodate pilgrims visiting Al-Masjid Al-Ḥarâm, so any construction work focuses on enlarging the Masjid area rather than restoring the old city. It could be argued that maintaining the historical and religious past for future generations would be in the city’s long-term interest. However, because of the narrow alleys and the extended wooden fabrics that unite districts of this old city, the safety of pilgrims and inhabitants is an issue. The following analysis, which is based on studies in the field of architecture and original sources and traditions, will discuss this in more detail.

As a result of continuing expansion, the traditional architectural
fabric of Makkah, as well as the rawāshīn, has suffered rapid and severe destruction. The speed of disappearance of the rawāshīn was highlighted by Hariri in “Housing in Central Makkah — the influence of Hajj” in 1986. Hariri stresses the impact of the Hajj in the architectural fabric of Makkah, and states that the rawāshīn are the most affected features. He also adds that the Hajj affects the development of housing, where pilgrims from all over the world with different cultures have added to and imitated the styles found in Makkah. However, Hariri highlights the necessity of preserving the traditional houses and to adopt traditional elements, such as the roshān in modern architecture. His call for the necessity of preservation and to adopt traditional elements was repeated again in his previously mentioned study of the roshān in 1991. Hariri also refers to the words of the architect and former mayor of Jeddah, Mohammed Farsi, who said in 1980 that:

32. The pilgrimage to Makkah which takes place during the last month of the lunar calendar (Hijri).

In fact, it is not just the terminology of such a traditional element in architecture which is under threat; the architectural fabric itself is also in severe danger. What can be more motivating to encourage action than living in a place where the silent and slow death of this traditional architecture and its heritage is deeply felt by both scholars and local people! The loss of these architectural features and the historical architectural fabric is noticeable in the Hijāz region as well as the eastern part of Saudi Arabia. In “The Planning & Development of the city of Jeddah 1970—1984” carried out in 1987, George Orr Duncan spotted that the mid and late 1970s experienced the loss of many historic buildings
in both Jeddah and Makkah. The major problem, Duncan notes, in Jeddah was a lack of adequate maintenance. He also claims that, “[by] 1978, land values had reached over 9,000 Saudi Riyals per square metre. Traditional buildings had become vulnerable and their future perilous. The scale of development in the ‘boom’ years of the mid to late 1970s had already accounted for the loss of many historic buildings in the city centre”\(^{35}\). The value of this historical fabric is being lost because of the increase in oil excavation and modern urban development. This change is also felt in the eastern part of Saudi Arabia, where traditional houses with wooden screens struggle to survive. The disappearance of this architectural heritage from living memory was stressed by Earls in 1989.

Although these buildings cannot be valued for their antiquity, they symbolise traditions inherited from thousands of years of civilisation, something few regions of the world can rival. For in their plans, materials, construction methods and details they are the products of an ancient culture and a way of life which will soon be disappearing from living memory.\(^{36}\)

The decline of architectural heritage is evident and increasingly threatened by encroaching modernity. Consequently, this heritage ought to be recorded and documented before it completely disappears. In fact, this is one of the aims of the current research. Visual documentation will play a part in preserving architectural heritage for the benefit of the new generation. In 1978, a survey on the historical houses of old Jeddah concluded by Duncan showed that a sizeable majority, 68%, believed it was worthwhile repairing property in the area, and that 81% stated that they liked living in the area. The most frequently cited reason for liking these old houses is nostalgia. The people interviewed stated that these buildings reminded them of the past. They also stated that the most important improvements needed were to repair the houses, especially the windows and the rawāshīn\(^{37}\).

Duncan was surprised by the fact that inhabitants did not

\(^{35}\) Duncan, 215.

\(^{36}\) Earls, 387.

\(^{37}\) Duncan, 227.
mention the rawāshīn as the main factor in the house that should be repaired and preserved. In fact, indigenous people who have lived with this wooden fabric see the rawāshīn within the context of ‘home’. Therefore, when these people talked about home they saw it as a whole, including its rawāshīn, and valued their homes for their warmth and intimacy. This shows that people may be more concerned about the nostalgic narrative and the living memory of the roshān within the entirety of the home rather than as a separate element. Duncan’s findings could also reveal the difference in interpretation between native and non-native inhabitants, which the current study will explore.

Not being from the same culture as the inhabitants of Jeddah’s traditional houses, Duncan’s surprise illustrates how views of heritage differ from indigenous and non-indigenous points of view. Native people interpret their daily lives simply and naturally, and usually differently from interpretations by non-native observers. Duncan, as a non-native observer, is more interested in the rawāshīn as architectural elements viewed in aesthetic isolation; whereas native inhabitants consider the rawāshīn as an integrated part of their lived experience. Duncan’s study and his concern for the rawāshīn of Jeddah could be seen as taking a subjective perspective in dealing with an element from a different culture. Therefore, indigenous inhabitants’ documentation will be the main priority of the current study, including consideration of verbal narrative experiences. The inhabitation of the roshān is another factor that will be emphasised in this research, in order to document the traditional architectural elements within their cultural context.

This study will look at memory and nostalgia in relation to the inhabitation of the roshān based on stories of natives’ experiences. However, conceptual interpretation among non-natives is another aspect worth studying. The Orientalist perspective on the roshān is one facet in the study of the non-native interpretation. Therefore, the Orientalists and Orientalism as a discourse will be addressed in relation to the reading of the
roshān as an experience from a different culture\(^{38}\). The main concern focuses on the Orientalist perceptions of the roshān and its inhabitation encountered in their journeys to the ‘East’. The reason of analysing Orientalists’ images is to correct any misunderstanding of cultural representations. For instance, the architecture and the interiors as backgrounds in these scenes are another field which can be studied in a deep, cultural scope to be used as visual sources. Such a perspective will open a new horizon of a cross-cultural constructive debate, which can enrich the field of architecture and inhabitation alike.

Some case studies will also be analysed in depth to provide a comprehensive logical understanding of the Orientalists’ own ideologies and attitudes toward the roshān. The aim of these case studies is to examine the inhabitation of the roshān from the perspective of a cultural outsider and, for the first time, to place these experiences in parallel to those of the indigenous occupants in one comprehensive study. However, the judgment of both experiences will reflect my own point of view in a kind of reflective study, which will contribute to and enhance the study from a different dimension.

The Islamic doctrine and rules regulating the principle of the roshān is another aspect that will be covered in depth in this research\(^{39}\). The concept of the roshān and the hijāb (veil), in particular, is tackled differently in some studies depending on the discipline. For instance, *Veil: Modesty, Privacy and Resistance* by Fadwa El-Guindi\(^{40}\) looks at the issue from an anthropological perspective. The argument focuses on transparency as a link between the concept of the hijāb and the mashrabiyya of Cairo. El-Guindi is an Egyptian woman who was brought up in an Arab culture. Her intention was to call the book ‘Hijab’, but the title was changed to ‘Veil’ instead; her publisher claims this was for commercial purposes as ‘veil’, as a term, is more interesting than ‘hijab’. However, the study places emphasis on the role of the

\(^{38}\) See Section Three.

\(^{39}\) See Section Four.

mashrabiyya in guarding families and women’s rights to privacy, mainly the right ‘to see’ but not ‘to be seen’. It discusses the hijāb as an outer garment, especially the upper part which covers the face. El-Guindi follows this description by saying that, “Here the analogy with the lattice screen of houses, mashrabiyya, is striking”. The idea is supported by visual evidence in the form of illustrations⁴¹. The description of the circles in the face cover triggers the association with transparency, which brings to mind the Afghani hijāb garment as the closest similar image.

Another study to be considered is that of Bechir Kenzari and Yasser Elsheshtawy on “The Ambiguous Veil: On Transparency, the Mashrabiyya, and Architecture”⁴², published in 2003. The study stresses the mashrabiyya and the hijāb from an architectural perspective. It covers the etymology of the hijāb and ‘transparency’ and analyses this concept in relation to textile crafts and weaving in order to achieve comprehensibility. Their study also demonstrates this comparison visually, with images of covered women in Cairo and a view from inside the mashrabiyya. Kenzari and Elsheshtawy’s study claims that the mashrabiyya is an architectural veil, where it controls the gaze as a transparent setting as well as women’s hijāb. Moreover, both the hijāb and the mashrabiyya fulfil the notion of intimacy and seclusion, where curious male viewers have little chance to see what happens behind the screen.

In fact, my main argument is that the hijāb is the Islamic rule behind the concept of the roshan, and this is the main reason for the existence of this architectural feature wherever and whenever Islam has existed. In order to emphasise this link, there will be a comparison of the roshan with the other form of the hijāb: a women’s outer garment. From my personal experience of using the outer garment, I made a visual analysis of this aspect in a presentation at the School of Architecture at the University of Brighton in 2004, entitled ‘The Roshān and the

Hijāb’. The analysis focused on images of these screens and the hijāb garments that related to each other. The presentation was based on my own experience as a Muslim woman and my understanding of the hijāb in Islam, referring to the main sources: the ‘Qur’ān and the Sunnah (Hadith, pl. Ahādith)\(^43\), as well as considering my own cultural background. Analysing the hijāb with the roshān from practical, personal experience creates a pioneering form of architectural analysis.

El-Gunidi states that the analogy between the Afghani hijāb garment, in particular, and the roshān [mashrabiyya] of Cairo is striking. She also mentions that her book ‘Veil: Modesty, Privacy and Resistance’ grew from a presentation, which later developed into a book. Interestingly, my study has the same path of development, where the investigation of this analogy was established from the visual presentation I gave in 2004. There are marked similarities between El-Gunidi’s research and my aim, not least that both are women from an Arab culture where the hijāb is commonly practiced. The current study focuses on visual language analysis to highlight this issue from a comprehensive perspective in relation to architecture. More importantly, this study will analyse local hijāb garments with local screen elements to justify the link between both facets of the hijāb in Islam. The outer garment of Cairo, for instance, will be compared to the roshān, as a similar hijāb tool in architecture\(^44\). Consequently, this analysis will cover the meaning of the hijāb in its physical and metaphorical contexts: in terms of garment and gender concealment in domestic architecture. The study will also draw attention to the background of the hijāb in Islam as a rule to be applied to Muslims’ daily lives and the role of women within the house.

The notion of ‘experience’ will be emphasised in some instances to bring about greater clarification to the debates. Significantly, the study reflects a female point of view that brings a new

\(^{43}\) Sunnah is the Prophet’s deeds, whereas the Hadith is his sayings, both are usually referred to in a combined way in the literature using the word Hadith only.

\(^{44}\) See Section Four.
approach to the field. It has been argued that looking at a subject from a woman’s point of view widens the field of study by adding other experiences, attitudes and insights to the dominant information and attitude. This outlook offers a fresh interpretation in the re-analysis of long-existing data according to a new paradigm, that is, the inclusion of women’s perspectives and the widening of history to include indigenous people.

In spite of the complex and diverse issues embedded within the roshān and its cultural context, it seems, from empirical experience, that the new generation has little interest in such architecture. I realised, while I was teaching in Makkah, that my students simply assumed that the roshān is an ‘old-fashioned’ architectural feature. They also showed little awareness or knowledge, no interest in, nor placed any value on the roshān as a distinctive feature of Makkan architectural heritage. The matter seems serious when the new generation is witnessing the disappearance of the local heritage without any concern or sympathy towards it. Students are not to be blamed however, because many issues contribute to the deteriorating status of the roshān in some Arab cultures. These factors may enhance the idea that the roshān is an old-fashioned and a long forgotten architectural element. Establishing methods of attracting a new generation to acknowledge the inhabitation of this era is one of the priorities of this study. The use of digital documentation and narrative formats provides an alternative way to bring interest and excitement to the subject. This study will also document verbal information and experiences of inhabitation provided by indigenous people to pass this historical heritage from one generation to the next.

Documenting indigenous verbal information and attracting a new generation to this type of cultural information are two issues

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46. Based on experiences as a teacher at the Art and Education Department at Umm Al-Qura University from 1995—1999.
which have been tackled in other studies. For instance, in 1998 Sameer Akbar studied “Home and Furniture: Use and Meaning of Domestic Space, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia”\textsuperscript{47}, analysing the \textit{roshān} furniture and its inhabitation. Akbar also addressed the rapid industrialisation and massive urbanisation of Jeddah, where home environments, including the \textit{roshān}, have experienced significant changes in the 1990s. The aim of Akbar’s study is to identify the influence of the use and meaning of modern furniture on the home environment in Jeddah. Verbal data is used as a way of documenting this era, because of the lack of published references, and in reflection to the fact that most of the historical heritage is passed down verbally and visually, when, for example, professional builders teach crafts to the next generation and so on\textsuperscript{48}. The beneficial aspect of Akbar’s study is in the gathering of oral data from indigenous inhabitants of these domestic spaces. This data includes interviews with older women and households from Jeddah, and the use of traditional furniture. Although Akbar’s study includes useful information on the \textit{roshān} and its uses, the current research focuses on the sensuous experience of being within the \textit{roshān}, as a pioneering study of such an element in Islamic architecture\textsuperscript{49}.

Amos Rapoport suggests that studying the full range of the environment, including both vernacular and traditional architecture, could change our understanding of the basic concepts of building and architecture, with important implications for theory development and valid cross-cultural comparisons. However, the most common attitude is to deny that such architecture can provide any useful cultural lessons. Accepting that the study of historical architecture has cultural and educational value is central to research in this field\textsuperscript{50}. Studying heritage, including the indigenous architectural fabric and the


\textsuperscript{48} See the value of verbal transfer of traditional knowledge in Crouch and Johnson, 25—44.

\textsuperscript{49} See Section Five.

\textsuperscript{50} The idea is raised in studying a range of vernacular architecture in regards to various environments, see Amos Rapoport. “Vernacular Design as a Model System.” in Lindsay Asquith and Marcel Vellinga, \textit{Vernacular Architecture in the Twenty-First Century: Theory, education and practice} (London: Taylor & Francis, 2006), 182.
inhabitants’ experiences, possesses the same value. A history never written, told or documented is a source of knowledge. This architectural fabric cannot be ignored. The roshan, within its context, is one facet of this heritage, linking culture, environment and inhabitants’ living patterns. The roshan is also an essential aspect that clarifies the ways in which these components were related and how they interact together. Digital documentation in particular provides an alternative way to attract interest while also solving problem of archiving a massive amount of information.

Graham Sullivan also claims:

Digital technology serves as a site for inquiry where information is clearly no longer a form within which knowledge is found, nor a unit of analysis that lends itself to neat manipulation or interpretation. Yet this uncertain realm of investigative opportunity is just the kind of place where artists, scientists, researchers, cultural theorists and community activists are speaking to each other in a fresh language of images and ideas.51

The digital technology has become such a fertile medium, due to the dramatic change in the way in which information is received. Books, plans and drawings are still in use, but now CD-ROMs, the Internet, computer-aided design, digital videos discs and more are increasingly widely used52. Using new technology is not a unique approach with which to study the roshan, as some studies have already used computer technology. Al-Shareef, for example, uses computer simulation to investigate the control of natural light of the louvres of the roshan. However, his study highlights the impact of the roshan from within, as an issue related to the study of interiors. Although there are some related chapters on his research that support some aspects in my study; there is no concern with the roshan as an architectural element, nor any interaction with the inhabitants or their experiences.

Nabeel Koshak and Mark Gross studied the roshan using a digital approach in 1998 in “3D Modeling of Historic Makkah”53. Their

52. Crouch and Johnson, 375.
study stresses the benefits of using technology in documenting heritage and historic buildings, in this case Makkah. However, the concerns of their study focused on building a three-dimensional model of a *roshān* as an architectural feature, mainly from outside, with no attention to the interior and its inhabitation. Koshak and Grass’s study also highlights the importance of such documentation in Makkah in particular, because of its cultural and religious status and to the rapid developments of the past decade. The current study employs the use of the computer and the interior differently, and it focuses on the inhabitation of the *roshān* and other related aspects from within. However, the experience of being within the *roshān* is the unique element of the current research, which will be recorded digitally.

The fading away of the term *roshān* in modern architecture motivated me to tackle this study to intensify the understanding of the *roshān* as a traditional element in interior architecture, and to re-evaluate its qualities in relation to Islamic values embedded in the culture. Furthermore, one of the aims of this research is to experience seeing the *roshān* as an intimate element related to the inhabitant. Rather than being an aesthetic element to be enjoyed, it is an intrinsic part of the fabric of daily life. The following analysis is far more than a personal experience of Makkah traditional architecture and its elements; however, it will be supported throughout by scholarly evidence. Visual images and a pictorial database will enhance access for scholars, will overcome problems of language, and could also help to recover a lost heritage and to capture the *roshān* spirit for future generations. Additionally, consideration of the Orientalist approach will complete the visualisation concept in understanding the implications of the experience of being within the *roshān*. This research also attempts to highlight a crucial aspect regarding the Arabic terms used in the field, and to examine how they were being used in some non-Arabic studies.

‘Behind the *Roshān*’ is an invitation to see the *roshān* from many facets and to value its concept as an architectural feature that reflects heritage. As such, it ought to be visually enjoyed
and experienced, to bridge knowledge between old and new generations and to follow the rapid pace of life and technology. The attractive and accessible digital format will represent heritage in a modern style. This study is accompanied by a CD-ROM, which offers a visual accompaniment to each section and constructs an interactive visual database of the roshān to bridge the gaps between similar studies in this field. Such an attempt does not just value the past generation’s experiences; it also interacts with the current and the coming ones as well.

2. Aims of the Research:

Firstly, this study seeks to demonstrate the quality and the richness of the roshān, not just in architecture, but also in many different disciplines. This aim seeks to document the heritage of the roshān and its concept in the nineteenth century in a narrative and interactive format. It also aims to preserve the roshān from being embedded within its cultural, social and psychological context to inspire future generations.

Secondly, this study intends to investigate the roshān in a holistic, historical and cultural context of nineteenth-century domestic interiors in the Islamic world. This includes articulating an understanding of the roshān as an architectural element within interiors, and to examine the roshān as a concept in relation to Islamic values, such as the hijāb. Such a study will give a deeper understanding of Islamic culture.

Finally, this study aims to illustrate a critical reflection of how the roshān is visualised, experienced and inhabited in traditional domestic interiors from different perspectives. That is, to analyse the roshān and how it was understood and read by the Orientalists, as non-natives, and by the indigenous inhabitants. These views will also be reflected through my own experience, to add another level to this study.
3. The Research Boundaries:

In considering the time frame of the study, the historical background will cover the roshān since its conception until the early twentieth century\(^\text{54}\), reviewing its place in the Islamic world generally and in Makkah in particular as a case study from my empirical experience. The sequence of narrowing down the timescale and the area being covered from a broad arena into a specific view is a theme of the study. However, the nature of this research and its diverse sections shape each part in its own boundaries and limitations: the historical background will cover the notion of the roshān, in the Islamic world, since its inception and even into its prehistory. The same limitations, in terms of historical and geographical consideration, will be applied to the concept of the hijāb and the roshān as an Islamic requirement.

From this broad view of the Islamic world the study will be contained in the Arab world, where the Orientalism movement will be explored.

The Orientalist section will investigate the period of the Orientalism movement, in relation to the roshān background\(^\text{55}\). The Orientalists’ depictions and declarations will be covered from the nineteenth to the early twentieth century, in the near and Middle East\(^\text{56}\), the consideration of the period of Napoleon Bonaparte in Cairo as early as 1798 will be included as applicable. However, the changing boundaries and taxonomy of the countries in the area now called the Middle East has at times made accurate topographical data difficult. The terminology used is that generally recognised at the time of the research, unless stated in the cited reference.

Other boundaries will shape the experience of being within the roshān in traditional houses in the Islamic world, the Arab world and Makkah in particular. The narrative experiences represent domestic traditional houses in the Muslim world generally, with

\(^{54}\) 1900—1999 = the twentieth century.

\(^{55}\) See more on 'The Roshân and the Orientalists'.

\(^{56}\) These terms are according to the current typographical situation.
a focus on Makkah in the late nineteenth and twentieth century. For the sake of the authenticity of such experience, the research covers the area of Makkah in more detail to give an authentic reflection of the experience of its native inhabitants. Because of the wide-ranging and potentially ambiguous meaning of the research title, terms used in this research will be clearly defined to clarify meaning and to draw boundaries. This clarification will draw upon the limitations and implications of each term in the title, to clarify what will be covered in the study and what will not. However, the metaphorical meaning of the title remains the major concern of the research, where the poetic meaning reflects most of the aspects.

**Behind:**

Behind does not just reflect the position of being at the back of the roshān or within it; the term also interacts with the rest of the research as a whole in a much broader perspective. It reflects the poetic meaning of the inhabitants’ experiences and that the feeling is not just from within the roshān, but also from the entire milieu within the room. Moreover, the word ‘behind’ represents the reasons behind the roshān etymology and historical background. It investigates the Islamic concept behind the roshān and its notion. ‘Behind’ covers the Orientalists’ image of the roshān and studies their own perspectives of sitting behind the roshān. The research also illustrates the native inhabitants’ senses and experience of being within the roshān.

**Domestic Interiors:**

Interiors related to home, family affairs or relationships are the main concern of the study. The study explores the roshān in domestic buildings, more precisely, houses with the roshān and their interiors. Although, the roshān is not exclusive to domestic buildings, domestic interiors are the main area of concern in this study.

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57. This focus demonstrates my experience in researching traditional Makkah houses at Masters level, as well as my position as a Makkāni who interviews native inhabitants.
Experience:

Experience, as a meaning, is an all-embracing term for the various modes through which a person knows and constructs a reality. These modes range from the more direct and passive senses of smell, taste and touch, to active visual perception and the indirect mode of symbolisation. The senses are an important part of everyday experience, where they mediate experience. The sensuous — the experience of the senses — is the ground from which a wider geographical understanding can be constructed. In this respect, ‘experience’ will be highlighted in relation to these different aspects, each on its own term. That is, the Orientalists’ case studies, the native inhabitants experience, as well as my experience as a woman from the field of architecture are all to be explored regarding to the roshan.

Roshan:

This term refers to the projected wooden window in traditional houses in the Islamic world (see Figure 1). The term also covers other spellings of the same word. Although there may be different spellings of the same word, they are meant to deliver the same meaning. Consequently, this term could be seen spelled as: roshan (roshān), raushan, rowshan (rowshān) and the plural rawāshīn. The characters are used to show the pronunciation of the term in Arabic, where translation/transliteration from Arabic to English is slightly different than from Farsi to English. This clarification is necessary because roshān is not originally an Arabic term. Accordingly, the translation of the term may be written differently. It is the same with the other terms, such as mashrabiyya, which could be spelled in various ways for the same reason. This protocol could be applied to other Arabic terms being pronounced incorrectly and written in the same way, these

58. Yi-Fu Tuan. Space and Place, 6th ed. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 8.
Traditional Houses:
These express a historical style and era with significant elements, structure and ornamentation. They reflect culture, heritage and society, however they can also be found in urban or rural areas as some building materials may have been imported. This is the difference between traditional and vernacular houses, where in the latter the constructed materials are purely local and obtained from the same environment.

Visualise:
The term is used the formation or recollection of a mental image. ‘Visualise’ is the core of the study in relation to the conceptual image of the roshān through diverse perspectives. The first viewpoint is to visualise the roshān from my point of view as an interior architect, who has studied this subject as part of my Masters thesis. Beside the intersections of being a woman from what is called ‘the Orient’ encountering the Orientalists’ images of the roshān. The second approach will consider critically how the Orientalists visualise the roshān and its interior inhabitation. The third consideration is the perspective of the native inhabitants’ view and their own visualisations of the roshān within its context of home.

Spellings and Transliterations:
To avoid confusion regarding the varieties of spelling among regions of the Islamic world, it is worth clarifying that variations in spelling are due to the efforts of Orientalists and the translation from French, or other languages, to English and vice versa. Most of the Arabic terms used in this research may take on different forms of spelling, sometimes the Arabic term is pronounced in Turkish or Farsi and then translated into other languages, without referring to the origin of the word. The main Arabic root has been adopted into various accents, in which it would be pronounced differently. For instance, most of the travellers who encounter local terms in Cairo write the term as it is pronounced, without any consideration that the written
Arabic is different to the spoken one. Considering regional accent variations within the Arab world itself, one word could be pronounced differently between Cairo, Damascus, Baghdad and Hijaz in the Arabian Peninsula. Moreover, the Turkish accent has its common feature of pronouncing the ‘أخر - W’ as ‘V’, such as ‘divan’, instead of ‘ديوان’ (diwan). The nineteenth-century travellers, writers and artists spread Arabic terms as if they are always pronounced in a Turkish accent. This could be because the majority of Turks and Mamluks were in power by that time, and they could have been among the people who the Orientalists encountered most.

Because of the difficulty in writing some of the crucial terms of the research, such as roshān, mashrabīyya and diwan; this investigation will keep the exact term as it is, if being used within a quotation. Therefore, the variety in written terms in the study is not a sign of inaccuracy; it is rather a part of the debate of the study. To avoid confusion these terms will be clarified in the 'Glossary'. However, this research will also use some characters to demonstrate the differences in pronunciation of some Arabic letters that might be read in the same way. For Arab readers, this will be fair and will not prejudice the language, especially when the study focuses on the old terminology. Therefore, authenticity and precision is used whenever and wherever possible.

4. Methodology:

The research will be derived from the following:

- Literature and historical reviews.
- Case studies and analytical reviews.
- A development of a pictorial database of the roshān that is based on visual language.
- A creative production symbolised in a CD-ROM, as a reflective practice of all theoretical reviews and a part of the notion of 'Practice-based research'.

61. Such as John Frederick Lewis, who lived in Cairo like a Turkish Bey. See Section Three — The Orientalists' Case Studies.
The forming of this study includes the literature and historical reviews, which will be based around the key aims addressed above. Data gathering on the historical background of the roshān will be in greater detail in order to emphasise the old terminology for the wooden projecting window in the Arab and Islamic worlds alike. Subsequently, reasons for the neglect and undervaluing of the roshān will be examined. Critical analysis is used throughout the literature review, where the gathering of information and images will be evaluated according to the theme of each section.

The study of the Orientalists’ images reflects what has been written and depicted about the roshān. These images will be analysed, classified and stored digitally. Three Orientalists who depict the roshān, inspired by its interior atmosphere or by the experience of its inhabitation, will be examined in the case studies. Even though some images depict the roshān from the outside, the interiors as the context of these elements are the main focus of the study, to test the atmosphere of being within the roshān. The case studies vary in their approaches according to the nature of each case, from the roshān being depicted in text and image, to a real roshān being experienced away from home.

The sensuous experience of the space within the roshān poses the question of what the occupier may sense (hear, smell, see and touch). This reflects the poetic picture of the space. That is, the daily life experience of being within the roshān in the room, and on special occasions including the experience for women in particular. This section will focus on narrative experiences from Makkah, as the holy capital of Islam, which has a strong link with Islamic culture and its daily application. Authenticity and experience are some of the factors emphasised in this research. The reason for choosing Makkah in particular and the Hijāz in general is to highlight the experience of its native inhabitants. ‘Lived experience’ will be the overall theme of the native stories where these traditional houses no longer exist.

Part of the originality of this study is based on the production of a creative work, in producing an interactive CD-ROM. The notion
of ‘experience’ will concentrate on building a three-dimensional model of the roshān in Makkān domestic interiors. These images will give the sense of experiencing the roshān with all of the senses, from various perspectives. Consequently, a brief picture will be drawn as a historical background record of Makkān domestic interiors in traditional houses in the nineteenth century, the period on which the three-dimensional model is based. This is to reflect the sensuous atmosphere of the roshān, in order to demonstrate an authentic feeling of the space without any staging of non-indigenous interpretations. The production of the CD-ROM is another dimension of creativity where computer skills are used to enrich the field of writing interactively. In fact, it is claimed that multimedia — such as a CD-ROM — is a way of dealing with the visual basis of the research material without undermining the need for a written document.\(^\text{62}\)

The roshān is unique in its sense of being a wooden cladding and more than a window treatment, which has been mimicked to some extent in modern architecture. This is the reason for building the reconstruction model of the roshān, which represents that the roshān is a timeless element and brings this idea to the current generation. The reconstructed model gives the reader the opportunity to visualise the space and to experience the narrative stories of native inhabitants. The viewer will have the chance to imagine the movement within the interior and experience the feeling of being within the roshān and at a distance from it. Perhaps this is the first image of a constructed room with a roshān based on one of Makkān traditional houses, which has been documented in technical drawings.\(^\text{63}\)

Highlighting the narrative stories of the inhabitants, imagining the sound, the touch and other senses, should evoke as many senses as possible. This research is an attempt to explore the roshān digitally and to inspire the coming generations to take this study further. The different approaches will provide a synthesis


\(^{\text{63}}\) See the CD-ROM: ‘From the Doorstep to the Roshān’.
for this research that will make a significant contribution to the main argument of valuing and appreciating the quality of the roshān, therefore documenting its aspects and past heritage in one comprehensive study.

5. The Value of the Research:

The importance of the research is underlined by the following:

A comprehensive study:
The analysis of the visualisation of the roshān and its inhabitation will situate the roshān experience in depth and breadth, and it will make this research the first comprehensive study in Islamic architecture. This multidisciplinary study links the roshān, as an architectural aspect, with other issues such as the hijāb, and lived and sensuous experiences. The study also aims to test the quality of the roshān in order to enrich the understanding of its milieu. Although it broadens the horizon for further studies, in diverse disciplines, the study can aspire to encourage documentation before the roshān’s complete disappearance. It is also an attempt to clarify such problematic issues being tackled differently in the field. In fact, a broader sense is needed once the particular topic is selected, where there is a need to find out what has already been achieved in the field. Carole Gray adopts the same concept and believes that, “all research in art and design must be interdisciplinary and collaborative to some extent”64.

An interactive digital reference:
The accomplishment of the interactive multimedia and the pictorial, digital database of the roshān is to be used as an easy access reference for scholars and future generations, in particular. This will bridge the gap in the studies of the roshān and will include the production of a three-dimensional model of the roshān in traditional domestic interiors, to give a deeper understanding of the poetic sensuous experience of the space within the roshān. These virtual scenes are reconstructed to

64. G. Elinor and Evans, 53. Carole Gray is an experienced supervisor of practice-based Ph.Ds in the Gray School of Art at Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen: Scotland.
represent the roshān realistically, thus eliminating erroneous speculation about the roshān and its milieu by those who have no experience of its inhabitation. The scope of this study has its own impact on the field, for the development of course material for teaching, publicity and archiving has extended the project into a second phase. The use of visual images and the three-dimensional model, as the main medium, engages with the subject to evoke a wide range of responses. Gray also states that: “As visual practitioners we prefer to use, whenever possible visual methods of communication, increasingly making use of contemporary technologies. For art and design researchers these technologies enable greater opportunity for interactive debate, visualisation of process and presentation of product.”

The emphasis on the visual level is another aspect of this study, as far as practice-based research is concerned. The visual format of the CD-ROM needs no interpretation, or ability to understand a specific language. It is a solution to overcome language barriers, and to allow easy access of knowledge through images. Stories can be told through these images without barriers. In effect, the complexity of the topic is the reason for using a visual means— as a way of explanation. Therefore, the key of the argument of this research is to compose the story on the visual level.

A woman from within:
The unique endeavour of this analysis is in being a woman tackling these problematic issues in relation to diversities of current debates, such as traditional architecture, Orientalists’ images and the hijāb. The uniqueness is in listening to a woman, from within the discourse of the Orient, in relation to architecture and inhabitation. Being a Muslim woman is not the only crucial factor in this research, but there is also the experience of living in Makkah, which has a great significance for Muslims around the globe. This aspect is associated with my background in Islamic culture and architecture and informs much of the debate in this research. The aim is to give an authentic image of these

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65. See more on the power of visual scale and images in Crouch and Johnson, 376.
debatable, cross-discipline issues within Muslim daily life. More importantly, this study seeks to develop an understanding of women’s intellectual viewpoints and contributions to enrich the discourse of architecture and inhabitation alike.

Documenting lost heritage:
The central concern of this research is to record and document a historical period of this architectural element, and to tell the stories behind the roshān as a means of restoring the lost heritage of Islamic domestic interiors. This study endeavours to visually document the roshān before it fades into the past. The study could be a unique documented digital archive in the field. The distinctive character of this research is to clarify some Arabic terms used or spelled incorrectly in non-Arabic references or travellers’ diaries and Orientalists’ depictions. Examining these issues from an indigenous perspective is for the sake of heritage documentation. In fact, this personal endeavour is not just a call to encourage the notion of safeguarding heritage and traditions.

It also shares knowledge with other multidisciplinary debates, seeking to reinforce cooperation between heritage, architecture, inhabitation, cultural values and many more. Such effort intends to promote an inter-cultural dialogue through heritage and a wider awareness of a multicultural heritage picture.

In conclusion, the theme of this thesis is based upon the idea of exploring the roshān in a different way. ‘Behind the Roshān’ is a study that frames debatable issues in a written component alongside a visual digital format. The written format has five sections; each section is like a chest full of experiences with its own treasure and mystery. In Makkah, ‘Sanduq Saysam’ is a big ornate wooden chest used to keep belongings and possessions. The first wooden chest or ‘sanduq’ contains the experience of the roshān and its terminology and maps its voyage as a term across the Arab and the Islamic world.

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67. See Crouch and Johnson, 4, 336.

68. See Section Two.
The second *sanduq* travels around Orientalists’ experiences and their understanding of the notion of the *roshān*. Another journey of the *roshān*, which is neither in the Arab nor the Islamic world, but is far away from its origin soil, is a journey to a different culture and different atmosphere where it is stripped of its value and concept, becoming ‘artefact’ and ‘memorabilia’. The Orientalists’ perspectives and the visualisation of their experiences within the narrative story of the *roshān* will be analysed. To produce a clear idea of the *roshān* in the Orientalists’ minds, their depicted images of the *roshān* from inside and outside will also be examined. This analysis will give an understanding of the Orientalists’ experiences of being within the *roshān*, therefore providing an appropriate introduction to the following case studies. Images of the *roshān* from the outside will include the experience of various functions carried out beneath it. The opportunity to experience the same scene from inside will be highlighted as well\(^\text{69}\).

The third *sanduq* reveals Islamic and religious values in relation to the *roshān*, such as the *ḥijāb*. This wooden chest explores the notion of Islamic culture and its architectural fabric that produces a simple way of ‘contemplating living’ within the *roshān*. This analysis will explore the meaning of the *ḥijāb* in its physical and metaphorical contexts: in terms of garment and gender concealment in domestic architecture. It also investigates the relationship between the *roshān* as an element in Islamic architecture and the concept of the *ḥijāb* as a principle in Islam. This part will highlight the background of the *ḥijāb* in Islam as a rule to be applied to Muslims’ daily lives and the role of women within the house. It also emphasises the link between the *ḥijāb* garment as a textile and Islamic architecture\(^\text{70}\).

The last *sanduq* touches the poetic of all aspects studied earlier, that is, language, architecture, space, experience, inhabitation and the senses. The reader is invited to experience the analysis of the *roshān* in relation to other aspects. My own

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69. See Section Three.

70. See Section Four.
experience will act as a background or a base for the analysis of the existing data in text and images. Therefore, this part will offer some explanations of the changing role of the senses in everyday experiences of space and place among the indigenous inhabitants within the roshān. Studying the psychology of space, that is the pleasure of looking at/and or looking through, feeling, touching and moving inside the roshān, cannot be completed without considering the sensory experience, which tests the degree of human needs and satisfaction of these needs both physically and mentally.71.

This analytical study is to value the roshān as a domestic architectural element and to demonstrate what is beyond its inhabitation. The roshān, here, is the key to explore and to open a critical study of what is behind it. It is the keyword to link the study of architecture to multidisciplinary fields; to examine the roshān within a different context where it is interwoven in domestic inhabitation. That is, what is behind the term?

What is behind the historical background? What is behind the concept? What is behind its visualisation through the eyes of its inhabitants, natives or Orientalists? More importantly, what is the sensuous experience of being within it in the context of its traditional atmosphere? Each aspect will open up an analytical study where the roshān is the main factor. It also demonstrates that architecture interweaves with many disciplines when it comes to inhabitation and the relation of people as users, such as history, linguistics, psychology, poetics and traditions.

Because of the rapid destruction of the traditional architectural fabric, including the roshān as one of the most significant elements, a holistic study is extremely necessary and recommended before the roshān completely disappears. 'Behind the Roshān' covers the mystical background of many aspects in relation to this architectural element. It covers what is behind the roshān etymology, and its historical background, what is behind its Islamic concept and the sensuous experience of its inhabitation and the different points of view of its visualisation.

71. See Section Five.
through its inhabitants — whether they are native or not.
Each section opens up another dimension of analysis and
broadens further studies as a window to explore more of this
horizon. Each argument proves that there is a concept and value
which lies behind the roshān, simply put, there is a story that
needs to be told. Such documentation of this narrative could not
have happened without the intersection of all of these issues
related to the roshān. In fact, each section with its analysis could
be read as a separate project in itself. This research is important,
for the sake of this heritage’s tragic loss and as an investment to
be kept for coming generations.

The CD–ROM is another journey, which enhances the argument
of the study in a visual language. This digital format contains a
short interactive demonstration to support each section of the
study. Some sections may contain more images than others,
according to the importance of the concept of visualisation.
Sections rely on images based on visualisation, as the core of the
study, from the Orientalists’ points of view and the experience of
native inhabitants. The former marries text with the interactive
still images of the depiction of the roshān, whereas the latter
narrates native experiences by telling stories accompanied by a
three-dimensional virtual room with a constructed roshān.

6. How to Read the CD-ROM:

The main aim of the CD–ROM is to visualise the roshān and
analytical issues in relation to its concept. It also contains
the three-dimensional model to visualise the sense of being
within the roshān and its authentic milieu as seen by native
inhabitants72. Without traces of people or simple inhabitation
these still and moving images seem lifeless, compared with
the Orientalists’ populated depictions in text and paintings.
The roshān in the CD–ROM virtual scenes seems abandoned
in the room, as once mysterious occupants lived here but they
no longer exist. The scene stands for itself with its own story
tempting the viewer to spell out the words. Imagination could be

72. See the CD-ROM: ‘Behind the Roshān’.
a motivation to occupy the vacuum of this cold stillness. On one hand these scenes may help to recall memories for people who experienced living within a similar milieu. Flashback memories may complete the scene with real settings and real stories with sounds and smells. On the other hand, those who have not experienced living in such an atmosphere may find these images cold and empty without the traces of indigenous inhabitants. In order to warm this coldness of space, stories with genuine feeling and senses ought to be narrated. ‘The Roshān and the Sensuous Experience’ aims to bridge this gap. Scenes are depicted to show the physical atmosphere of the real roshān, mainly in Makkah\textsuperscript{73}, with the absence of inhabitants from within for these reasons:

- To leave no room for imagination or fantasy, therefore allowing experience of the roshān and its interior in a subjective way.
- To reconstruct the roshān and its furniture as described and told by indigenous inhabitants. This could be seen as a further study where native inhabitants can complete these scenes and bring them to live with their own stories. This could be a long-term project, where scenes like these demonstrated in the CD-ROM may trigger inhabitants’ memories to reveal more stories of their past. Such an experience would create a historical source where expertise is transferred and exchanged from generation to generation.
- To encourage the reader to experience the absolute feeling of being within the roshān and to get the opportunity to fill the space with an authentic story and impartial opinion in the light of the previous context.
- To give a comprehensive image of the roshān in Makkhan traditional houses which no longer exist. It is an individual effort to retrieve and document this architectural feature, which has been lost for the sake of urban expansion.
- These reconstructed perspectives are waiting to be explored, touched and smelled, away from the digital format. The written exploration of the sensual experience within the roshān should be read alongside the three-dimensional

\textsuperscript{73} See the CD-ROM: ‘From the Doorstep to the Roshān’.
model in the CD-ROM. Without additional sensual detail, the digital reconstructions exist as virtual images alone rather than as lived and experienced historical sites. Visual representations emptied of sensual warmth are akin to the neglected and abandoned rawāshīn.

The formal description of architecture and inhabitation remains an extremely important element in historical narrative. The visual element can evoke a wide range of responses: awe, devout spiritual recognition or a deeply felt aesthetic. However, the CD-ROM will not concentrate on the flow of images to glorify visual observation. It also evokes the other senses in order to document heritage and layers of history. Despite the power of image in documentation, which cannot be halted, it also enhances the other senses.

Therefore, for all of the above reasons, the reconstruction model and its sketches will be shown only in the CD-ROM, and in an indirect way. This demonstration is partly because of the notion of the title of the thesis ‘Behind the Roshān’. The reader will take part in a brainstorm session before accessing the three-dimensional model. This is to prepare the reader so that they can relate to a sense of time and space of being in Makkah and in one of its traditional houses. The CD-ROM will work alongside the accompanied text, where the analysis of the senses tries to evoke a specific atmosphere to be used as a base in the visualisation of the three-dimensional model74 (see Figure 2).

The CD-ROM will not be listed in parallel to the written component; it has its own format and strategic way of browsing. The CD-ROM will reflect the last three sections of the text and reinforce their main arguments. That is to say, the Orientalists images of the roshān, including the images and some extracts of their opinions and perceptions, will occupy the first interactive demonstration. The aim of this first interactive demonstration is to enrich the analysis visually. The reason for the intense focus on Orientalists’ images is because these images are well preserved.

74. See the CD-ROM: ‘From the Doorstep to the Roshān’.
compared to the lack of real inhabitants’ images from the same period in the Arab and the Islamic world.

Therefore, Orientalists’ depictions are documented by their artists or Orientalists so that they remain an accessible source for scholars. The danger lies in these images’ perceptions of being distributed as a stereotype, despite the fact that the depicted interiors were seen from a non-native perspective. It also relies on the fact that most of these houses are under threat of complete disappearance: if they have not already ceased to exist. The problem is not just in the loss of this heritage and the lack of documentation, it also enables Orientalists’ images to stand as the exclusive visual source in the field. The attempt here is to correct some misunderstanding regarding the native inhabitation and domestic culture in the Arab and the Muslim world, in light of the previous issues. This study focuses on the inhabitation of the roshān according to the pattern of Islamic living, which clarifies some issues of Muslim culture.

The strategy to browse this demonstration is based on a flexible, interactive show where the reader can choose where to go and what to observe. ‘Rollovers’ and back and forth click buttons are used to visualise paintings, and corresponding reference materials related to the roshān. The main issue of the research and the CD-ROM is the notion of the title ‘Behind the Roshān’ as a motivation and a monitor of the project as a whole. Consequently, rollovers and hidden information behind the Orientalists’ names play a part in browsing this demonstration.

‘The Roshān and the Hijāb’ is another interactive demonstration that focuses on the principle of the hijāb, which lies behind the notion and the existence of the roshān in Islamic architecture. Accordingly, this presentation will be guided, and the reader has no choice but to follow the formation of the slide show. In this case the reader cannot skip any scene, as in the Orientalists’ demonstration, but is able to go back and view once again after finishing the show. The same system is used for ‘The Roshān and the Sensuous Experience’. This will lead to the three-dimensional
model where basic and related data are to be observed first. However, the sensuous experience will be evoked by starting a narrative or reading written extracts, which will help to prepare the reader to reach this goal. This preparation is mainly conceptual and partially visual, because of the lack of sensual experience in such a simulated virtual context. The contents of the CD-ROM comprise an attempt to explore the sensuous experience within a virtual model. Although some senses cannot be stimulated digitally, the CD-ROM aims to create an atmosphere of being within the roshān.

Finally, as a reader who has been on the journey through words, now it is the time to take the same journey through images, in a digital world where the argument of this analysis leads to a combined format of text and image. So, open the first chest and explore these two journeys, considering that you are ‘Behind the Roshān’.

Explore the CD and the meaning of being behind the roshān

Figure 2: The three-dimensional model of the roshān in Makkah. (Al-Murahhem)
Section 2

The *Roshān* Historical Background
1. The Roshān:

This section dives into the textual depth of the roshan/roshān as a term used in traditions and historical sources, as a pioneering work of comprehensive analysis in the field linking architecture, history and linguistics in relation to the roshān.

It is worth noting that roshan (روشان) is the most commonly used term in the majority of the references. The term roshān (روشان) that is implemented in this study is the term found in some Arabic dictionaries and the local term used in Makkah and the Ḥijāz region until today (see Figure 1). The plural for both is rawāshīn (رواشين) or rawāshīn (رواشین). However, this is not a term used solely in the Arabian Peninsula, roshān is also still in use in Sawākin in Sudan and Rashīd and Quseir in Egypt. The current study focuses on the term roshān, because it is still used today and is well known even among the current generation of some regions. This factor shapes the starting point, as one part of the

Figure 1: The roshān in Makkah, early twentieth century. (The Hajj Center, Makkah)
study aims to educate the coming generation about this cultural heritage before the roshan disappears completely. The study also endeavours to maintain the roshan as an old term and not to destroy the heritage of the term, including its traditional culture and architecture.

This section alternates between these two spellings with the same meaning — roshan and roshan; this occurs for the sake of accuracy. The term is written as it appears in references, especially in the ancient sources. The other issue that is worth noting relates to the dates of the Hijri (Arabic calendar) and the Latin calendar. Some ancient references, especially in Arabic, refer to the Hijri calendar. In these instances, the equivalent Latin date has been calculated, to help the reader to build an accurate chronology of events. The combination of these considerations and the placing of the old term roshan among layers of historical viewpoints is an innovative and unprecedented endeavour. The aim is to establish a clear knowledge of the roshan as a base to articulate the following multidisciplinary issues.

1.1. The Roshan — Etymology and Idiom:

Sources vary in their explanation of the origin of this word (roshan or rawshan) and its root meanings. There are those who favour the idea that it is a Persian word and others who state that the origin is Hindi. A Persian origin is supported by the Persian dictionary, which includes the word roshan (روشن) under roshandân (روشندان). Roshan has the meaning ‘illuminating’, ‘shining’, ‘clear’, ‘evident’, ‘vivid’, ‘a place that shines with light’ and roshan has similar meanings¹. Another writer gives a similar meaning, recording that roshandân means a place in which a lamp is set or a place from which light emanates². It is also

¹ Abdul Ná‘íym M. Hasanayn, Qamús Al-Farisiya: Farsi/Arabi (Beirut: Dár Al-Kitab Al-Libnani, 1982), 308. See also Anooshirvan M. Miandji, Farsi-English/English-Farsi Concise Dictionary (Persian) (New York: Hippocrene, 2003), 103. The term is spelled ‘roshan’. In agreement with these references that roshan means light, or something clearly evident, or luminosity, there are: Firyal M. Khudayr, Al-Bayt Al-‘Arabi fi Al-‘traq fil Al-Asr Al-‘Islami (Baghdad: Wazarat Al-Thaqafa wal Al-‘-Alam: Al-Muassasa Al-‘-Aama lil Athr wal Turath, 1983), 122; and Ahmad Muhammad’ Isa, Vice-President of the Executive Council of the Research Centre for Islamic History, Arts and Culture in Istanbul, private letter to author, March 7, 1993 and Roden, 132.

suggested that it derives from *rauzana* (روزنا) and means a small window in the sense of ‘light’, or a shelf or balcony. Ahmad Muhammad Isa adds that the Turkish acquired the word from the Persian *reuzen* (روزن) or *reuzene* and in Turkish *rusen* or *rusena*. He also notes that the *roshan* is an opening in the roof to let in light, while *roshana* is an alcove in a wall containing a shelf.

The argument for the Hindi origin of the word depends on whether it was derived from *roshandān*, which means a source of light and high openings near the ceiling. This word is made up of the words *roshānī*, meaning ‘light’ and *dān* meaning ‘source’, hence source of light. In another dictionary, the translation of the Hindi term is written as *raushan*, *roshan* (adjective), whereas *roshan-dān* is a hole for admitting light or a skylight. However, the reference also highlights two other interesting aspects: the first is that the Persian term *roshanā*, means light, splendour; the name of one of Alexander’s queens (called by the Greeks Roxana). The second issue is that *raushnī*, *roshnī* means light, brightness, splendour; illumination; brightness or clearness (of vision), sight (of the eye); a lamp kept burning at a Mohammadan tomb or shrine.

Under the root *r-sh-n* (ر-ش-ن) or *r-w-sh* (ر-و-ش), Arabic dictionaries suggest that *roshan* or *rashan* has the sense of a small window, *roshan* the sense of a shelf, and also that *roshan*...
or roshān is a Persian word. Furthermore, in a comment on the root r-sh-n or the term roshan, Arabic dictionaries maintain that the Arabic verb rashān has the sense of stretching out the neck, as in ‘the dog rashān’, that is to say, it puts its head into something, the action of extending the neck, or craning the neck. Also from the root r-sh-n comes the adjective rāshin (رَاشٍ), which is described as ‘established man’, but this term can also be applied to an intrusive person.

Sheikh Hamd Al-Jāsir, the well known Arab scholar, adds that the word roshan or roshān was absorbed into Arabic long ago. Evidence for this is found in the report transmitted by Al-Azharī in Al-Tahdhib (Vol 11: 341) on the authority of ‘Amr b. Ṭabā’ī Al-Shibānī, which says ‘I say al-rafi‘ al-roshan is a shelf’. In a study of traditional houses in the city of Sawākin, in Sudan, the word roshan (pl. rawāshīn) occurs and is said to be a word of Persian origin meaning ‘light’ that spreads in the area of the Red Sea, especially in Jeddah and Sawākin. The popularity of the term among craftsmen goes back to this area as makers of these rawāshīn were from Bukhara who lived and settled in Jeddah for several generations. Persian trade with Jeddah as a significant harbour in the region is centennial, where some wealthy Persian merchant families abandoned Siraf, on the Gulf, and migrated to Jeddah in the tenth century. It happened when Fatimid-ruled Cairo eclipsed ‘Abbasid Baghdad, and the India trade followed the shift in regional power from the Gulf to the Red Sea.

Therefore, it is clear that most of the sources support the Persian origin of the word, although they differ over its root.
and meaning. This is the most convincing opinion, and it is supported by the fact that Persian culture is strong and ancient and had a linguistic influence on neighbouring cultures. In fact, the presence of Persian terms were even earlier than Islam, especially in the area of the Hijāz — and Makkah in particular — because of the two pre-Islamic trade journeys of Quraysh in winter and summer (Rihlat al-Shita’ wa al-Sayff) These trade journeys were to the warmth of the Yemen in winter and to the cooler region of Al-Shām (Syria and the north of Arabia) in summer. The first was to bring local goods and the Indian Ocean goods trade, which link India and China. The second was to exchange with the Mediterranean basin trade and the neighbouring civilisations. Quraysh became practised travellers and merchants, and acquired knowledge and many arts of the world due to the strategic location of the Arabian Peninsula and the privilege of the custody of the Ka’ba. This fact remains the same after Islam, where the route of the Ḥajj plays a role in exchanging culture and trade alike. For all of these aspects, the region is a vital part of the sea route between the Mediterranean world and India, including the slave trade. The Arabs used the slaves for labour, especially on jobs that they despised. Consequently, Persian, Greek and Ethiopian words were known among the Arabs before the rise of Islam, especially those connected with trades and crafts that the Arabs did not wish to work in themselves. These terms entered into Arabic and became widespread through these workers.

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17. The family (tribe) that the Prophet Mohammad (ﷺ) descended from. They ruled Makkah in pre-Islamic times. See ‘Glossary’.
18. These two journeys are written in the Qur’an in one sura (chapter) to indicate the role of Quraysh and Makkah in particular. The Arabs were the founders of the international trade in ancient times. They controlled the trade of the Indian Ocean and transferred it to the Mediterranean basin through Al-Shām ports. The role of the pilgrimage through Makkah enabled Quraysh to obtain security and safeguards from the rulers of neighbouring countries on all sides (Syria, Persia, Yemen and Abyssinia) protecting their trade in all seasons. See Victor Sahab, Itf’ Quraysh: Rihlat Al-Shita’a wa Al-Sayff (Beirut: Al-Markaz Al-Thaqafi Al-Islami, 1992), 273–283.
20. On the ancient trade route and the role of the Arabian Peninsula, see Peter W. Schienerl, Trade and Trading Route in, Markus Hattstein and Peter Delius, ed. Islam: Art and Architecture, trans. George Ansell, et al., (Germany: Köinemann, 2004), 324–327. He notes that as the Prophet (ﷺ) was brought up in an environment pervaded by commerce, it was then natural to expand the trade when Muslims succeeded in conquering a massive empire.
Labib Al-Batnūnī also mentions that the people of Makkah used many Turkish and Persian words, such as *roshan* for ‘window’\(^{22}\). Whereas Ibn Al-Qaim Al-Jawziyah, the prominent Muslim scholar, cited the term ‘*rozanah*’ as a window in one of his books\(^{23}\). This debate on the *roshan* term origin and the role of the Hajj route in exchanging culture and architecture was highlighted by Harry Alter in 1971:

> Some local historians believe it to be of Persian origin and, if nomenclature is any guide, this may be the case. The great bay windows or oriel, for example, are called rawashin, a Persian word meaning splendid and bright. Other authorities simply describe the style as “oriental”, and note that similar latticed balconies are known elsewhere in the Middle East as mashrabiyya. In fact, given the city’s long history as a commercial center and pilgrim port, Jiddah’s architecture is most likely a composite of many foreign influences.\(^{24}\)

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1.2. The *Roshān* — Historical Background:

The entry of the word *roshan* or *roshān* into Arabic was used in the context of building and construction and was known to mean a wooden structure that projected from the wall of a house into the street without touching any other wall opposite. If it was supported from the street by pillars, it was known as *jināḥ* and, if not, as *roshan*\(^{25}\). It was referred to by religious scholars in the 1500s (the schools of law of the four Imams — \(^{26}\) in building and planning laws: the Shāfi‘ī define the *jināḥ* as a piece of wood projecting into the street. The Hanbalīs call this a *roshan* and say it should have wooden edges buried in the wall and some of its edges projecting into the street. The Mālikīs define the *roshan* as projecting high up on the wall and the builder may construct whatever he wants upon it. They say that the *roshan* is a *jināḥ* at the top of the wall intended to extend the house.

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\(^{23}\) Maghrabi, “Airflow Characteristics”, 43.


\(^{26}\) The four schools of Islamic rules are distributed across the Islamic world during C. 1500. They are: Shāfi‘ī, Hanbalī, Mālikī and Hanafi.
and to overlook the street. The Hanafis define the *roshan* as an elevated passage, like a shelf, as found in the Maghrib.

This precision in the legal definitions by the traditionalists of the Four Schools of Law (*madhāhib*) enable us to deduce that the *roshan* or *roshān* is not only a Persian word, but has also been used for a long time in construction and building across the area covered by these religious schools. This is evidence of the term's universal use, insofar as all four schools of law had a clear understanding of the definition and meaning of *roshan* and, even if it acquired a variety of forms and descriptions from one area to another, its origin and definition are basically one. Similarly, each of the well known law schools had their own area of influence in the Islamic world. In fact, the four *madhāhib* came into existence in the period of the Umayyads (661—1031), and by the time of the Abbasids (750—1258) these school were already known.

This proves the existence of the *rawāshin* in this period, and at the latest, in the tenth to eleventh century.

The fact that some areas continued to use the term until recent times may indicate that it was a well known and well-used term in the Islamic world. Considering that the Umayyad stretched from Al-Andalus (Spain) in the west to Bukhara and Samarqand in the east. In short, *roshān* is not a term restricted to the area of the Hijāz and Makkah. This overview will conclude with a chronological presentation of some of the historical incidents and descriptions found in the words of travellers, historians and Orientalists, relating to ancient architectural features.

The term *roshan*/*roshān* also appeared in some traditional sayings and historical references. For instance, Abū Hilāl Al-‘Askārī says in his book, *Al-Awā’il*, that the first person to have a *roshan* was Budayl bin Waraqā. Budayl was head of the Khuzā’ tribe who lived near Makkah and supported the Prophet.
Mohammad (s.a.w.) against Quraysh. This indicates that this episode occurred in the time of the Prophet or it could be as early as the seventh century. This reference shows that the roshan was established in Makkah from ancient times. However, no description has been found regarding the form and dimensional meaning of the term in architecture, apart from it being an architectural element. Some sources also refer to the existence of rawāshīn from the first century of the Hijri calendar in the city of Al-Baṣra in Iraq: “It is likely that the roshan was in use from the first century AH in the city of Al-Baṣra for the word occurs in a speech attributed to the Imam ʿAlī (a.s.): ‘Your well-built homes and decorated houses have wings (ajnīḥa) like the wings of hawks and trunks (sic) [pillars] like the trunks of elephants’. And Ibn Abī Al-Ḥādīd said: ‘The wings of the houses that he likened to hawks’ wings are the rawāshīn’. And it is not unlikely that these rawāshīn would have spread from Al-Baṣra to the other cities of Iraq”.

It is said that the buildings of Al-Baṣra in the early Islamic Period, that is at the end of the period of alkhulafāʾ al-rashidīn (the Rightly Guided Caliphs), were outstanding for their many rawāshīn, which formed an additional storey to houses. Some of the historical sources describe houses standing at the time of Hārūn Al-Rashīd, including the house of Ibrāhīm Al-Mawsūlī which had a recessed reception area that he described as a zhulla (shaded area) and a roshan, and the house of Ishāq Al-Mawsūlī which had a roshan and a booth (tārima) and a long passageway and rooms facing each other.

ʿUmar bin Al-Khāṭāb (a.s.), the second Caliph, used to check the windows of the houses if they were overlooking neighbours’ houses and causing any sense of intrusion. In case of any intrusion he had the right to ask the occupier to shut these openings for the sake of the neighbours’ privacy. For instance,

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32. Al-ʿĀli, 123, quoting Khudayr.
33. Al-ʿĀli, 50.
34. Hārūn Al-Rashīd was in power from the eighth to the ninth century (170—195 AH).
35. Khudayr, 640.
in the eighth century/the second AH, Al-Azraqi\textsuperscript{37} describes the building of Al-Haram Al-Sharif in Makkah using the same word: over the gate is a teak *roshan*, carved and decorated with gold. It is 17 *dhira* long and 3½ *dhira* wide and from the *roshan* to the ground is 17 *dhira* and the gate is 24 *dhira* wide\textsuperscript{38}. Al-Tabari, in the year 865 AD/251 AH, says: [the ‘Abbasid Caliph] ‘Al-musta‘în was loathe to leave the house of Muhammad, but he was removed from it because the people boarded boats and nafât\textsuperscript{[sic]} in order to fire on the *roshan* of Ibn Tahir when he had difficulty opening his door on Friday. Some of these *rawâshin* over looked the River Dijla [Tigris]\textsuperscript{39}. This passage shows that the extension of the projection of the *rawâshin* was over the limit and broke the rule of privacy. In such a case, and for the sake of the neighbour’s privacy, the public reacted to defend the neighbour’s right. Such a link between privacy and the *roshān* in Islamic architecture will be studied further in the following sections\textsuperscript{40}.

The German Orientalist Adam Mitz describes Islamic civilisation in the fourth century AH/the tenth AD, saying that most of the houses of Baghdad had booths and *rawâshin* on the lower floors, which people riding donkeys used to bump into if they did not take care, and in which wanton and corrupt people used to hide. He adds that the streets of Shiraz in Iran were narrow, not wide enough for two beasts of burden to pass side by side, because of the great number of *rawâshin*; people also used to bang their heads on them\textsuperscript{41}. The traveller Nāsir Khisru described the houses of Fustat (Old Cairo) in Egypt in the eleventh century/the fifth AH, mentioning in his third narrative that the streets were narrow with buildings so tall that they needed to be lit by lamps, even in broad daylight, and the presence of *rawâshin* projecting into the


\textsuperscript{38} Al-Azraqi, vol. 2, 87. *dhira* is an old measurement unit that is equivalent to the arm’s length.


\textsuperscript{40} See Section Four.

\textsuperscript{41} Adam Mitz, *Al-Ḥadārā Al-ʾIslāmiyya fî Al-Qarn Al-Rabī’ Al-Hijri awʾ Asr Al-Nahda* (Islamic Civilization in the Fourth Century of the Hijra Era) Muhammad A. Abu-Rida, trans. 4\textsuperscript{th} ed. (Beirut: Dār Al-Kitab Al-′Arabi, 1967), vol. 2, 221. Mitz was a historian and German Orientalist (1869—1917).
street contributed to this necessity. A translation of Ibrāhīm Al-Rūmī Al-Āryan relates: “Ibn Farjān, who was originally a Greek and came to the city ... had many fine treasures and most of them were in the madrasa in his home, and were it not for him, its storeys would have collapsed, but he erected its columns so that they would bear the roof and the rawāshīn”.

Mamlūk documents in Egypt also refer to “rawāshīn made of pure painted wood ... and rawāshīn bearing the limit of their permitted load, and a roshan with windows, and an old double roshan, that is a roshan with double uprights made of stone or old wood” and “[a] platform projecting over the canal supported on buttresses built of stone and wooden rawāshīn”. Towards the Maghrib (west of the Islamic region) to the far reaches of Al-Andalus, it is recorded that: there was the palace of Al-Ma’mūn b. Dhī Al-Nūn, king of Tuli’tila (Toledo), a magnificent example of art and splendour. Its famous roshan, built in the middle of the palace’s lake of coloured glass, was embellished with golden decorations. This link between the Mashriq and the Maghrib of the Islamic world in crafts and buildings, especially the rawāshīn, is significantly notable and will be discussed further.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century travellers and Orientalists began to visit the Arab world and the Arabian Peninsula. Khan notes that in 1834 one European described the rawāshīn of the city of Jeddah as carved with refined taste and exquisite delicacy and bearing decorations composed with amazing harmony and beauty not found anywhere else in the Arabian Peninsula. The Frenchman Charles Didier described them in 1854 as “large external openings constituting a rare sight in Islamic countries where the whole of family life is lived within the house, and offering people the opportunity to see what

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43. Ahmad I. Al-Ghazzawī, Shaz’rāt Al-Dahab (Jeddah: Dārat Al-Mīnḥal, 1987), 227. He adds that Al-Āryan died in the city in 730 AH and the rawāshīn were clearly in existence at that time.
44. Amin and Ibrahim, 58, 113.
45. Salīḥ A. Al-Shāmī, Al-Fann Al-Islāmi (Dimashq: Dār Al-Qalam, 1990), 326.
46. Khan, Manāzil Jeddah, 14.
is happening outside and also allowing the women to enjoy the pleasant air without being seen by anyone”\textsuperscript{47}. In 1916 Thomas E. Lawrence described the facades of the houses of Jeddah as: “[d]ecorated by wide bow-windows running from ground to roof in grey wooden panels. There was no glass in Jidda, but a profusion of good lattices, and some very delicate shallow chiselling on the panels of window casing”\textsuperscript{48}.

The Dutch Orientalist C. Snouck Hurgrgnje described the \textit{rawāshīn} of Makkah in 1885 when he visited the city. He said, “The middle windows have balconies [\textit{rawāshīn}] that overlook the main streets and they are all enclosed in wooden screens with decorative apertures [\textit{qallābāt}] through which people inside can look out while people outside cannot see the people inside the house”\textsuperscript{49}. He also recorded that these balconies were called \textit{roshan}, while openings with wooden window screens were called tāqa (pl. \textit{tiq} or \textit{tqāt}).

In 1303 AH/1885–6 AD, the Tunisian traveller Muhammad Bayram Al-Tūnisī described wooden carvings including \textit{rawāshīn}, doors and windows in Makkah as being of excellent workmanship\textsuperscript{50}. He then noted that the normal old domestic buildings in Egypt had wooden \textit{rawāshīn} beautified with patterns and decorations, but not painted\textsuperscript{51}. He also described the houses in Constantinople (Istanbul — Turkey): “The finest of the palaces built by the Sultan Al-Muńim ʿAbd Al-Majīd (may Allah have mercy on him) is called \textit{dolma bikhtashih}, and nearby is another palace built by the Sultan ʿAbd Al-ʾAzīz, which is called \textit{Tsharghan} and it is more splendid and ornate inside than the first, but the first is finer in outward appearance and they are all on the coast of the Bosphorus and their many \textit{rawāshīn} open onto it, as is the case with all the houses there, and you do not find more than half a \textit{dhīrā} or a \textit{dhīrā} space between the...

\textsuperscript{47} See Khan, \textit{Manāzil Jeddah}, 14—15.
\textsuperscript{48} Thomas E. Lawrence, \textit{Seven Pillars of Wisdom}, (London: Jonathan Cape, 1935), 72.

\textsuperscript{50} Muhammad Bayram Al-Khamis Al-Tūnisī, \textit{Ṣafwat Al-ʾtibār Bumustawdā Al-Amsār wa Al-Qār} (Beirut: Dār ʾṢādir, 1303 AH), vol. 4, 27.
\textsuperscript{51} Al-Tūnisī, vol. 4, 128.
windows”52.

John Christie, a British diplomat who lived in Jeddah, states that, "The windows of the buildings were masked by elaborately carved wooden shutters and lattice screens. These bay windows (rawasheen, singular roshan) were the most distinguishing feature of the houses, projecting well beyond the walls of the building to catch every passing breath of wind”53. However, in the Museum of Abdul-ra’ūf Khalil in Jeddah, a lattice piece made of sandstone decorated with piercing and relief from the ‘Islamic Indian Mughal’ eighteenth century is documented as a roshan54. In fact, this may disclose another dimension in this study to analyse the roshān and its counterparts across the Islamic world.

From the evidence above, the following conclusions may be drawn:

- The term roshan or roshān was used in the Arabian Peninsula in both Makkah and Jeddah; that is, the area of the Hijāz, and in Egypt in both Fustāt and Cairo; in Iraq at Baghdad, Al- Başra and Al-Mosul; in Iran in the city of Shiraz; in Turkey at Constantinople and in India, and in Al-Andalus in the city of Ṭuliṭila [Toledo]. In short, this covers the whole of the Islamic world from the east to the west. Considering the fact that the Muslims reached the Indus River in 710 and Andalusia in 711, Islam influenced the culture and architecture of these regions55.

- As far as this research is concerned, the earliest use of roshan or roshān was in Makkah, perhaps at the time of the Prophet (ṣallā Allāhu ‘aláîhī wa sallam).

- The use of the term roshan by the Four Imams

52. Al-Tunisi, vol. 5, 45, 46.
55. The early Islamic Empire was taken to its farthest extents, when Muslims reconquered parts of Egypt from the Byzantines and moved on into Carthage and to the west of North Africa. In 711 Muslim armies conquered Spain, and by 716 Spain was under Muslim control. This would be the farthest extent of Islamic control of Europe — in 736 they were stopped in their expansion into Europe south of Tours, France. In the east, Islamic armies made it as far as the Indus River in 710. The Islamic Empire stretched from Spain to India. See Washington States University, World Civilization: Civil War and the Umayyads, http://wsu.edu/~dee/ISLAM/UMAY.HTM.
madhāhib in judgments about building and construction provides evidence that the legal textual means existed to make the term widespread in the Islamic world, at least among those connected with the building and construction trades and crafts during the tenth century.

- The evidence of the Mamlūk documents in Cairo confirmed the use of ‘roshan’ as being the most widespread and earliest, at least during the thirteenth until the sixteenth century.

- Adam Mitz used the word kawāšik (sing. kushk) with rawāšin, perhaps as synonyms, which will become apparent in the following further discussion of this term, which is currently used in a number of Islamic countries with the same meaning.

- The use of the term roshan by the traveller Al–Tūnisī, in his descriptions of the various traditional houses of the period at the start of fourteenth AH/nineteenth century, opens up two possibilities: either that the term was widespread in the Islamic world and carried the same meaning to the extent that travellers from the west or the east described these architectural features (rawāšin) using the same word and expression in a way to be understood that the roshan have universally the same form and function. Or, alternatively, that the term roshan was known in the traveller’s home country (Tunis) and he used it in his descriptions in a manner that was familiar and well known to him. If this is the case, then the term was current in Tunis with the same meaning, and if it was known in the western part of the Islamic world, it would presumably be far better known in the eastern Islamic world, given its Persian origin and the distance from Persia.

- The l:lajj and movement of pilgrims from Makkah to their own hometowns in the east and west of the Islamic world also helped to ensure the spread and the use of the term.
1.3. The Architectural Concept of the Roshān:

The roshan or roshān is a term extensively used in the areas of architecture and building in Islamic regions, and it has come to be used to indicate various architectural features including:

Defence devices:
Abdul-Qadir Al-Rihawi states that “the roshan is an Arabised word I found used in a fourth-century book so I used it to refer to defensive projections which are added to fortresses which are basically made of stone. The oldest example of this is in the Islamic architecture of the eastern castle of Al-Ḥiyr Al-Ṣarqi and other small examples are to be found in Byzantine houses in northern Syria, in the region of Al-Мāʾrāʾa”⁵⁶. He refers to the Hijri calendar, which means the tenth century AD.

In a study of architectural terms it is found that when the roshan was placed in the wall of a citadel, tower or palace it had a defensive role. From it boiling oils were poured onto attackers, as with the rawāshin in the western castle of Al-Ḥiyr Al-ḡarbi, the citadel of Aleppo, the tower of Sībā, the citadel of Sanjil in Tripoli and others⁵⁷ (Figure 2 and Figure 3). This can be reckoned to be an ancient usage, an image of what may be regarded as the earliest roshan, as Al-Rihawi claims.

An upper room:
The roshan is an old popular name given to a principal sitting room set aside for guests and people held in respect by the householders. The same term was used in the traditional old houses of Najd — in the central area of the Arabian Peninsula — for a sitting room on the floor above the ground floor⁵⁸. These rooms, by their situation and design, are better than the rooms on the ground floor. They are enclosed by doors and windows

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⁵⁸. From Sh. Hamd Al-Jāsir, and Al-Quwāl i, 254.
and they are the living quarters of the master of the house and his wife, or they are usually lived in by young people who are about to be married. Gertrude Bell described this room in her diaries when she was in Najd and Ha’il regions in the Arabian Peninsula in 1914, relating that:

As soon as I was established in the Roshan, the great columned reception room ... I rode through the dark and empty streets and was received in the big Roshan of the qasr [palace], a very splendid place with great stone columns supporting an immensely lofty roof of white jess, beaten hard (?) and shining as if it were polished ... We sat all round the wall on carpets and cushions.

A niche with a shelf:

The roshan is a niche on the wide section of a wall, triangular or oblong, containing one or more shelves and decorated with gypsum. It was intended to be used as a small elegant storage space. The word (رُشّانة) raushana/roshana was also known in the area of the Arabian Gulf as an architectural feature in traditional old houses,

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60. Newcastle University Library Special Collection, Gertrude Bell Diaries of 02/03/1914.
61. Al-Quwai, 254.
and it was a square or oblong niche in the wall of a room. Its approximate measurements would be 25 cm deep by 60—90 cm high, and it would be made up of two shelves. Some people would decorate it by surrounding it with a frame or coloured braid. These alcoves would be used for displaying decorative objects; accessories and oil lamps would also be placed there. The term seems to be used here to indicate a shelf used for placing oil lamps for lighting, therefore, becoming itself a source of illumination and shining light, and it was sometimes called a rauzana/rozana (رژنা). A similar architectural element is found in India and Andalusia as a shelf within the wall, which is believed to have been introduced by Muslims.

A dakka with apertures:

The roshan is the most important seating area in the house. It is a kind of a dakka built of stone provided with large apertures so that air can enter from three sides (see Figure 4). Double wooden movable sashes are used with it, made in such a way that the lower can be moved downwards and the upper upwards. In 1986 Al-Hārithī revealed in his masters’ research that the roshan is a kind of stone dakka whose dimensions match those of the opening itself. The level of the dakka is about 30 cm above the floor, but the roshan need not have a bench. The apertures of the roshan are fitted in its three sides, which project from the surface of the wall to admit air. Although there is a connection between the dakka and the roshan, as described in traditional Makkah houses, it is not necessary that every roshan should have a dakka. This connection is not solely a Makkan feature as will be seen through the Orientalists’ depictions.

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62. Al-Khurs, private letter to author, 1993 describing the word as applied in traditional old Kuwaiti houses. See also, Rashid Al-Oraifi, Architecture of Bahrain (Bahrain: Al-Orafi Gallery, 1989), 33.
64. See the last part of this section: ‘Andalusia and Beyond’.
65. A solid mastabah extends higher than the floor of the room.
67. Al-Hārithī, 75.
68. See the CD-ROM: ‘The Roshān and the Orientalists’. The dakka is knowing among the Orientalists as mastabah.
An aperture and source of light and air:
Towards the end of the nineteenth century Yfyim Rizfan described the wooden facades of Makkah houses, saying that the rawāšīn are considered to be the main features that characterise wealthy Makkah homes, and they constructed the length of the outside walls. These apertures are made in the protruding sides of the ground-floor door posts and so form a kind of enclosed balcony projecting by about 1½ arshīns (1 arshīn = 71 cm) and screened by rows of woven straw shutters that can be raised and lowered. Hariri confirms that the roshān is made up of a group of large, wooden apertures projecting out of the sides of the buildings and they are made of teak, which is known locally as Jawi, or Javanese wood.

Kaiser Talib refers to the rawāšīn of Jeddah, saying that the roshān is a sort of projecting enclosed aperture surrounded with

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70. Hariri, “Al-roshān”, 98. It is also known as 'Jawi' in the Hijāz region and Sawākān. See Greenlaw, 21.
decorated wooden screens. These *rawāshīn* are built upon a wooden frame projecting out from the wall, which is fitted onto the openings after being assembled and decorated as required. The wood may be left in its natural colour, or it may be painted or sometimes dyed. In the traditional houses in Madinah, the *roshān* is defined as the whole wooden surface projecting from the façade of the building. In this it resembles the *rawāshīn* of the region of Hijāz, for example in Al-Tā’īf, Yanbu’, Al-Wajh and Al-Qunfudha (Figure 5—Figure 10), as well as in Umm Lajj and Duba’ on the northern stretch of the Hijāz coastline.

Another study of the traditional houses of Cairo states that the *rawāshīn* are extensions or projections on buildings, which may have wooden railings, or they may be made of turned wood like *mashrabiyyat*, intended to increase the surface area of the upper storeys and to join buildings together. This definition is the same as that of the term *roshan*, which appeared in the Mamlūk manuscripts: when the *roshan* was made up of supports or *kawābīl* and then *maddādāt* or *kabbāsāt* of stone or wood, which secured the projecting part to the building. Then they would raise them with *harmadānāt*, also made of wood or stone, to form the floor of the projecting part. This projecting part might have railings of turned wood. In fact, all of these terms describing the supports of the *rawāshīn* of Cairo are identical to the *rawāshīn* of the Hijāz region and Sawākin. Nihal Tamraz argues that the *roshan* is a characteristic feature of the domestic Cairene architecture of the first half of the nineteenth century (Figure 11); she adds:

> Some parts of the façade would be projecting, or at least some rooms project in the shape of the rawshan (projecting

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71. Talib, 28.
73. King, 17–55.
75. Sing. *Kābul*, which is an equivalent term to corbel, the rest are names of supports.
76. Sing. *haramdān*, which means an ornamented stone corbel.
77. Amin and Ibrahim, 57. All local technical terms mean supports; but they vary in shape, form and materials.
The *rawāshīn* in the Hijāz region

Figure 5: *Rawāshīn* of Makkah.
(Al-ḤaJJ Research Centre, slide collection)

Figure 6: *Rawāshīn* of Al-Ṭāʿīf.
(King, 100)

Figure 7: *Rawāshīn* of Jeddah.
(King, 35)
Figure 8: Rawāshīn of Unbū. (Al-Murrahem, 1997)

Figure 9: Rawāshīn of Al-Wajh. (King, 20)

Figure 10: Rawāshīn of Al-Qunfudha, 1984. (King, 52)
mashrabiya window), often resting on columns or corbel but lacking mashrabiya, as was usual in the ten-existing style of Cairene houses and palaces.78

A point to be considered throughout this study is that some Egyptian scholars have already highlighted the fact that the projected mashrabiyya was called and known as ‘rawshan’ in Cairo. In fact, the term is still in use in some cities in Egypt today, such as Rashid and Qusier (Figure 12). The rawashin are one of the several architectural elements in the old buildings of Quseir, such as Sheikh Tawfik house79. These cities are on the Red Sea and on the route of the Hajj, a factor which plays a significant role in the movement of the rawashin across the Islamic world. This can be seen in the similarity of the architectural features of these cities overlooking the Red Sea.


The word 'roshan' was used with the same meaning with reference to the traditional houses of Sawākin in Sudan (Figure 13)\(^80\), where the 'roshan' is an aperture projecting from the wall, made of wood and used to admit air and light. The rawāshīn of Sawākin are not generally alike and there are variations from one roshan to another on the façade of one house, such as the rawāshīn of the house of Shinnāwī Bey and Khurshid Efendi\(^81\) (Figure 14). This unique feature of each roshan is not exclusive to Sawākin; it is rather a common point among all the rawāshīn in general.

1.4. The Construction of the Roshān:

The traditional roshan is assembled from identical parts and units sourced locally, so that the side panels of the roshan have one standard height, which also applies to the front panel with slight variations, not in the construction but in small details (Figure 15).

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\(^81\) Roden, 119—132, and Greenlaw, 22—37.
The variation may occur as a result of the joints between one panel and another, and in order to achieve a satisfactory general appearance of the roshān as a whole. This could be “with the proviso that generally the width of the side panel should be equal to the distance between the uprights that divide the panels of the roshān”\(^{82}\). The interior division of the upright panel also has to be appropriate and coordinated, as is described in one of the studies: “the roshān is divided into a number of upright sections so that the horizontal aspect of the roshān should be symmetrical (in most cases) while its vertical aspect need not be symmetrical because of the variations in the component parts and their use. Thus if the roshān were made up of a vertical unit ‘X’ which is repeated, the unit ‘X’ would be a unit of, say 50—70 cm and the roshān would then be made up of several units”\(^{83}\).

Since the present study does not deal with the precise dimensions of the roshān, the above measurements may be taken as approximations of the example in question, i.e. 50—70 cm for each of the standard repeated units as a module. The internal divisions of the standard unit can be considered as horizontal units connected in sequence from bottom to top. If the standard upright unit is ‘X’, on the inside it would be bottom X, upper X and middle X considered as separate parts. Consequently, the inside of the standard upright unit would be a unit with a horizontal measurement repeated for each of the (X) sections (see Figure 16). There are also additional trimmings and extras to join the parts of the traditional roshān as a whole into one fixture. Then the various decorative and imaginative items appear inside each unit and its parts, in the plain and empty areas and the hollowed-out and projecting parts (Figure 17)\(^{84}\).

**The lower part:**

The lower part is made up of two sections: the support (da’āma) and the base (qā’ida), which is the lower part of the roshān, which

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83. Taha, 68, on a study of the rawāshīn in Madinah.

84. For a complete visualisation of the roshān within its context see the reconstructed three-dimensional model in the CD-ROM: ‘From the Doorstep to the Roshān’.
Section 2

Figure 15: Analysis sketch of the roshan.
(Al-Murahhem)

Figure 16: The roshan.
(Front and Side view)

Figure 17: The construction parts of the roshan.
is plain on the inside and decorated on the outside. From inside the room it looks like a cover resting on a frame to be used for sitting. The area between the floor of the roshān and the lower panels may be covered with horizontal panels varying in height between 40 and 50 cm. This part forms a suitable height for supporting the back of who is seated in the roshān, and gives a clear outside view\(^\text{85}\). The lower part is the fixed part of the roshān and its measurement varies between approximately 30 and 70 cm. On the outside it may be decorated, while the inside is used differently and forms a harmonious part of the interior surroundings.

As for the support or da‘āma, the rawāshīn of Makkah rely on wooden supports between the floor and ceiling of the room, which extends by the same distance as the roshān protrudes. They are usually made of strong, squared lengths of wood, set close together, or the supports may be on both sides of the lower part of the roshān, forming an approximate triangle (see Figure 18 and Figure 19). These are called locally karādī (sing. kurdī). The term kurdī is also used in the rawāshīn of the traditional houses of Sawākin, in Sudan, where the support of the roshān is called a mada‘af. It bears the weight of the roshān on strong wooden beams projecting from the surface of the wall at an angle of about 10 degrees. The beams are left exposed without any covering, or they are hidden behind shorings and decorated planks. These shorings may be carved or decorated, and each of them is called a kurdī. However, the rawāshīn on the ground floor are set on projecting stone supports or on a projecting base wall that is built up from the ground to the level of the roshān base\(^\text{86}\) (see Figure 4).

In the Hijāz, the rawāshīn of the houses of Jeddah are supported on projecting supports (kawābīl), which are made of wood, and their design and size varies according to the resources and taste of the householder. Wooden supports that are set inside the walls of the building to bear the weight of the rawāshīn and the kawābīl

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\(^{85}\) Hariri, “Al-roshān”, 186.

\(^{86}\) Roden, 103—04, and Greenlaw, 104—111.
are also used as decorative architectural features, some being carved in the form of peacocks, which are a common feature in Persia and India. The *rawāshīn* of the houses in Madinah are supported in the same way and the wooden beams extending from the ceiling of the ground floor are called *kabūsh*, which may be covered and decorated with patterns and carvings to beautify the *roshān* (see Figure 19).

The middle part:

The middle part is the section that has the apertures (*nawāfīdh*), which are made up either of one moving section or of two sections, one of them fixed and the other moving. The essential aspect of this part is that it should be movable, because it is the part that controls how much air and light is admitted to the room. If it is made up of one section, it consists of panels that

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88. *Kabūsh* (pl. *kibāshi*) is a local term known in the construction of traditional Madinan houses synonymous with *kābulī* (Taha, 68). It is also known in Cairo, see Salih L. Mustafa, *Al-Turāth Al-Ma`ari fi Masir* (Beirut: Dār Al-Nahḍa, 1984), 97.
89. Taha, 68. These ways of supporting the *rawāshīn* are also used in Makkah and Hijaz.
open sideways or slide upwards, and they may be either plain or perforated or have small sliding panels. If it is made up of two sections, they are usually sliding shutters (Figure 22). Louvres are also used in these sliding shutters to control air and light. In fact, if the openings were of sliding panels with louvres, the flow and amount of air is more controlled. These louvres govern the direction of the air in which it flows downwards into the room or upwards, as the householder wishes. That is, the appropriate number of louvres in the sliding shutter can be considered as a separate unit that can be controlled independently.

In this part an extra lattice screen is used to conceal these apertures for more privacy. The extra screen addition of the middle part is an indication of the family or women’s presence and called locally shīsh (شیش). This element could be added to the rawāshīn, as well as flat windows, to give the sense of another hanging, screened, projected box (Figure 20 and Figure 21). Alter describes the one in Jeddah saying: “Perhaps the most common features were small balconies with lattice screens (locally known as shish), designed to permit the occupants to see without being seen.” The shīsh is a well known element in the Hijāz region, as well as Sawākin and Egypt. In the latter, the word is still in use for any kind of grids and lattices which are placed before the shutter of any opening.

This part plays a great role in controlling most of the roshan’s functions; including the view and penetrating air and light into the interiors. As far as the light is concerned, if these extra lattices are used, they help to limit the amount of glare that enters into the rooms through the openings. That is, the rays and light of the sun are weakened many times over on the movable surfaces around the units, which allow a comfortable amount of light to enter the interiors without exposure to strong glare. In

90. These panels have varieties of sliding window panels, for more details see Al-Murahhem, 164—199, and Hariri, “Al-roshan”, 186.
91. See the previous images in the Hijaz region (Figure 5 to Figure 11), especially, the orange dotted box that shows the shish attached to the rawāshīn and windows alike.
93. Jean-Charles Depaule, *A travers Le Mur (Through the wall).* (Paris: Center George Pompidou, 1985), 295. He refers to the origin of this term as Persian (Farsi).
addition, the amount and proportion of light can be controlled by closing and opening the shutters. If the shutters are plain, it is the grill shish that performs the task of filtering the light and limiting the amount of interior illumination. If the shutters have movable louvres, the light passes through these louvres in each wooden panel independently, with a possible opening of up to about 40% of the surface of that panel (Figure 22 and Figure 23). If more intense light is needed, the shutter can be raised so that light enters through the whole area of the shutter. Taking into consideration the fact that each roshān has at least twelve shutters, and each of them can be controlled separately, it is clear how much flexibility there is in the complete control over the intensity of the lighting.

The upper part:

The upper part is made up of two sections, the upper window (shurrah حورى) and the top treatment. The shurrah is the upper part of the roshān connected to the apertures, or the

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middle part. It may be plain or partly perforated, (i.e. plain parts and perforated parts with holes arranged in a particular pattern) as in (Figure 1 and Figure 15). A plain shurā'a is a horizontal surface, patterned or decorated with plant or geometrical designs which extend from the top of the apertures to the top of the whole roshān. A partly perforated shurā'a consists of geometrical designs incorporating perforations which are a permanent source of light. The more perforations there are, the more light is admitted to the room, and usually clear or coloured glass is fixed from the inside to prevent dust from entering. It is sometimes possible to move the glass upwards or downwards to allow air to flow into the room. The top of the roshān is the last part above the shurā'a and takes various decorative forms from plain geometrical treatment to floral decorative crowns (see Figure 24 and Figure 25).

These additional parts are extensions and trimmings used to decorate the top end, which act as a protective shield for

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95. Taha, 68. This treatment is found in the rawāshīn of Madinah.
the *rawāshīn*. This could be a *raffraf* or a kind of umbrella for protection with a crown which is sometimes called *burneita*, as it is called in Sawākin\(^6\). The analogy in the construction of the *rawāshīn* between the Hijāzi cases and Sawākin counterparts is evident (e.g. Figure 14 and Figure 17). In spite of the great quantity of woodwork in the *roshān* that extends outside, the three parts of its construction work as a whole to help the *roshān*’s mechanism. These parts are designed to benefit the interiors of the house. The *rawāshīn* not only as air filters but also as light filters, since they regulate the entry of light and air alike. However, it is worth noting that the *roshān* may constitute the whole outer wall of the interior space, and this large area helps to combat inadequate lighting, but it also catches the breeze (see Figure 1).

\(^6\) Greenlaw, 21. The similarities in terms and technical construction between Sawākin and Hijāz are astonishing.
2. The Roshān in the Arab World:

2.1. The Mashrabiyya:

Miles Danby defines 'Mashrabiyya' as an Arabic term to describe the latticework of turned or carved wood used for screens or enclosing balconies where privacy and ventilation are needed. Jean-Charles Depaule studies the projected windows in the Arab world, including Egypt and Syria, and documents the Persian term 'roshan' to be used in both regions. Evidence is clear that the term 'roshan' was replaced by new terms in Egypt and Syria. Such a debate opens up a broader analysis to trace this element, not just in the Red Sea area as a consequence of the Hajj route; it also follows the trade routes of the Islamic world. To map this architectural element and to retrieve its ancient term, the roshan and its current replacements will be examined in their regions across the Arab world. The mashrabiyya may be covered more than the other terms, because it is the most frequently used term currently replacing the term roshan.

This analysis aims to clarify the misunderstanding of the concept behind this projected window, and to identify the circumstances of this replacement. Although the debate is about the roshan, which is proven to be the oldest term for such an architectural element, local terms are kept as stated in the references, as they are the terms used in the sources. The main concern is to provide evidence that the roshan, as an architectural term, is old and was known in most, if not all, major Islamic cities, especially cities on the route of the Hajj.

2.1.1. Mashrabiyya — Etymology:

Mashrabiyya (مشر abiya), pl. mashrabiyyat (مشر abiya), is a term derived from an Arabic root of disputed origin. It is either from šr-b (to drink), mashraba (مشر abā) meaning a place for drinking,
a place from which drink is taken\textsuperscript{99}, or from mashraba, meaning a room or upper room\textsuperscript{100} which may be square\textsuperscript{101}. It is also said that it derives from shariba (شircles), yashra`abu (يشراب), meaning to look down over, or crane one's neck to see\textsuperscript{102}.

Another opinion highlights that mashrabiyya is originally from mashrafiyya, meaning an outer window in an old house that looks out over the street\textsuperscript{103}, derived from the verb ashrafa (اشرفة), to oversee. One attempt to establish the approximate meaning considers it unlikely that it is derived from mashrafiyya, because the meaning is so close to yashra`abu (يشراب). The verb ashrafa gives a meaning of 'overlook', similar to the meaning of yashra`abu, to crane the neck, and mashraba is closer in form than mashrafiyya, which is attributed to the root mashraf\textsuperscript{104}.

Consequently, it is more likely that the word is derived from the noun mashraba, which has the meaning of a drinking vessel or a place where drinking vessels are kept. That is, a section added on or built for placing these vessels for cooling, or a place for eating and drinking. Descriptions of houses in Al-Baṣra have the reference: "The rooms are characterised by decorations and numerous apertures covered with panes of coloured glass. The rooms on the lower floor are called bu)ra (بحر), while they are called ghurfa (غرفة) or `ulliyya (علية) — upper room — if they are on the upper floor, or mashraba (شربة) if they are used for eating and drinking"\textsuperscript{105}.

If it is defined as an upper room, it contains the two meanings


\textsuperscript{101} Khudayr, 17, quoting Ibn Al-Mukhssís.

\textsuperscript{102} AbdulAziz A. Abá-Al-Kháil, Al-Kitáb wa-Al-Sunna Asas Ta`wil Al-Árabi Al-Islámiyyah (Al-Áyadh: Abá-Al-Kháil, 1989), 102.

\textsuperscript{103} Rajab lzzat, Tarikh Al-Áthath min Aqdam Al-Árabi Al-Árabi Al-Ámáah, (Al-Qahira, Al-Ha`yya Al-Masriya Al-Ámáah, 1978), 145; Awad, 83.

\textsuperscript{104} Mashraf is a name of a village in Yemen in pre-Islamic times. See Wadhibi Ál-Samad, Al-Siná át val Hiraff 'ind Al-Árab fil Al-Ásr Al-Jalili (Beirut: Al-Mua'ssasa Al-Jarniyíla li Al-Dirasat wa Al-Nashir wa Al-Tawzik, 1981), 128.

\textsuperscript{105} Al-Áli, 52.
from *shariba* — *mashraba*, which translates as to crane one’s neck in order to be able to look out. In addition, this place for drinking may be on the upper floors. Al-Zabidi, the well known Arabic lexicographer, agrees with this meaning in saying that the *mashraba* is a room where they drink, so they have made it a name for the room\(^\text{106}\). A *mashraba* is also an upper room, although it is more common to say *ghurfa* than ‘ulliyya. The *mashraba* is a ledge and is the name given to a ledge between the wings of the room, and it is also said that the verb *ashra’aba* is taken from *mashraba*. Whereas *ashra’aba* means to crane the neck in order to look, or to lift or raise it, and every raising of the head is called a *mashra’ab*. The term *mashraba* has been used since the time of the Prophet (ﷺ), in the sense of an upper room or ‘ulliyya. Al-Samhudi says: ‘There is in the Sahih the saying of Hafsa: He was in the *mashraba*, and in one story it is called ‘ulliyya and in another *ghurfa* … and in another ‘He is in his storeroom in the *mashraba*. And a story says: ‘The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) is going quickly up to a *mashraba*, and another: ‘I went in and saw Rabah, the Messenger of Allah’s serving lad, sitting upon the doorstep (*Uskufat Al-mashraba*)\(^\text{107}\) of the *mashraba* dangling his legs over a wooden *naqir* [grove] and it was a *jadha‘* [trunk] upon which the Messenger of Allah used to go up and down’.\(^\text{108}\).

The existence of the doorstep is an indication of height and an elevation above floor level, so the *mashraba* is like an upper room. This is why it is sometimes called a *ghurfa* and sometimes an ‘ulliyya. The same source refers to another *mashraba*, which is Umm Ibrāhīm’s *mashraba*, in the Hadith\(^\text{109}\) of the Prophet (ﷺ):

“‘He prayed in the *mashraba* of Umm Ibrāhīm’. It was called Umm Ibrāhīm’s *mashraba* because Mariya the Copt\(^\text{110}\), the mother of

\(^{106}\) *Taj Al-‘arūs*, vol. 1, 314.

\(^{107}\) *Uskufat Al-mashraba*: the piece of wood upon which anyone entering the room would step — something like a threshold or doorstep.


\(^{109}\) The second source of the Islamic rules after the Qur’ān.

\(^{110}\) There may be a connection between the term *mashraba* and Mariya the Copt because the Copts were known as woodturners in ancient times, or it may have once been known and then become famous as a *mashraba* instead of ‘ulliyya or *ghurfa*, because of her. Or it may be a simple coincidence that she was taken to this ‘ulliyya rather than any other and there is no absolute similarity or connection. But it is not certain that the wood upon which it was supported and fixed is in the walls of the *mashraba* or its ceiling.
Ibrāhīm, the son of the Prophet (ﷺ), gave birth to him there and when the labour pains started, she held onto one of the beams of this mashraba, which seems to have been an 'uliyya (upper room) in a garden that belonged to her”

From the above note, it is clear that wood was the material used in this mashraba, but it is not certain that the walls were made of wood. It is reported that Al-Shuaylī said: “Hasan Al-Baṣrī said: I used to go into the Messenger of Allah’s houses when I was an adolescent boy, and I could reach the ceiling with my hand. Each house had a room (hujra), and it was a room clad in 'ar'ar wood”. It is also clear that the preferred derivation is from mashraba because it is an ancient Arabic form used in Makkah around the first century AH/the seventh century, and it was widely used not only in Makkah, but also in Al- Başra in Iraq with the same meaning (room, or upper room): “The houses of Abū Bakr and Al-Mughīrā b. Shū ba in Al- Başra were side by side with a path between them, they had two mashraba facing each other, each having a small aperture (ar'ar) facing the other, and when the wind blew the door of the aperture would open”

From the description of the two ‘mashraba’, it is clear that they were distinct, although they were in two neighbouring houses. Does this mean that the mashāra projected outside to the extent that the aperture in each mashraba was obvious? Or that it was a single room on the upper floor and that is how it was so easily recognisable? Does the term reflect the function of the space as a place for eating and drinking? Or does it symbolise the location of the space as in the upper floor which overlooked outer spaces? Whatever the case, what could be absolutely certain is that mashraba is clearly an Arabic term from the verb shariba, from whatever root or derivation, that was used from the beginning of the Islamic era and known in the architecture of old Islamic houses in various sites and places in the Islamic world. What is not as certain is the link between this upper

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112. Al-Samhūdī, vol 2: 463.
113. Khudayr, 16.
space and the wooden projected windows ‘rawāshīn’. However, *mashrabiyya*, as a term in Islamic architecture describing the projected wooden windows, is not as ancient as *rawshan/roshan*; it is rather a modern term which occurs more recently, from the nineteenth century. Although *mashraba* could be used in old Islamic houses, *mashrabiyya* has no sign of existence from the early stages of the birth of Islamic architecture as a feature.

### 2.1.2. *The Mashrabiyya — Historical Background:*

The oldest examples of *mashribiyyat* are said to be those in the Great Masjid at Qayrawan, where there is a *maqṣūra*, a screened area set aside for the ruler to say his prayers, made up of a framework and awning of carved wood and lattice made of wooden spindles with decorations of calligraphy and plant designs formed with perfect skill. Some date this screen to the time of the Amīr Al-Muʾīzz of the Banū Al-Zubayr in the eleventh century\(^{114}\), while others date it to the ninth\(^{115}\), that is, in the Islamic period. However, the manufacture of wooden *mashrabiyyat*, as a technique, goes back to before the eleventh century/the sixth AH, especially in Egypt, where the Copts were significantly advanced in working in wood, especially in fine turning. This craft flourished in many countries in the Islamic world during the seventh and eighth centuries AH, and advances continued to be made until it reached its finest stage in Ottoman times\(^{116}\).

In view of the fact that the *mashrabiyyat* (flat screens, in this sense) were based on woodturning, this woodcraft began and was developed in the Coptic period (third to seventh century). This kind of wood-screened aperture, which had a lacy appearance, became common in Egypt and was called *mashrabiyyat*\(^{117}\). There is a wooden *mashrabiyya* in the Muʿallaqa Church, which is the most important of the Coptic churches in

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\(^{114}\) Afīf Al-Bahnasī, Majallat Tārikh Al-ʾArab wa-ʾAl-ʾĀlam, 51.

\(^{115}\) Farīd M. Shafīʿi, Al-ʾAmāra Al-ʾArabīya Al-Islāmiya: Madiḥa wa Hādirha wa Mustaqbalha (Al-Riyadh: King Saud University, 1982), 257.

\(^{116}\) Shiha, 155. This may document early cases in Egypt.

Old Cairo. It has wooden sanctuaries and screens and dates back to the thirteenth century. The *mashrabiyya* may be from the same century or it may have been added with the restorations in the Fatimid period (909–1171) and thereafter. Doors of Coptic houses from the thirteenth century have been found, made in the popular style of carpentry, made up of squares with many pieces of wood acting as a frame and pieces of *mashrabiyya* finely made with turned wood in the popular style, with decorative crosses and geometrical designs. Some examples of antique *mashrabiyyat* are still in the Coptic Museum in Cairo. The above descriptions are referring to the *mashrabiyyat*, here, as lattice-screened partitions and not as projecting windows.

Some sources refer to examples of turned wood lattices known as *mashrabiyyat* going back to the Ayyubid period (1171–1250).

Gustave Le Bon states that the development and quality of wooden artefacts, including open-work *mashrabiyyat*, had reached perfection before the twelfth century. Moreover, most of the sources emphasise the flourishing of the *mashrabiyya* in the Mamlûk period (1250–1517), reaching its peak in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when it was widely used in Egypt. Among the finest examples in traditional houses in Cairo are a sitting room in the Shalabi house; a hall in the palace of Muhîb Al-Dîn; the house of Zaynab Khâtûn in the Fâtîmiyya district; the palace and *wikâla* of Qayt Bey and the house or palace ofBiashtâk in the Nahhâsin or what is called Al–Mû'izz.

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118. Farghalî, 71–75.
119. 'Awad, 76.
120. Shiha, 155.
121. 'Aabdul 'Azîz Hamîd, et al., *Al-Funûn Al-Zukhrufiya Al-'Arabiyya Al-Islamiyya* (Baghdad: Baghdad University, 1982), 39; and Hasan, 470.
122. Gustave Le Bon (1841–1931) is a French social psychologist, best known for his study of the psychological characteristics of crowds. Encyclopædia Britannica.
124. 'Awad, 85, and Muhammad, *Dirasât fi Al-Funûn*, 56.
125. Shâfi'i, 129.
Li-Dīn Allāh Street\textsuperscript{128} (Figure 34).

The mashrabiyya reached its peak in the Ottoman period, and traditional houses used it to decorate particular spaces on their façades or to improve the function of corridors and hallways on upper floors overlooking halls and open spaces, such as maghānī halls, which were beautiful mashrabiyya screens behind which female singers would sit (see Figure 26 and Figure 27). Similarly, the women of the house and their female visitors could watch the men from behind the mashrabiyyat and be with them from a distance\textsuperscript{129}. The mashrabiyyat at the front of the maghānī hall, in the house of Jamāl Al-Dīn Al-Dhahabi, overlooked the street, and above them were small windows made of coloured glass in plaster frames\textsuperscript{130}.

Among the seventeenth-century houses\textsuperscript{131} are Bayt Al-Sīhaymī (Figure 28), the house of the mufti or sheikh Al-Mahdī\textsuperscript{132} by the Cairo Canal, the Musafer Khāna in Al-Jamāliyya and the house of Ibrāhīm Katakhdā and Al-Sinnārī in Al-Sayyida Zaynab district\textsuperscript{133}. On the far side of the reception hall on the ground floor of Bayt Al-Sīhaymī, there is one of the most striking mashrabiyyat in Cairo. This mashrabiyya extends from wall to wall and almost from floor to ceiling. It is an enormous carved screen overlooking an interior garden, and from inside it looks like a mishkât [a monster lamp]\textsuperscript{134} (Figure 29 and Figure 30).

The above demonstration of the development of the craft of the mashrabiyya and its history focuses on Cairo because woodturning was an art there from early times and there are

\textsuperscript{128} This historic street was formerly known in the Fatimid period as Bayn Al-Qasrayn (between the two palaces) because it was formerly a spacious square lying between the great Fatimid palace to the east and the small Fatimid palace to the west. Farghali, 212.


\textsuperscript{130} Hasan Al-Basha, Madkhal ila Al-Āthār Al-Islāmīyya (Al-Qahira: Dār Al-Nahda Al-ʿArabiya, n.d.), 233.

\textsuperscript{131} Allām, 281, he states that these houses are not from the Mamlūk period. They are in the style of the Mamlūk period but built later. See Farghali, 218, for more information on the houses.

\textsuperscript{132} This house had been visited and depicted by some Orientalists such as Frank Dillon. See images of this house depicting from inside in the CD-ROM: ‘The Roshān and the Orientalists — From Within’.

\textsuperscript{133} ‘Izzat, 189. Most of these houses are restored and opened as museums.

\textsuperscript{134} Sahab, “Al-Mashrabiyyat”, 51.
Figure 26: The maghānī. (ArchNet library image: 0142)

Figure 27: From within, overlooking the main hall. (ArchNet library image)

Figure 28: Kinds of mashrabiyyat in Cairo, [Al-Suhami] House. Creswell, early twentieth century. (ArchNet library image: ICR0434)
ancient, historic examples of it in existence or previously
listed and recorded. However, the Islamic world witnessed this
development and the *mashrabiyya* technique spread beyond
the surrounds of Cairo and became known by the same name
in other places. In Egypt there are also the traditional houses of
Rashid of the Mamlûk period, which are famous both for their
*mashrabiyyat* and examples of woodturning. The projected
*mashrabiyyat* dominate most of the upper storeys in these
houses and are very varied, with no two *mashrabiyyat* being
the same in one house. A statement of the Committee for the
Preservation of Arab Antiquities says: “Since woodwork is used
more in houses than in *masājid* [mosques], we find the best
designs in domestic architecture, and it is pleasing to the eye
to find a collection of windows in a house containing varied
examples of woodturning. In the façade of one small house we
may find about up to seven designs in *mashrabiyyat*”. Among
the most famous houses providing examples of woodturning or

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135. See Al–Hajjān, 161—162, concerning the statement of the Committee for the
Preservation of Arab Antiquities (198).
mashrabiyyat are the house of Al-Amāsīlī, the house of 'Arab Killi, the house of Al-Tūqātli and the house of Ramadhān.\footnote{Al-Hajjān, 145.}

There are cities in the Islamic world where mashrabiyya work was known to be similar to that of the mashrabiyyat of Cairo and other cities, where the traditional houses are described as having wooden partitions and window screens. André Paccard claims that in Morocco the mashrabiyya is a projection from the façade extended with turned woodwork. It is also used as a perforated wooden partition or screen that allows women to look through while retaining their privacy. These screens were widely used in schools and their courtyards to separate one section from another. Paccard also emphasises that the mashrabiyyat in Morocco came from the east and the route to Makkah is counted responsible for this movement and cultural and architectural change, along with the excellence of eastern mashrabiyyat in their precision (in the roundness and smoothness of the turning) compared with mashrabiyyat made in the west, which existed for many centuries and were used in the making of chairs and thrones and screens used in school yards.\footnote{Paccard vol 2: 224—225.}

In the north of the Arabian Peninsula it is reported that mashrabiyyat are still to be found. For instance, in the old part of Tripoli in Lebanon, they are called kharrāja — a colloquial term meaning a projecting aperture.\footnote{Chālib, 158, 384.} To the south, in Yemen, the old city of Sa‘a and Dhimmār may be considered to be the Yemeni cities richest in the kind of windows known as mashrabiyyat. They are to be seen on the façades of the houses of these cities in varied designs, and they are also found in the area of Bīr Al-‘Azab, which is an area that grew up to the west of Sa‘a in the first Ottoman period. The Ottoman style dominates the houses and the mashrabiyyat there are usually borne upon wooden supports sometimes carved in the shape of the heads of...
birds or animals. They may also be borne upon iron or stone supports or graduated bricks. However, these mashrabiyyat do not have extensive decoration and take the form of narrow uprights of turned wood, some of which are angled or segmented to form small squares and oblongs in geometrical designs along with the addition of other geometrical shapes such as circles and semi-circles.

It is also reported that some mashrabiyyat project outwards to a notable extent. They may be made up of a number of small levels with apertures in the form of arches side by side. Some of the mashrabiyyat may have some decoration on the frames and precise decorations such as calligraphy or plant designs or geometrical patterns and so on. Since woodturning was known and used in various ways before the Ottoman period, it may be that mashrabiyyat were also known before the Ottomans were in Yemen.

Heading to the east of the Arab world there are other examples. In Bahrain, in Al-Muharraq area, there is a traditional house built towards the end of the eighteenth/beginning of the nineteenth century. For instance, there are numerous windows in the Siyādī house, and these windows have many layers. Some are larger than others and have apertures with wood-like mashrabiyyat, known locally as (karkari), which aid the flow of air inside the house and let in the cool breezes. This is actually seen in the north-facing openings to the summer room situated on the upper floor in the eastern side of the house, which overlook the street (Figure 32). A Bahrani architect has also described the old houses in the city of Al-Shāriqa in the United Arab Emirates: “the apertures in the old buildings are few and high up and designed in a truly scientific way. They have shades like mashrabiyyat to protect them from the sun and allow the flow of

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140. Shiha, 156. See the debate of these screens and the hijāb as a garment in Section Four.

141. Shiha, 156.

There is a similar use of wood in the architecture of the Gulf area, including the houses in Al-Khobar in Saudi Arabia. Earls claims that the largest and the most elaborate cases were in Dammam, Al-Khobar and Al-Hafuf and were similar to the cases in Bahrain. In the Gulf, the mashrabiyyat are not an extension of the room nor did they form a screened wall, but are independent additional appendages to the rooms with few features to integrate with the buildings. Earls also argues that cases of projecting wooden treatment in the Arabian Gulf region, including Bahrain and the eastern part of Saudi Arabia, are linked to India more than to Al-Baṣra in Iraq. He then states: "However, the long, continuous, cantilevered galleries projecting out from the walls along the sides of the buildings, in their basic concept, may have had stronger affinities to India than Turkey, for such galleries expand on Moghul palaces". The link with India and the Mughul reflects the ties between the Arab world,

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143. See the article on the old houses of Al-Shāriqa in, Khālid Shahīl "Hadharnā Al-Qadima Muhadada bi Al-Indithār" Majallat Al-Ittiḥād 4354 (1985): 3.
144. Earls, 139—140.
the Gulf in particular, and the Islamic world.\textsuperscript{145}

\subsection*{2.1.3. The Architectural Concept of the Mashrabiyya:}
Architecturally, the mashrabiyya is a current well known feature of traditional old houses in Cairo, as shown in the examples previously, in which it is defined as:

Firstly, a \textit{screen made of turned wood as a sort of a curtain}:\textsuperscript{146} a kind of a screen or barrier made of wood assembled from small pieces of turned wood and set in front of the windows of the palaces and houses of Cairo. It is made by assembling wooden uprights turned into wonderful geometrical designs placed between shutters that open from below in order not to allow the neighbours to see who is inside the house when the window is open.\textsuperscript{147} The mashrabiyya is also described as a lattice grid made of turned wood placed in the apertures and façades of the buildings to make separate partitions between the compartments in the \textit{masjid} (mosque) and the other areas. They are widely used to cover windows to ensure that the women are hidden.\textsuperscript{148} (Figure 27). In brief, this is a lattice screen which could be used anywhere to fulfil the need for privacy and concealment within the interior spaces.

Secondly, a \textit{wooden outward extension}: a projecting section, extending from the surface of the aperture for placing drinking vessels, made of turned wood. Hassan Fathi records that in the past it used to be a kind of projecting screen with a lattice opening in which a small jug of water could be placed to cool through the evaporation caused by the flow of air through the opening. Currently the name is given to an opening with a wooden lattice screen made of small wooden bars cut in a design of spheres with regular defined spaces between them forming a precise, decorative and very complicated geometrical pattern.\textsuperscript{149}

\textsuperscript{145} See the following discussion ‘The Roshān in the Islamic World’.
\textsuperscript{146} Tunbakji, 125; Al-Rihawi, “Al-Bayt”, 61; Khalifa, 90; Shāfī’i, 256 and Mustafa, 97.
\textsuperscript{147} Farghali, 45.
\textsuperscript{148} Hasan, 471; Hamid, et al., 39 and Muhammad, \textit{Dirāsāt fi Al-Funūn}, 56.
\textsuperscript{149} Fathi, 94.
It is true that this kind of wooden treatment was used in the past, however, Fathi highlights just one function of this architectural element: that it accommodates water jars, presuming that to be the main factor behind its name. As Fathi was an iconic architect in the Arab world and in vernacular and traditional architecture in particular, his concept became a philosophy which has been adopted by many scholars in architecture globally. Therefore, such an opinion on the principle of these lattice windows could be distributed widely and easily. This could be the reason for this wide concept behind the mashrabiyya, as he mentioned previously. If this is the case, then what could the mashrabiyyat be called if they existed without this portion for the water jars? The concept of the main root of this architectural element dominates the main argument of this analysis, where the current study disagrees with Fathi’s assumption regarding the old terminology.

Thirdly, an aperture in the upper floors: it is the outer window in...
old houses that overlook the street and is known as a rawash (روش), whose base is used for keeping clay pitchers (qulal) in order to cool the water in them, and the windows are made of turned wood. It is also said to be a kind of wooden balcony projecting from high up on the wall of the house, like an aperture for the upper storeys, and it is generally on a level with the floor of the room with narrow openings such that anyone inside the house can see out without being seen (Figure 27).

Thus the mashrabiyya is known as a kind of wooden screen that may project from the façade of the house. It is added to windows or may cover partitions that may fill a whole wall overlooking an interior courtyard, and is made up of interlocking turned patterned pieces. Although the term mashrabiyya is described as a projected window, stressing the function of cooling water jars as the main concept behind it remains a matter of confusion.

The complexity of this confusion may be due to the link between the roshān and the principle of the hijāb, which makes it easy to mix up the mashrabiyya as a flat screen and the roshān as a projected window. Simply because the turned wood of flat screens could also be referred to as mashrabiyya, even the turned wood panels which are used to construct local furniture are called the same name. This also could be the reason for identifying the mashrabiyya as a flat or a projected window, the same reason why the rawāshīn are identified as both flat and projected types.

The Encyclopaedia Britannica also gives as synonyms for mashrabiyya the words ‘mushrabiyyah — moucharaby’ or ‘Arabic mashrabiyyah’ describing it as a feature of Islamic architecture known as the ‘oriel’, which is a projecting aperture on the upper floors that occurs in French architecture under the name ‘moucharabieh’. Known in residential buildings, such as the houses of Cairo, the mashrabiyya is an architectural feature made of interlocking wooden pieces in the form of small turned balls.

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150. Izzat, 145, and Kamal Al-Din Samih, Al-‘Imāra Al-Islāmiyya Fi Masr (Al-Qahira: Al-Hay'a Al-Masriyya Al-'Iāmāma Li Al-Kitab, 1991), 166. Notice the link to the rawash as a term related to the roshān in this reference and the previous one.
152. Chālib, 384. Note the connection with the mashraba as a room in upper floors.
tightly fitted together in geometrical designs. This is another dimension of the historical background of this element and its widespread use, which plays a role in the oriel window’s history.

From the examples of the images (Figure 33 and Figure 34), it appears that the projected mashrabiyya has the same three parts as classified in the roshān. These are the lower part made up of the base or support, the middle part which contains the apertures and the upper part which has additional features to cap this projected body as a whole. Comparing images of mashrabiyyat and rawāshīn construction reveals similarities in the structure of both elements, where both have the main three parts with almost the same treatment. Wooden techniques may vary due to the availability of some materials and local skills, where the differences appear in the motifs and detailed techniques that are identified with each region (compare Figure 14, Figure 17 and Figure 30).

However, Depaule claims that the mashrabiyya is composed of four horizontal bands (a, b, c and d); each band fulfils and corresponds to a precise purpose. Depaule’s classification could be read as a detailed description of the middle part of the mashrabiyya, excluding the base and the upper top treatments. Therefore, the previous classification of the roshān, which contains the main three parts, appears functional and applicable. Such classification could also be applied to other architectural elements in the Arab world, as this general formula leaves room for flexibility and local identity in each region.

2.2. The Shanāshīl:

2.2.1. The Shanāshīl — Etymology and History:
Shanāshīl (شناشيل) is a term of Persian origin meaning the seat of the Shah; such a concept may be linked to India because of the term’s origin. The term is a compound of shah and nashin, which

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155. Yusuf, 14. See the link with India in the following discussion ‘The Roshān in the Islamic World’.
means the most splendid seat, or the best of seats. It is also argued that it occurs in the sense of the place in a room where the Shah sat, or a room within a room, or a part of a room, in the form of a recess facing the court of the house, but with the recess having no door. Shanāshīl is a name given to protruding wooden windows in the Iraqi region that were widespread in Baghdad, Al- Başra, Al-Mosul and perhaps other cities. The shanāshīl as architectural elements were known in Al- Başra from the seventh century/the first century AH. In studies of shanāshīl, it is recorded that the roshan is called shanāshīl in modern-day Baghdad, another states that the houses in Al- Başra in the Islamic era were noted for their numerous rawāshīn. These findings by Iraqi scholars indicate that the roshan was known and used as an old term in Iraqi architecture; and it is substituted by the term shanāshīl in modern-day architecture. However, the name shanāshīl is also given to a similar window in Diyar Bakr in Turkey.

The Baghdadi house is repeatedly referred to as the model of the residential building from the Abbasid period and even earlier. Some sources state that the Baghdad house reached its definitive form at the beginning of the eighteenth century. However, some scholars believe that most of the traditional houses currently standing in Baghdad date back to the late Ottoman period and the beginning of the twentieth century, with only a small number dating back to before 1869. This means that the shanāshīl goes back a long way. Its current association with the Ottoman period may be related to a particular model or change in the structure of the general design of these wooden windows and does not preclude its earlier existence, even though it may have been in a different and less significant form.

156. Al-ʿA.I., 55.
157. See Khudayr, 123 and 200.
158. Khudayr, 123, quoting Mustafa Jawād’s study in 1968. This is supported by another study, which states that the shanāshīl is an equivalent term to the mashrabiyya in traditional Egyptian architecture and that linguistic and cultural sources list it under rawshan/roshan. See Salimah Abd Al-Rasūl, Al-Mabāní Al-Turāthiyya fī Baghdaḍ: Al-Ka‘kh (Baghdad: Al-Muāsasā Al-ʿA. Amā lī Al-Āthār wa Al-Turāth, 1987), 65.
159. Al-ʿA.I., 50.
2.2.2. The Shanāshīl — Architectural Concept:

In a study on the Arabic house in Iraq, the shanāshīl has been described as a room on the upper floor of the house with windows, which project to the outside by about 50 cm, overlooking the street. Behind the glass, a panel of wood is set with perforations to prevent the sun from shining into the room in the summer, to maintain a steady temperature in the room, to prevent passers-by from looking in on the residents of the house, and to enable the women to look out without being seen. In addition it offers passers-by some protection from the sun in the summer and the rain in the winter162.

The Baghdadi shanāshīl resembles the mashrabiyya but differs slightly from it in terms of detail and construction. However, the parts of the shanāshīl are similar to the rawāshīn. In a study of the shanāshīl, Salman Al- Başri finds that the width of the shanāshīl is 5 m, the height is 4 m, while the depth is between 1—1.5 m. From top to bottom, it is divided into four sections, some of them fixed and some movable, each section being an average of 1 m high. Al- Başri also claims that these four sections extend across the width of the front surface and they are: the bottom support, the screen, the arch and the frieze163. Although he classifies the structure into four parts, the constructed parts of the shanāshīl seem similar to the rawāshīn, apart from the local terms of each part (see Figure 35).

In fact, the lower part, which Al- Başri calls 'the bottom support', is the fixed lower part of the shanāshīl, which supports the body structure. It depends on the extent of the protrusion of the shanāshīl from the wall, which may vary between 30 cm and 1 m, and the material could be wood or metal or other materials164.

162. Khudayr, 123. Yusuf, 19, agrees with these functions of the shanāshīl and also states that they are located in upper storeys of the old houses of Baghdad.

163. The shanāshīl measurements and local terms are from Salman Al- Başri, Dirāsah Jamāliyya li Al-Shanāshīl. Kitāb Al- Turāth Al-Sha’b bi 2 (Baghdad: Dar Al- Shu’ūn Al- Thaqāfiyya Al- ‘ammah, 1986). He is the only one who said that ‘shanāshīl’ is plural, and the singular called shanshīl. Al-Jawadi refers to these windows as multi-functional luxury windows or sometimes as bay windows instead of windows. See also M. H. A Al-Jawadi, “Window optimisation for Iraqi houses” Ph.D. thesis (Glasgow: Strathclyde University, 1986), 33—40.

164. The measurements are based on a study of Baghdadi shanāshīl. See’ Abd Al-Rasūl, 66.
The middle part, which is called ḥājiz, indicates the metal lattices or metal grilles surrounded by a wooden frame that cover the openings of the shanāshīl (Figure 36). These openings are constructed from wooden and glass sash panels that slide up and down. The wooden sash panels are situated immediately above the bottom support and above them are the glass sash panels, one of which is fixed and the other of which is movable. Sometimes the lower sash panel is covered by a lattice of criss-crossed wooden strips, similar to the shīsh, which may be used either with or without the metal grilles. These criss-crossed panels are to secure more privacy for women and family sections, similar to the shīsh. The metal bars, or ḥājiz, could also be seen in the Hijāz region if the rawāshīn are on the ground floor and are used for safety and security purposes.

‘The arch and the frieze’ are the fixed upper parts of the shanāshīl. However, the arch is a curved piece of wood framing a pane of coloured glass which is between 50 and 60 cm high. The frieze frames and forms the upper edge of the shanāshīl and it may have a wooden shade extending outwards from it. In fact, the arch part looks like the fixed openings in the upper part of the rawāshīn, more than being a single different part, as this unit has glass to admit light into the interior (Figure 37).

2.3. The Kushk:

2.3.1. The Kushk — Etymology and History:

Kushk (کَحْشَ)، pl. kushkāt or akshāk, is a Turkish term used to describe the wooden projected windows in Baghdad traditional houses. The same word is used in Syria which means a small palace, a rest-house or pavilion. This word was imported into western languages as ‘kiosk’ with the same meaning. However, the term is claimed to be of Persian origin. Depaule also claims that kushk is used in Syria and Egypt to describe a kiosk that juts outside the wall of the house and consists of many windows and suffa — which is like a covered or closed balcony. However,

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165. Yusuf, 44.
The lower part

Figure 35: The *shanāshīl* overlooking the street. (Warren and Fethi, 27)

The middle part

Figure 36: The *shanāshīl* from without. (Warren and Fethi, 14)

The upper part

The frieze

Figure 37: The *shanāshīl* from within. (Warren and Fethi, 30)

The hājiz

The arch
in Turkey it means the kiosk or a small open pavilion in the garden\textsuperscript{168}. The term ‘\textit{kushk}’ is also used in some parts of the Arab world to describe the mashrabiyyat and projected wooden windows, as found in Syria, Iraq and Yemen.

In Syria, Muhammad Kamil claims that the use of the word \textit{kushk} spread with reference to the traditional houses of Aleppo’s old districts, such as Al–Farāffra, Al–Jamīliyya and Al–Azīziyya. Kamil also adds that the \textit{kushk} is claimed to be an Ottoman craft that passed into the Arab–Islamic architectural heritage and brought about a radical transformation in the internal structure of Arab houses\textsuperscript{169}. There are some examples in the old quarters of Damascus and Hama (see Figure 38 and Figure 39). In Iraq, Mitz mentioned earlier that Baghdad houses had \textit{rawāshin} and \textit{kawāshik} as early as the tenth century\textsuperscript{170}. It is also reported that the \textit{rawāshin} in Al–Mosul houses that were brightly coloured and beautifully decorated were called \textit{kushk}\textsuperscript{171}.

However, the traditional houses of Yemen have protruding wooden windows in the form of mashrabiyyat that are called \textit{kushk}\textsuperscript{172}. Some claim that they are called ‘Turkish windows’ because these windows first appeared in the quarters that were constructed during the first period of Ottoman presence\textsuperscript{173}. But others make no connection between the existence of this kind of window in Yemen and the Ottomans, because of the fact that woodturning was known and used before the Ottoman period in doors and windows and pulpits and other similar architectural elements. These windows are also widespread in Zabyid, Jabala, Tīz and Ridā\textsuperscript{174}.

\textsuperscript{168} Depaule, 290—291.
\textsuperscript{170} Mitz, vol. 2, 221.
\textsuperscript{173} Khalīfa, 150.
\textsuperscript{174} Shiha, 156. He gives an example in the Ashrafīyya School (800 AH/1398 AD).
2.3.2. **The Kushk — Architectural Concept:**

Al-Rihawi argues that in Syria the *kushk* is a wooden balcony in front of the apertures in old traditional houses, and it is a synonym for *mashrabiyya* and *roshan*\(^{175}\). In Yemen, however, the *kushk* is a projecting wooden window in the form of a *mashrabiyya* on the façade of old traditional houses and is the most prominent of the windows\(^{176}\). The same projecting wooden windows are found in old traditional Iraqi houses. Therefore, the term is well known in Syria, Iraq and Yemen, from the north to the south of Arabia. This confusion with *mashrabiyya* may indicate that the term *kushk* is not quite as ancient as *roshan*. In fact, ‘*kushk*’ is a Turkish term that may reflect an Ottoman influence to the regions, or may simply have started with the Ottomans. What may reinforce this idea is the term used in Yemen for these windows, which is a ‘Turkish window’.

The confusion over the historical background of the *roshan* occurs here in referring to it as an Ottoman architectural element, as Earls previously states. This issue could be seen as another layer of the

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\(^{175}\) Al-Rihawi, Al-'Amarah, 626.

misleading terminology surrounding the roshan.

Protruding wooden akshāk resemble each other in their general appearance and the parts of which they are made up, although they vary in their amount of precision and detail. While the akshāk in Syria are box-shaped without any clear delineation of the parts, the akshāk construction in Yemen are more like the mashrabiyyat in Cairo, perhaps because they are based on the use of turned wood and piercing. Nevertheless, in all these cases the parts could be classified as the lower, the middle and the upper part.

The lower part is the base to support the body; in Syria it consists of two supports on which wooden planks are placed horizontally to bear the shell of the kushk and the floor. Whereas in the Yemeni examples, the base extends from the façade of the house by about 30 to 50 cm and is borne upon supports or rests of the same material as the building (baked brick, unbaked brick or stone). These supports, which are called kābūli, may also be made of iron or wood in the form of heads of birds or animals, and they may sometimes be made of stone or bricks in a stepped design. It is noticeable that the use of term kābūli, here, links with the rawāshīn of Cairo, Hijāz and Sawākin.

The middle part is the part that has the apertures, of which there are usually three in the front of the kushk framed by arches, or decorative relief appropriate to the general design. Syrian and Yemeni examples exhibit the use of glass in these apertures. In Syria, straw latticework 'khus' is added to protect them from breakage and to give increased privacy, acting as the shīsh. In Yemen, glass has long been in use and it may be that both plain and coloured glass was used in the apertures of projecting wooden akshāk. The use of shīsh also occurs in Yemeni akshāk, depending on the design, and they are also used locally for what

177. Kāmil, 77.
180. See Khalifa, 150 and Shiha, 156.
are known as *bayt sharba* (a place for earthenware jars), where these *akshāk* act as natural coolers adjoining the sitting room for chilling clay drinks' containers\(^ {181}\) (see Figure 40). This is another analogy of misunderstanding in describing the function of these extra screens as being used to cool earthenware jars, as it occurs with the *mashrabiyya*.

The upper part is called the upper *shurrā*a; this is similar to the *akshāk* of both areas, even including the addition of shelves, a shade and a top piece, except that some models found in Syrian houses have glazed apertures in the upper *shurrā*a which may be intended to allow light in, as in the case of Iraq. Generally, the *akshāk* are embellished with various kinds of decoration, such as calligraphy, plant and geometrical forms and some bird designs or compound images. These are common on the surfaces of the *akshāk* in Syria but more limited in Yemen, except that they may be made of small-scale rows of arched apertures set side by side\(^ {182}\).

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\(^ {182}\) Shiha, 156.
also from the same origin, except mashrabiyya and khurrāja, which are Arabic. All of the local terms can be traced back to the same Persian origin rowsh or roshan, which means a source of light. The historical origin is based upon the word roshan from the very distant past; this is confirmed through travellers’ and Orientalists’ depictions, including Adam Mitz and Edward William Lane. Consulting the opinion of Orientalists does not guarantee strong evidence; but it clarifies the literal transfer of local terms used in former times, especially as they were visitors to the region and not residents. This is in addition to what has been recorded by Arab travellers and pilgrims in the past. The Mamlūk manuscripts that catalogue architectural terms list the term roshan and define it as a projected element or wooden window, which is strong evidence of its ancient history. In fact, all the terms mashrabiyya, shanāšīl and kawāshik are fairly new in comparison to rawāšīn.

The comparison of the components and parts of the rawāšīn, regardless of their current names, shows that there are slight differences in the general external appearance, as various parts are appropriate to the environment and climate of each area. The similarity is clear between the three constructed parts: the lower section including the base, the middle section containing the apertures and the upper part with its treatment. These components could be classified according to a modern architectural analysis. However, similarities are still identifiable between these architectural elements (rawāšīn) across the Arab world. Variations are apparent in the detail, with regard to the creativity and variety in woodworking skills in each region. So while the rawāšīn of Egypt are found made with variations of turned skill and variations in size from one section to another, along with precision in the design of the apertures, those in Syria have apertures based on glass and the openings or apertures are slightly more widely spaced to comply with the climate. This may mark each element with its local identity.

It is clear that the middle part treatment of the rawāšīn across

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183. See more in Section Three — The Lanes Experience.
the Arab world could reflect the region and its environment, as this part has various casement shutters, sliding sashes or even qalālib (louvres). Glass panels are also used with wooden sliding sashes in some Syrian and Iraqi examples. The unity in all cases is in using the extra screen panels, to hide the openings, whenever privacy is needed. However, regional creativity, along with material availability, plays a part in the final appearance. This could be a factor not just in the Arab world, but in the Islamic world as well. All of these screen types combine to provide privacy for the interior spaces and add another kind of extra wooden lattice to make it easy to open the apertures in the rawāšīn and their counterparts without affecting privacy. These additional layers, whether they are connected with the structure or separated from and outside it, have various local names and designs.

The extra lattice screen that is projected from the rawāšīn and ordinary windows may generate the confusion of the roshān terminology. This jutted element could be seen as ‘mini roshān’, as Lane describes it. However, Islamic architecture has maintained the use of these extra wooden screens when it is essential to open windows and balconies overlooking the street, as well as the inner courtyards in order to protect whoever is behind them from the eyes of visitors and passers-by. This extra lattice screen, regardless of its local name, is used to cover apertures in the middle part of the windows and rawāshīn alike. It is an extra screen layer which attaches to the openings to secure privacy (Figure 41 and Figure 42).

A comparative study carried out in the Arab world demonstrates that the extra lattice screen may be a mashrabiyya screen, shīsh or khusṣ made of turned wood to cover the old-style apertures. According to Ibn Jubayr, it may also be called ‘khashab musharjab’, known as shīsh in the Hijāz, khusṣ in Syria and mashrabiyya in Egypt. The word shīsh is also used for various kinds of turned wood windows in Cairo, but in the Hijāz.

184. Tunbakji, 125—126.
185. Al-Riha, Al-‘Amarah, 636. See also Depaule, 289, describing the khusṣ in Syria as a wooden grid that could be moved to represent a screen in front of the window.
region and Sawâkin in Sudan this is the name given to wooden panels made of wooden strips cut at the ends and fitted into an oblong wooden frame in such a way that the strips lie vertically and horizontally or diagonally. Sometimes the various frames are large enough to cover the complete aperture of a window or roshâni, or to cover openings in modest houses, or the openings in the sidewalls of fine houses. Another type is also found in both regions with more elaborate wooden techniques, that is, made from notched or tongued laths halved into each other at right angles and set within a frame. This is called shîsh or shareikha work in Sawâkin, and shîsh or manjûr in Hijâz. In Syria another term is known as sha’riyya, which means an arrangement of fine interwoven wooden sticks forming part of a mashrabiyya. It is called a sha’riyya because it is woven from strips to look like a chessboard in the aperture, and it has a frame which is placed over the aperture to protect the glass from

186. Roden, 123—124.
188. Greenlaw, 103.
189. Ghâlib, 158, 234.
breakage. This craft was widespread and flourishing in the old houses of Damascus. There is little variation in decoration among all of these elements, because ornamentation in Islamic architecture, including Arabic calligraphy, is universal and widely used across the Islamic world, regardless of materials. The main principle of Islamic architecture lies where unity is reflected in the function and the role of screening as a means of hijab. Such a concept could indicate similarities of these screens in major Islamic cities as well as cities located on the Hajj route. As Makkah is the main destination of the Hajj, it seems natural that there is a variety of decoration, given that Makkah is a melting pot of many civilisations. As a consequence, there are Persian, Indian and Chinese decorations as well as decorations from Syria alongside decorations from Egypt and the west of the Arab world, and elsewhere. This varied collection brings out many ornamentation and woodwork skills, which are clearly and conspicuously displayed on the façades of traditional Makkan houses in the form of the rawāshīn. There is carving and turning and so on, so that the various crafts are gathered together in the creation of one artefact, apart from the fact that the different rawāshīn are themselves grouped together on one façade.


191. See more analysis in Section Four.
3. The *Roshān* in the Islamic World:

Paccard stresses earlier the route to Makkah, the Hajj in particular, as responsible for the movement of the *roshan* from the east to the west of the Islamic world. Danby also highlights the connection of these screens across the Islamic world and the solution to the necessity to prevent the inhabitants of being seen from the outside world. Danby notes that these perforated grilles are made of stone and plaster and are known as *celosias* in Spain and *jali* in India, where they are present in both religious and domestic buildings. However, there is another type of a screen used in a more modest domestic setting, which is made from timber and known as *mashrabiyya* in Arabic and *rowshan* in Persia. The decoration of the *roshan* of Andalusia in the city of Tullīṭila (Toledo) reinforces the above assertion of both Danby and Paccard. Greenlaw also adds:

Greenlaw highlights another dimension of mapping the *roshan* across the Islamic world and beyond; that is another journey from the East to the West. Therefore, this discussion examines the existence of the *rawāshīn* and its counterparts, regardless of its local terms in the Islamic world. Regions considered are those on the route to Makkah and the Hajj, a journey that has a great impact on Muslims, as one of the pillars of Islam, and plays a role in the exchange of cultures and trade (and other issues) across the Islamic world. The area covered here includes regions where Islam was the rule of civilisation for sometime, and where the Islamic impact shapes the architectural fabric and it is classified under the umbrella of Islamic architecture. This includes the

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192. Danby, Moorish Style, 64. The terms are written as they appear in the reference.

Indian subcontinent\textsuperscript{194} and other regions that were ruled by Islamic laws, sometimes as far as Andalusia\textsuperscript{195}.

3.1. The Indian Subcontinent:

The \textit{jali} (screen) is a relatively new architectural element introduced to Indian architecture. These screens are used to cover verandas, the most common and traditional features of Indian architecture, which could be described as balconies or \textit{jharokha} in the Mughal time\textsuperscript{196}. However, such a screen could link with the previous debate of the \textit{mashrabiyya} being used as a screen or a projected window, where the Islamic role of the \textit{hijab} lies behind the main concept of this concealment. The study starts with the lattice flat screens and leads to more elaborate projected windows. That is, the \textit{jali} as a screen resembles the flat lattice screen or the \textit{shish}, and the \textit{jharokha} as a screened projected balcony symbolises the \textit{roshān}. The purpose of this analysis is to cover the area where the \textit{roshān} exists in order to show how widespread it is. It is also to reveal the confusion surrounding these Islamic screens and the projected windows in particular; the case is similar to that of the \textit{mashrabiyya}, which is also not fully understood.

3.1.1. The Jali:

\textit{Jāli} (jālikā) is defined as “network, netting, criss-cross; a net muzzle. A material of open weaves: muslin, gauze, lace. A lattice, trellis, grating; screen.”\textsuperscript{197} However, \textit{Jāl} (jāla) is a Hindi term that means a net, a lattice grating; lattice window, and a network, mesh or a web. Whereas \textit{Jāla-dār} (Persian adjective) means consisting of mesh, network; a cloth or garment having network

\textsuperscript{194} That is the area covered by present-day Pakistan, India and Bangladesh; however, parts of Afghanistan, Ladakh, Assam and Kashmir have also produced some of the finest expressions of Islamic art and architecture. As claimed in Hattstein and Delius, 454.

\textsuperscript{195} The rule of Islam and the Arabs started in 756 and ended in 1492 with the fall of the kingdom of Granada. Eight centuries under the Islamic rule has a great impact on culture and architecture alike. See Gérard-Georges Lemaîres, \textit{The Orient in Western Art}, Harriet de Blanco, et al., trans. (Germany: Königemann, 2001), 7.

\textsuperscript{196} Kamil K. Mumtaz, \textit{Modernity and Tradition — Contemporary Architecture in Pakistan} (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1999), 63.

embroidery. Another dictionary defines jāli as a Hindi term for network; a net (for holding grass, straw); an ox-muzzle; a lattice; a grating; trelliswork, lace, bobbinet; the integument in which a foetus is enveloped; a coil; a caul, the pellicle or coating of a fruit-seed (as that of mango).

The definition of the first dictionary highlights the link between the netting, lattice and the embroidery of the garment in the Persian adjective ‘Jāla-dār’, which could be linked to the analysis of the roshān and the hijāb. In the other, the sense of enveloping and protection is evident, as in coating the fruit seed. The description of lace and trelliswork indicates the nature of this device in terms of concealment and protection. However, the link with the jali, as a screen in architecture, and with the principle of protection to cover as a garment is not direct in this sense.

The term Jalis is the subject of an interesting coincidence. If jali is written in English in plural, it becomes Jalis. Jalis (جالس) exists in Hindi, but its root is Arabic from the verb j-l-s-a, that is ‘to sit’. What is used in Hindi is the adjective ‘jalis’, that is part of ‘to sit’ or one who sits; one of a company. This could be linked to jali and jharokha as the seat of the Shah or the jalsa of the roshān, if it is not a complete coincidence. Perhaps there is a link between these two terms: the act of sitting and screening and the notion of being behind the hijāb. Could it be as the case of roshān and mashrabiyya and the sense of similarities in both etymologies, and the similar concept of the jharokha and the shanāshīl as a Persian term? The exchanging of vocabularies between Arabic and Hindi is old and interwoven, due to the trade of the Indian Ocean from pre-Islamic times. The Indian ports were often visited by Arab ships, and the Arabs are reported to have established colonies in Ceylon (Sri Lanka), Malabar and the Karomandal coast.

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199. Platts, A Dictionary of Urdu, 0372. Miles Danby also claims that jali (Urdu) is a perforated stone screen. Danby, Moorish Style, 232.
of India as early as the mid-seventh century\textsuperscript{201}.

The \textit{Dictionary of Islamic Architecture} defines \textit{jali} as an Indian term for a perforated stone screen, usually with an ornamental pattern\textsuperscript{202}. \textit{Jali} is also a stone lattice or pierced screen\textsuperscript{203}, or a perforated marble screen with an ornamental design\textsuperscript{204}. Literally, it is a ‘net’, screen, lattice or perforated pattern\textsuperscript{205}. However, one reference claims that \textit{jali} is a Sanskrit term for latticework or netting. It is an architectural device, a perforated screen of stone, wood, brick or other material that protects the interior of a building from direct sunlight while allowing an essential cooling breeze to enter. The \textit{jali} confers a measure of security; to deter thieves, the openings are never larger than the size of a fist\textsuperscript{206}.

These pierced walls are treated more as an enclosure offering privacy and security; nevertheless, stone lattices were later replaced by iron rods and thick timber lattices\textsuperscript{207} (Figure 43, Figure 44 and Figure 45). This is the screen or the curtain withdrawn to fulfil privacy and protection for Islamic purposes. \textit{Jali} have been used to cover verandas, balconies and separate interiors in Indian architecture since they were introduced by the Mughal. These pierced screens are used extensively in Indian architecture as windows, room dividers, and railings around thrones, platforms, terraces and balconies. During the day the reflection of their patterns moving across the floor would double the pleasure of their intricate geometry\textsuperscript{208} (Figure 47). Such a scene reflects the same benefits of the \textit{rawāshīn} and the beauty

\textsuperscript{201} Kamil K. Mumtaz, \textit{Architecture in Pakistan}. 2\textsuperscript{nd} ed. (Singapore: A Mimar Book, Butterworth Architecture, 1989), 32. Sahab believes that it is earlier than this time, as trade routes existed between the Arab of the Peninsila and India, as seen in \textit{Rihlat Al-Shita’awa Al-Sayff}. Sahab, \textit{Ilf Quraish}, 273–283. The goods from India reached the Gulf ports, Oman and Yemen where they then continued their journey towards the north via Makkah.


\textsuperscript{203} Michael D. Gunther. 2002, Old Stone: Monuments of India, Glossary of Indian Art. s. v. ‘jali’.

\textsuperscript{204} See more in Dominique Clévenot and Gérard Degeorge, \textit{Ornament and Decoration in Islamic Architecture} (London: Thames & Hudson, 2000), 220.

\textsuperscript{205} Mumtaz, \textit{Architecture in Pakistan}, 205.


\textsuperscript{207} Srim Ganapathi in, Oliver, 1.VI.4.i-i: 470.

of the interiors, which demonstrates the dramatic view of the play of light and shadow (Figure 46, Figure 49 and Figure 51).

G. H. R. Tillotson claims that variation in style and the extensive use of jali are not across windows but as panels in large areas of wall, where windows are often fitted instead of wooden shutters\textsuperscript{209}. He also states that jali appears in the zenana (women’s quarters), where the condition of purdah [hijāb] dictated the presence of jali or screens across the windows. These are finely carved stone lattices, through which the inmates of the zenana could glimpse the outside world or events in the courtyard of the palace without being seen\textsuperscript{210}. These examples of stone jali, which appear in zenana for women to peep through (as in Figure 47 and Figure 48), could be identical to the maghānī hall in Cairo where women peep through wooden lattices to overlook the main qa‘a. Such analysis reflects


\textsuperscript{210} Tillotson, \textit{The Rajput Palaces}, 5. It is also claimed that examples of these stone jali appear in Rajput palaces especially in the zenana section for women to peep from behind. See: Ilay Cooper and Barry Dawson, \textit{Traditional Buildings of India} (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd., 1998), 96.
an association between these screens and women’s quarters in the Islamic house, a concept that leads to the *hijāb* as a principle. In brief, the existence of the *jali* alongside the women’s section demonstrates the impact of Islam on the architecture of the region through the influence of the Mughal Empire.

Herbert Baker, the architect of the buildings of the Imperial Secretariat in New Delhi, points out that *jali* is one of the very early features of Indian structural design. He then adds: “These screens were familiar to the master-builders of the ‘Mohammedan’s India’, and latter developed, notably at Ahmedabad, into an art as exquisite, as it was wonderful”\(^{211}\). In fact, finely carved examples of *jali* appear in houses of Ahmedabad, Baroda, Surat and Patan in Gujarat among specific [Muslim] families, and in the south, in the curved wood balconies of houses and Hindu temples\(^ {212}\).

There is no evidence, which proves that the *jali* is not an Islamic


\(^{212}\) Peter Engle in, Oliver, I.VI: 470.
Figure 47: A delicate fretwork of carved marble *jali* in the loggias of the women's quarter. (Slesin and Cliff, 87)

Figure 48: *Jali* screen of the Khass Mahal in the Red Fort, Shahjahanabad, Delhi, 1639—1648. (Hattstein and Delius, 471)

Figure 49: A *jali* in a tomb in Gwalior, India, 1560s. (Danby, *Moorish Style*, 65)
feature introduced to Indian architecture. The Muslim Sultanate of Gujarat was founded in 1403, Ahmedabad was set up as a capital by Ahmed Shah in 1411, where vernacular domestic buildings were kept and the rulers were inspired by local forms and techniques to develop their own style of architecture in the frame of Islamic rules. Later, in the sixteenth century, the style was developed by the Mughal. It was not the only time when Muslims and Arabs existed in the Indian subcontinent. Trade has long been an important Gujarat occupation, although most of the merchants are Hindu; there are important Muslim business communities, including the Bohras, Parsis and Persian followers who fled before Islam in the eight century.

Moreover, by the end of the sixteenth century the Mughal Empire had expanded control over territories stretching from Kabul and Kashmir to Bengal, extending from Khandesh to Gujarat, to the northern border of Deccan. An aristocracy established through military rank was created from among the Mughals of Central Asia, the Afghans, Persian and Hindu Rajputs, who constituted the nobility of the new empire. This chain of loyalty was consolidated through a policy of marriage alliances. This was the local inhabitation fabric, beside the converts from Hindu to Islam and the impact of merchants and trade that affected the movement of crafts and building. For instance, it is claimed that in Gujarat the way in which the lintels of doors and windows were designed seems Abyssinian. Therefore there must have been close contact between the craft tradition of Gujarat and Abyssinia going back to the fourteenth century. Consider the Abyssinian craftsmen working in Makkah from ancient times and the link

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213. Cooper and Dawson, 103.
214. See Philippa Vaughan in, Hattstein and Delius, 454.
of the Hajj route and trade\textsuperscript{217}, beside the artisans’ transfer and exchange between Islamic regions. It is claimed:

Beyond the historic and regional differences there is a relative unity which is due to the recurrence of techniques, themes, principles of design and common aesthetic choices. These recurrent traits can be explained by an intermingling of cultures resulting from exchanges experienced throughout the Muslim world. For instance, it is known that the builders and artisans employed on construction sites could offer their knowledge from one region to another...\textsuperscript{218}

The architectural production of the Muslim world cannot be considered without the transferable expertise among artisans. The result can be seen in the development of these skills alongside with local artisans as in the Indian subcontinent.

Over the course of several centuries, Islamic architecture transformed North Indian architecture. Islamic decorative traditions in carved and pierced stone—often inlaid with mirrors or colored glass — and delicate miniature paintings were not only embraced by Indian craftsmen but developed into even more elaborate and detailed design\textsuperscript{219}.

The \textit{jali} as a feature being used in tombs was introduced by the Mughal to Indian subcontinent architecture to preserve \textit{hürma}\textsuperscript{220}. It is a concept for respect and sacredness of places. It is, then, used widely in houses or mausoleums alike in Muslim and non-Muslim buildings. Muslim architecture in the north-western region of the subcontinent — Sind, Multan, Punjab and the North West Frontier — had developed as an extension of the Turko-Persian cultures to the West\textsuperscript{221}. The technique of applying timber-bonding to brickwork or stone, as in Gujarat, was widely prevalent in ancient Syria and Anatolia as far back as 2300 BC\textsuperscript{222}.

\textsuperscript{217} This great link of Islam and Makkah in particular with the trade routes, still exists; there are districts for Indian, Pakistanis and Afghans. In the Hijaz region some big families are rooted back to these regions, such as Al-Sindi, Al-Milibari and Al-Afghani. Some families are still famous merchants in textile, spices and scents.

\textsuperscript{218} Clévenot and Degeorge, 20—21.

\textsuperscript{219} Suzanne Slesin and Stafford Cliff, \textit{Indian Style} (London: Thames & Hudson Ltd. 1990), 42. The reference also claims that this technique is mirrored in interiors from Syria to India.

\textsuperscript{220} A concept that implies holiness, sacredness and respect.

\textsuperscript{221} Mumtaz, \textit{Architecture in Pakistan}, 32, 38.

\textsuperscript{222} See Dhamija, 101. In 711 the Umayyad caliph in Damascus sent an expedition to Baluchistan, which went as far north as Multan, and then Raja Dahir at what is now Hyderabad in Sind. Muslim rule reached the Indus Valley. Umayyad rule stretched from Lisbon in Portugal to Lahore in the Punjab was the apogee of this vast empire. See more in World Civilisations: Richard Hooker, “Islam: Civil War and the Umayyads”, Washington States University, http://wsu.edu/~dee/ISLAM/UMAY.HTM.
Despite the impact of neighbouring Islamic regions, such as Iran, Afghanistan and Turkistan (Asia minor), on Mughal architecture, some materials cannot be found in India. This shows limitations when attempting to imitate a neighbours’ architecture. For instance, a neighbours’ architecture relies on bricks and mud bricks, with plenty of glazed tiles and faience mosaic for ornamentation; India uses stone as a main material. What suits stone may not suit bricks and mud bricks: as a result, the Islamic architecture in India is similar to the far regions of the Islamic world, such as Syria, Egypt and Anatolia. They rely more on stone, plaster and marble as materials, and on piercing and inlaying as techniques, but Indian examples are more elaborate\textsuperscript{223}. This accounts for the commonly found jali constructed from materials other than wood.

The arch, jali and dome were structural elements nurtured by Islam that transformed architecture, while geometric patterns and Arabic calligraphy became important decorative elements executed in the finest marbles, metals and gems by highly talented craftsmen. The Muslim rulers, while shaping the administrative and legislative destiny of the country, were prolific builders with ambition.\textsuperscript{224}

3.1.2. The Jharokha:

Jharokha, in Hindi, is loophole, eyelet hole, lattice, window, casement, skylight; open door or arch (of a summer-house)\textsuperscript{225}. It is also written as ‘Jarokha’, a Mughal term for a projecting covered balcony, often used for ceremonial appearances\textsuperscript{226}. It is a Mughal projecting balcony with a domed or vaulted roof\textsuperscript{227}. However, some references claim that ‘Jharoka’ is a Sanskrit term, to describe the emperor’s place of appearance\textsuperscript{228}. The last two references stress nothing about screening or covering these balconies. However, one reference defines jharokha as an

\begin{itemize}
\item Platts, A Dictionary of Urdu, 0403. It is also defined as a window or an opening, in Mumtaz, Architecture in Pakistan, 205.
\item Petersen, 131. See also Partha Mitter, Indian Art. Oxford History of Art Series, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 135, referring to it as ‘Jharoka’ — ceremonial balcony where Mughal emperors appeared before their subjects.
\item Gunther, 2002, Glossary of Indian Art. s. v. ‘jharoka’.
\item Ebba Koch, Mughal Architecture: An Outline of Its History and Development (1526-1858) (Munich: Prestel-Verlag, 1991), 109. See also Hattstein and Delius, 469.
\end{itemize}
elaborately carved partly enclosed balcony. Jharokha might be a Hindi term, introduced and well used by the Mughals as an architectural concept. However, dating it to Sanskrit roots may not be proved, because there is no sign of its existence in Sanskrit dictionaries.

From most of the descriptions above, the jharokha is not just a flat window; it is more like a closed or screened balcony. Some state that these balconies have wooden shutters opening over the street. Others says that it is a window from which the emperor showed himself to his subjects, or an architectural frame for an official appearance of the Mughal emperor; its conventional shape is that of an overhanging oriel window supported by brackets. Jharokha is a ceremonial balcony or oriel window used by rulers to present themselves to their subjects and to review processions. It is described as a balcony resting on carved stone brackets and covered with highly decorative perforated stone screens. Jharokhas are also described as projected screened oriel windows that allow women to view street life from above without being observed, which are more sufficient than windows since they afford side views down the length of narrow streets.

This is a description of the Imperial Harem of Fatehpur Sikri

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229. Slesin and Cliff, 292.
230. Some Hindi dictionaries which are used in this research. See bibliography, and the genuine effort of Mrs Jolly Rajguru in checking the term in Indian and Sanskrit dictionaries. Interestingly, the term shareikha which is a wooden technique in Sudan sounds similar to jharokha in India if they are written in Arabic. Could this be a coincidence after the proven links in wooden crafts between India, Arabia and even Abyssinia?
231. Cooper and Dawson, 100.
232. Koch, 58, 140.
233. See Dhamija, 163.
234. Dhamija, 114.
235. Norbert Schoenauer, The Oriental Urban House. 6,000 Years of Housing Series 2 (London: Garland STPM Press, 1981), 93. The term is written as 'zarookhas'.
complex in Agra, India. The place was secluded for the women of the palace, and designed to secure the hijāb custom, where the entrance gateway is flanked by ornamental alcoves, which are superimposed, on the upper storey, by jharokha windows, overlooking the court below. The description of this piece of a hanging lace, alongside with the images of (Figure 50, Figure 52 and Figure 53) reflect similarity with Makkan wooden lace facades as previously discussed (e.g. Figure 5). Therefore the possibility of the similarity between the roshān and the jharokha could be based on the argument that the jharokha is a projected pierced window, which could be formed from the Indian verandah that veiled with the Islamic screens jali. This pierced work could be made of wood, stone or any available material, which could be crafted in this way.


Jharokha could be correlated to the Persian term, shanāshīl, which means the seat of the Shah or the most splendid seat. Jharokha is associated with the emperor’s place of appearance, as a splendid seat for the Shah. This association plays a considerable role in the layout of the Mughal spiritual and political buildings; such as the masjid and Diwan-i-Amm (public audience hall). The Diwan-i-Amm has a wider nave in the centre indicating the direction in which the hall should be read. Accordingly, if the masjid’s wider nave leads to the mihrāb, the public audience hall’s nave leads to the jharokha, that is the emperor’s place of appearance. When the mihrāb indicates the qibla (direction of prayer), orientation of Makkah, the jharokha indicates the direction of the ruler’s seat, the King or the Sultan. For instance, in the Forts of Agra and Lahore, the halls of Public Audience (Diwan-i-Amm) were similar in shape to prayer halls of masjid, but with the focal point of the mihrāb replaced by the place that the emperor appeared in public jharokha. The parallel imagery was deliberate to unite spiritual

240. See ‘Glossary’ for the mihrāb and qibla.
and temporal authority on earth, as the *qibla* for the subject. This metaphor was reinforced by the inclusion of a *masjid* in the western side of the courtyard directly opposite to the *jharokha*\(^{241}\).

*Jharokha* could be a ceremonial seat from inside, whereas from outside it is projected and screened. This imitates the concept of the *mihrab* in being projected to emphasise its status as a focal point to attract attention, or the *minbar* (pulpit) when the Prophet (ﷺ) establishes the concept of giving a speech from a high place\(^{242}\). The notion of direction to show respect and importance may seem obvious to both features; it also indicates the philosophy of the status of the ruler on earth. Ebba Koch claims that the *jharokha* and its ornaments resemble a copy of the throne of Solomon (אֲרוּם) in the Qur'ān as an icon of power (Figure 54)\(^{243}\). This statement leads to the concept of the Mughal in paradise and what is being described in the Qur'ān. This concept has been reflected in Mughal architecture, especially in gardens, to be as paradise on earth\(^{244}\). In fact, this concept is to be found in many aspects of Islamic architecture.

\(^{241}\) Hattstein and Delius, 469. See Mumtaz, *Architecture in Pakistan*, 70—73, for the *jharokha* (the window of the hall of special and common audience) in the garden of Shalamar, the garden was laid out in 1640 for Shah Jahan.

\(^{242}\) Compare this notion with the coming statement of the similar concept in India and the Mughal.

\(^{243}\) Koch, 113, See the link of the Qur'ān and the Mughal architecture in: Hattstein and Delius, 467.

\(^{244}\) Hattstein and Delius, 474—483 and 490—493.
Jharokha, as an architectural element, resembles a screened projected balcony that started to be used by the emperor of the Mughals, who introduced this element to the Indian subcontinent. In respect of what is mentioned above on the emperor and his appearance to the public, this element may have started to shape traditional projected windows in Indo-Islamic architecture. Therefore the lifespan of this element could be assumed to be from the beginning of the Mughal Empire that was based, to some extent, on Persian civilisation\textsuperscript{245}. The time of the Mughals in India coincides with the existence of the Mamlûk era in Cairo, around the thirteenth century, where and when the roshan was flourishing in Islamic architecture. In fact, the trade route was the domain between these two civilisations, Egypt and the Indian subcontinent where experiences between artisans may have been exchanged as well. Gujarat textiles were discovered in graves in Fustât (old Cairo) and visual evidence of this trade connection is also depicted in paintings and manuscripts\textsuperscript{246}.

To analyse the architectural construction, here are a jharokha from Jodhpur from the Meherangarh Fort (Figure 55)\textsuperscript{247}, and another one from the Nawab’s Palace in Palanpur (Figure 56). Although the Rajputs were Hindus, the influence of Mughal culture runs deep. The first jharokha with jali is made of stone and the second is made of wood. Both examples demonstrate similarities in construction, including the three main parts between the jharokha and the roshan. This similarity with the roshan is not just in its construction, but also in the main Islamic principle of veiling the interiors.

The Mughal started to put their mark on the valley of Kashmir in 1586\textsuperscript{248}. This valley is dominated by Muslim housing along

\textsuperscript{245} The Mughal Empire started in 1526 and lasted until 1707. The founder was Babur (1481–1530) who descended through his father from Tamerlaine, and through his mother from Gengis Khan.

\textsuperscript{246} Mitter, 101. The Mamlûk controls the trade between India and Venice for more than 200 years. See more in Paul Lunde, “The Coming of the Portuguese”, Saudi Aramco World 56, 4 (July/August 2005): 54.


\textsuperscript{248} Cooper and Dawson, 48.
the Jhelum River\textsuperscript{249} (Figure 57 and Figure 58). However, Islamic impact reached the region earlier, windows in Kashmiri traditional houses have wooden \textit{jali} (lattices, formed of closely spaced slats) for ventilation and privacy. More elaborate \textit{jali}-work, known as ‘\textit{pinjara kari}’, was used for the shutters of large upper windows before the use of glass. This latticework was introduced by the ruler Mirza Haider Shah (1540—51) along with the \textit{hamمام}. \textit{Zoonдaб} (projected window and enclosed balcony) is the traditional façade. This was either cantilevered out from the façade on sturdy beams or supported by struts. Windows are plentiful in upper storeys as well as the number of bays that are locally called \textit{tak}, and each \textit{tak} appeared with a single window\textsuperscript{250}. \textit{Tak} or \textit{taq} is known as a ‘sill’ in Afghanistan, the word \textit{taqa} means an opening such as a window\textsuperscript{251} (Figure 59 and Figure 60).

\begin{itemize}
  \item[\textsuperscript{249}] See Oliver, vol 2.1: 1006.
  \item[\textsuperscript{250}] Cooper and Dawson, 48. See also, M. Zikmund and I. Hanzelka, \textit{Kashmir: The Heavenly Valley} (Czechoslovakia: Arita, 1962), 14, and 7 on the claim that Kashmir survived 200 years of the domination of the sultans and the Persian Shahs, but the Islamic impact was the most evident when the Mughal came from India.
  \item[\textsuperscript{251}] For \textit{Tak} or \textit{taq}, see Stanley I. Hallet and Rafi Samizay, \textit{Traditional Architecture of Afghanistan} (London: Garland STPM Press, 1980), Glossary. See also Oliver, vol. 2. 1013—1014. Where \textit{Taq} is defined as a type of a window treatment in Kashmir, that is a shuttered window alcoves cantilevered over extended floor joists.
\end{itemize}
Figure 57: A 200-year-old house, with lattice windows, overlooking Jhelum river in Kashmir. (Slesin and Cliff, 35)

Figure 58: Wooden screens in Ladakh. (Cooper and Dawson, 52)

Figure 59: Ornate projected windows in Afghanistan. (Hallet and Samizay, 179)

Figure 60: A street in Afghanistan. (Hallet and Samizay, 11)
The term, taq/tāqa is rooted in Arabic and is still used in Arabic as well as in Afghani\textsuperscript{252}.

There is similarity in the woodwork techniques between the Indian subcontinent and the Hijāz region in Saudi Arabia. Indian influences, such as from Malabar and southern parts of India, are conspicuous in Makkah. Family names such as Afghani and Kurdi in Al-Madinah could indicate a strong link with Afghani regions. That is, analysing images of the roshan from the Hijāz with examples from Indo-Islamic architecture can illustrate this visual analogy\textsuperscript{253}. For instance, the wooden cladding of the rawāshīn and their crafts in Makkah and Ahmadabad or Agra looks similar; and the cases in Al-Madinah are similar to Afghanistan despite material differences. Similarly, the Persians, who were merchants and have a strong link with Indian trade, were based in Jeddah and had a great impact on architecture and wooden crafts in particular.

\textsuperscript{252} The similarity between Arabic and Afghan languages, in building and construction terminology including wooden crafts is noticeable, such as Najjar for carpenter. This evidence proves the strong link in architecture among Islamic regions.

\textsuperscript{253} See the CD-ROM: \textit{The Roshān and the Hijāb}.

\subsection*{3.2. Andalusia and Beyond:}

In the palace of Al-Ma'mūn b. Dhī al-Nūn (1044–1075), King of Tūlīṭila (Toledo), there was a famous roshan, which was built in the middle of the palace's lake with coloured glass and golden decorations\textsuperscript{254}. The exact term 'roshan' is used here to describe a projected window with coloured glass, which existed in the eleventh century. This traditional Arabic description, compared with an existing example in Spain, reflects similarity with a projected balcony in Al-Hambra Palace. This balcony is called 'mirador of Darax' and is overlooking a lake in a garden with the same name, which appears in a map of the Palace\textsuperscript{255}. The balcony, the garden and the Lion Court are believed to be parts of the harīm section in the Palace\textsuperscript{256}. Nevertheless, 'mirador', which embellishes the building façades in Spain, is almost identical to the Arabic Islamic treatment. Mirador is claimed to be the term

\textsuperscript{254} Al-Shāmī, 326.

\textsuperscript{255} See more in Hoag, 27 and plate 65 for the map.

\textsuperscript{256} Al-Rihawi, Al-'Amarah, 408.
used for this element that fulfils women’s privacy and shows the impact of Islamic influence\(^{257}\). Bernard Rudofsky also argues that the lattice screen of Cairo has its counterpart in other countries where women are jealously hidden from men. He then adds that in spite of the long time since the Muslim ruled Andalusia, windows of Arabic derivation are still in much in evidence\(^{258}\).

Danby also describes these screens for privacy, as a device with one-way vision. These perforated grilles made of stone or plaster, known as ‘celosias’ in Spain, were carved with great skill and precision and were based on geometric or floral patterns\(^{259}\).

These types of lattice screens could be seen as an influence from the Islamic architecture of Muslim rule from a long time ago, where ‘celosias’ seems a kind of perforated screen and ‘mirador’ a type of projected window. It also places evidence on the claim that the rawāšīn have transferred from place to place following Islamic dynasties from the East to the West. Susanne Funk confirms in her study on ‘oriel windows’ that:

> In Europe, variations on this form [oriel windows] first appeared in Andalusia at the turn of the 13\(^{th}\) and the 14\(^{th}\) centuries, at the time when large parts of Spain — with the exception of the Caliphate of Granada — had been reconquered by Christianity. Interestingly enough, cities such as Cadiz, Cordoba, Granada and Seville conducted an active trade with Cairo. The 19\(^{th}\) century witnessed two new interpretations of this idea of an enclosed balcony. They are the ‘mirador’, a glazed, turret-like oriel attached to the corner of a building ... Traditional timber orielis are still popular in parts of southern Europe today, as in Malta, where they adorn facades along the length of whole streets.\(^{260}\)

Funk gives a clear picture of the roshān and its counterparts in the Islamic world, in relation to the role of trade with Cairo in particular. She also indicates the existence of these elements (rawāšīn) not just in Spain, but also in Malta and southern Europe (see Figure 63). Funk stresses the historical background of oriel windows in Europe, starting from Al-Andalus in Spain as the first destination (Figure 64). This appears to be further

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\(^{257}\) Suzanne Slesin, et al., *Spanish Style* (New York: Clarkson Potter Publisher, 1990), 38–39 and 209.


\(^{259}\) Danby, *Moorish Style*, 64, 232.

\(^{260}\) Susanne Funk, “The Oriel in Architecture” *Detail* 37, 7 (October/November 1997): 1080.
evidence of the existence of the rawāshīn-like features in Spain, which may currently be called mirador. These features in architecture appeared in the thirteenth and the fourteenth century, as Funk claims in searching for the origin of these elements.

Margaret Wood records that twelfth and especially thirteenth-century documents mention a mysterious addition called an oriel (oriol), obviously larger than a mere projecting window. But the earliest reference discovered is one of 1186. This means that the oriel is a relatively new element to the English Mediaeval House. It is also claimed that the term ‘oriel’ is often loosely but incorrectly applied to any bay window. However, it was a characteristic of the late medieval and early Renaissance period (fourteenth to fifteenth century) in England in civic and domestic buildings alike. It is also found in France and Germany during the same period. In view of the apogee of the rawāshīn during the Mamlūk period and later during the Ottoman Empire alongside the link with south east Europe, Jennifer Scarce emphasises that the exchanging of cultural aspects occurred in architecture and costume alike. This exchanging was one of the more obvious and striking visual symbols of Ottoman influence in south east Europe (see Figure 61). Even earlier than the Ottoman impact, Venice was another gateway for this exchange; being situated between Europe and the civilisations of Byzantium and the Islamic world. Venice was uniquely positioned at the crossroads of East and West. For more than 200 years the Venetians and the Mamlūks had maintained diplomatic and commercial relations, and their prosperity was interdependent. Such a strong link may have produced a physical impact on Venetian culture, and architecture was one facet.

Deborah Howard claims that the Venetian wooden Liagò, a

roofed, projected gallery enclosed on three sides, replicated more the eastern prototype (Figure 62). She believes that there is a link between the balconies in Venice and the wooden screened windows \([\text{rawāshīn}]\) of the Fatimid period (tenth to twelfth century)\(^{266}\). Although the example of the Venetian wooden Liagô looks similar to the cases of Al–Shām rather than Cairo, it could be another architectural element which reflects the \(\text{rawāshīn}\) concept. The aspect of screening windows and the projected balcony is clearly evident. Furthermore, the image of the \(\text{rawāshīn}\) could be transferred to Venice with Bellini’s depiction of *The Reception of the Venetian Ambassador in Damascus*\(^{267}\). This depiction could be in the late fifteenth century, as it will be highlighted in the following section on the role of the Orientalists in transferring cultural images.

From the East to the Far West Danby gives examples of these projected lattice windows as the one in Lima (Peru) of the

The Fatimid Period (969—1171).

\(^{267}\) See Howard, 17, and Lemaire, 9.

Archbishop’s Palace that was built in 1939 (Figure 65). These windows and their geometrical patterns are influenced by the Mudéjar tradition, a Spanish term which refers to Muslims who remain in Spain, and the style of architecture that largely derived from their culture. Perhaps there is a link between the terms ‘Mudéjar’ and ‘Mirador’, which describes these windows in Spain.
Danby also pinpoints that this Islamic architectural influence has transferred to South America with Spanish architecture to its colonies. Christopher Alexander has read these immigrant Spanish architectural features as Peruvian’s (Figure 66).

The process of watching the street from upper storey windows is strongly embedded in traditional Peruvian culture in the form of mirador, the beautiful ornamented gallery which sticks out over the street from many of the colonial buildings in Lima. Peruvian girls especially love to watch the street, but only if they are not too visible. They can watch the street from the mirador without any impropriety, something they cannot do so easily from the front door. If anyone looks at them too hard, they can pull back into the window.

Perhaps many indications stress that oriel windows could be another development of the rawāshīn. Danby emphasises that these wooden projected windows ‘mashrabiyyat’ resemble oriel windows in Western architecture:

268. Danby, Moorish Style, 198–199, and 232 for the definition of ‘Mudejar’.
Figure 64: From Seville in Spain. (Funk, 1079)

Figure 65: Lima. Archbishop's Palace, 1939. (Danby, Moorish Style, 232)

Figure 66: A house in Lima, Peru. (Innes, 48)
This balcony closely resembles what is called an oriel window in western architecture, made of solid wood, generally teak, and having a seat above floor level where cushions and backrests are placed. If the screen covers an aperture overlooking the outside wall or facing an interior courtyard, it generally has a special box with openings to contain drinking vessels. This kind of wooden screen is known in Cairo as mashrabiyya, but it is found in different designs and finished in various ways as we move from the Far East to Latin America.\(^{271}\)

The Orientalist Martin Briggs stresses the spread of the lattice screens beyond the Islamic world into Europe. He says that these wooden ‘Arab mashrabiyyat’, which were used to screen off the women’s quarters in houses and as dividing partitions in mosques were copied by the British in making metal railings and fences\(^{272}\). Besides, the use of ‘oriel’ windows in French architecture has already been described, together with the ways in which they came to prominence at the beginning of the fifteenth century, when they were usually to be found above doorways and entrances to houses and public buildings. This lasted until the end of the Gothic and Tudor periods, although these oriel windows became widespread again with the emergence of the Gothic Revival in the nineteenth century\(^{273}\). This may indicate another revival journey of the *rawāšīn* through the French and the colonisation of Cairo and other Arab regions in North Africa, where artefacts were brought from there to be adapted into the French culture. Napoleon’s expeditions played a part in the journey of the *rawāšīn*, migrating from its home origin to Paris. Kamil also stresses the migration of Islamic architectural elements, such as the *kushk*, as an architectural device that transferred from Istanbul to Britain, France and Germany and contributed to the development of architecture from one-storey to multi-storied buildings\(^{274}\).


\(^{273}\) Encyclopaedia Britannica, vol.7, 581. ‘Oriel window’ or ‘bay window’ are similarly described as being an aperture projecting from the façade and above the ground floor, strengthened by triangular brackets or other supports called ‘corbels’ (see Colliers Encyclopaedia, vol. 2: 547; Everymans Encyclopaedia, vol. 9: 197. According to Oxford English Dictionary, vol. 7: 199, and The Penguin Dictionary of Architecture, 31, ‘bay window’ is applied to a projecting aperture on the ground floor, and also called a ‘bow window’ because of its rounded shape.

\(^{274}\) Kamil, 78.
The impact of Islamic civilisation on Andalusia and the surrounding regions has an influential role on travellers and Orientalists in particular, and plays a role in cultural transformation. This was the map of the Islamic civilisation that links the history of the roshān and its existence as a significant feature in Islamic architecture, with consideration of the transfer of craftsmen and skills as well as trade and diplomatic relations between the Islamic world and the adjacent cultures. Howard records that in Venice there are some windows which resemble the notion of the mīhārab of the masjid, and these are called 'mihrab windows'. These types of windows emerged in the fourteenth century as an important modification in the formation of the window opening, which began to characterise Venetian merchants’ palaces. Gradually these windows transferred from merchants’ palaces to be a recurrent theme in the Venetian Gothic tradition. Howard also stresses the power of the image of the mīhārab, this niche of the qibla wall of the masjid that also appears in prayer rugs symbolising the light of eternity and the garden of paradise.

This concept, of applying Islamic rules in architecture, seems parallel to the Mughal architecture in India and the notion of the jharokha as a niche of the mīhārab, and a niche of the lamp within the wall of the Islamic house. Another element was introduced to the Indian subcontinent architecture by the Mughal, and it is called ‘chini khana’: a kind of display shelf to show attractive items or other family treasures (Figure 67). The concept may resemble the mīhārab, another Islamic element that embodies the notion of a niche of enlightenment. In fact, the mīhārab’s concept plays a significant role in many other architectural aspects in Islamic art and architecture. Paccard also claims that in the Magrib region (in countries such as Morocco and Algeria) low

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275. See more analysis in Section Three.
276. Howard, 155, see the impact of Islam on windows.
277. Howard, 156—158.
window niches called qbu\textsuperscript{278} facilitate the viewing of the street\textsuperscript{279} (see Figure 68). This feature is also commonly used in Andalusia, where it was introduced to Europe and South America via the Spanish\textsuperscript{280} (Figure 69).

In Islam, the concept of the \textit{mihrāb}, metaphorically, means more than Howard's interpretation. Such an explanation could be found in \textit{surat Al-Nūr}, a chapter in the Qur'ān, which has its role, importance and is interwoven with Muslim domestic lives\textsuperscript{281}.

In short, all of these aspects pour into one pot in relation to the roshān as 'mishkāt', a niche of illumination including its broader dimensions. A concept cannot be fully understood without referring to the Qur'ān and the verse of 'Allahu Nūr Al-Sam'awāt wa Al-Ardh', which means: Allah is the light of the heavens and

\textsuperscript{278} Paccard claims that the English word 'alcove' comes from the Arab 'alqubba', through the Spanish 'alcoba' and the French 'alcôve'. He was referring to the small, square or rectangular rooms, which are facing the entrance. See Paccard, vol. 2, 338. In fact, al-qubba is different from al-qabu. The first means a dome, whereas the latter means a place with no windows, or a windowless basement.

\textsuperscript{279} Friedrich Ragette, \textit{Traditional Domestic Architecture of the Arab Region} (Sharjah, UAE: Edition Axel Menges: American University of Sharjah, 2003), 76.

\textsuperscript{280} Paccard, vol 2, 238.

\textsuperscript{281} See Section Four.
the earth. This interwoven bond of the Qur’ān with Islamic art and architecture, including daily life manners and activities, is evidently associated. Therefore, the distinctive role of Islamic architecture and crafts cannot be understood without the specific context of Islamic religious doctrine and practices. It is doubtless that the Qur’ān is the fundamental source of the Islamic doctrine, which draws on Muslims’ rituals and beliefs, and in which there is no such concept that could separate the Qur’ān from any discipline in a Muslim’s daily life.

This niche that resembles the mihrāb and its furniture, which some of the Orientalists encountered while they were in Algiers and Morocco, was an element of fascination. It leads to another discussion in relation to the roshān as an image being brought home, such as the case of Frederic Leighton’s admiration of this kind of space within the interior. The image was also depicted in paintings, as shown in Delacroix’s sketch from Morocco, Moorish Interior with Two Mirrors, in 1825 (Figure 70). This Orientalist view will bring another layer of understanding and history to the roshān from a non-native perspective.

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282. See more in ‘Ali, 876.
283. See more on the role of Islam in Architecture in, Mumtaz, Modernity and Tradition, 63—66.
284. See Section Three — Leighton Case Study.
Section 3

The Roshān and the Orientalists

There are various kinds of mashrabiya design in Islamic countries and sub-divisions within each style; the style most familiar to Europeans is one made of the little, turned pieces and rods such as were usual in the mashrabiya of Cairo. These were often dismantled and turned into screens and panels which travellers in the nineteenth century brought back to Europe and they could be seen in many a Victorian or Parisian drawing-room.

Jean-Pierre Greenlaw, 103.
1. **The Orientalism Discourse:**

The use of the terms ‘Orient’ and ‘Orientalist’ lead to associations with ‘Orientalism’ as a form of discourse. The discourse of Orientalism is broad, complex and multiple, but it is not the main core of this section. Although Orientalism has been studied by many scholars, my own observations and perspective as a woman from ‘the East’ is the basis for a new approach. It is important to stress that I come from the same culture, and I have encountered at first hand the imaginary interior scenes depicted by ‘outsiders’ who may lack a complete understanding of their cultural context. An indigenous background allows a greater understanding of the cultural milieu of the roshan and its inhabitation. Those who are neither native nor brought up in the Islamic culture with first-hand experience of its values are unable to give an authentic or convincing description of its realities.

This issue was felt by Orientalists themselves. Arminius Vambery, the Hungarian Orientalist who travelled among the Muslims of Central Asia, wrote that, “It may well be said that Christian travellers like Burchardt, Burton, Maltzahn and others have exhausted subjects relating to the Holy Places of Islam, but a Muslim sees more and better than any foreigner”.

Howard also highlights the same perspective in the study of the relationship between Venice and the East, and she claims:

> Images from Islamic art and architecture could not be ‘read’ by westerners as they were by practicing Moslems [sic]. The subjectivity of perception was recognized by Islamic philosophers … just as Arab calligraphy, deprived of its literary content, becomes exotic decorative ornament for the western observer (with a hint of demonic power concealed in its ‘secretive’ content), so too, Islamic buildings assume a more purely aesthetic framework in the perceptions of the non-Moslems.

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1. See Section Five, for natives’ experiences.

2. Arminius or Hermann Vambery (1832—1913) was a Hungarian philologist and traveller. He went to Constantinople (1857—63) and learned several languages and dialects of Asia Minor and then travelled through Armenia and Persia in the dress of a native. See *The Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia*.  
4. Howard, 41—42.
Similarly, Lord Frederic Leighton’s house in London employed scripts from the Qur’ān as ornamental motifs to decorate the Arab Hall without any concern about authentic arrangement or underlying meaning. Islamic architecture is based on Islamic rules and doctrine. This is not just reflected in the materiality of the religious buildings but also in the fabric of daily life and domestic architecture⁵. That is to say, what could have been seen by the Orientalists as merely an aspect of visual culture would be, instead, a physical embodiment of Islamic obligation. As a result of long-standing misrepresentation, it is timely and necessary to conduct an analysis of Islamic architecture doctrine from the perspective of an Islamic ‘insider’.

This section focuses on the depiction of interior spaces and the experience of inhabitation, specifically, the role of the roshān considered objectively. Depicted scenes are situated in relation to key Arabic sources, traditions and native inhabitants’ experiences. The term ‘Orient’ is explored to emphasise the limitations, in time and space, of the Orientalists’ images, helping to define the boundaries of the research⁶. To tackle such an imaginary visual perspective, images will be observed and critically analysed. The accompanying CD-ROM reinforces the debate and reflects an understanding of the wider picture of the Orientalists’ imagination⁷.

Howard notes that the idea of the ‘Orient’ has been argued as an invention of the European mind. The renowned ideology of ‘Orientalism’ is dependent on the conscious awareness of a coherent ‘European’ perspective that was largely the product of a later imperialist mentality⁸. The Orient, as defined by Christine Peltre, refers to the countries along the eastern and southern edge of the Mediterranean, to what is sometimes called the

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⁵. See Howard, 5, referring to the strong link of Islam and architecture in saying: “In some respect, the religious basis of Islamic society itself generated a characteristic urban form, independent of historical or geographical location, acknowledging the complexity and variety of the urban patterns displayed in the Islamic world through space and time”.

⁶. The Orientalists of the nineteenth to the early twentieth century are the main concern.

⁷. See the CD-ROM: ‘The Roshān and the Orientalists’.

⁸. See Howard, 3 and 5.
Levant or simply the 'East'. The concept of the Orient is broad and uncertain, but it is a cultural and geographical concept with links to Islam. The current study covers regions where Islam has been practised officially for some period of time; namely regions that have been part of the Islamic world. The Orient, in this sense, comprises the Islamic regions as ruled by Islam until the time of the Ottoman Empire, as well as Venice, as a destination located between the East and the West.

'Orientalist', at its most general, is a term used for someone who is knowledgeable about the Orient, its people, languages, history, customs, religion and literature. It also applies to Western painters of the Oriental world of the nineteenth century who used Eastern themes in their works. Michelle Verrier claims that Orientalists never constituted a specific school, since most of them included Middle Eastern scenes among a variety of other genres. However, they were found in various countries, with the largest number of Orientalists' works being contributed by French painters. The earlier concept of the Orientalist is, more or less, based on French references. Briony Llewellyn has proposed a different definition, which the current study will follow, one in which artists who were never known to have visited the Near or Middle East are excluded from the Orientalist classification. From the same standpoint, Orientalists, who travelled to the Orient and spent sometime there observing daily life, are those upon who the greatest focus is placed in this study. Those were also the painters who were eager to collect props and Oriental materials for their studios. Orientalists whose perspectives were formed as a result of actual, rather than imagined, encounters with the East are the primary concern in this study.

9. For the Levant definition see Peltre, 14.
12. Briony Llewellyn, The Orient Observed- images of the Middle East from the Searight Collection (London: Victoria & Albert Museum, 1989), 12—15. Sweetman also mentions that the 'sublime' image of the writer who never experienced the East is very different from the one who had. Sweetman, 114.
The Orient gave Orientalist painters living colours, and a new way of drawing and painting that was both vigorous and precise. This stage documents the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the West discovered Islam in its physical reality in places where the Orientalists started to travel and to bring back their own visions. However, what remains from these journeys and experiences are layers of memories and nostalgic dreams that mapped the rest of these Orientalists' lives, regardless of the reasons that lured them to explore the Orient in the first place.

2. Mapping the Orient Impact:

Napoleon Bonaparte's expedition to Egypt in 1798 brought the East dramatically into public view. French Orientalism is likely to be inspired first by this expedition to Egypt and later by those expeditions to Algiers and Tunisia, between 1830 and 1881. Islamic culture, as portrayed in visual imagery, was being seen by a public who were distanced from the Islamic world. Islamic quarters in exhibitions were designed and displayed by non-indigenous people as if they were authentic. London's Great Exhibition of 1851 was the start of a new era of international and cross-cultural communication. Aspects of Islamic culture, regions and people were displayed in the Crystal Palace and subsequent international exhibitions of design and industry, although increasing demand for authenticity resulted in indigenous displays of Islamic culture by the time of the International Exposition in Paris in 1867. However, early displays relied on the outlook of the Orientalists' interpretations based on their own experiences. For instance, the Egyptian Court at the 1851 Great Exhibition was based on a series of original drawings that Owen


17. The British took control of Egypt in 1882. John M. Mackenzie, Orientalism — History, Theory and the Art (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 50. See also Thornton, The Orientalists, 14, and Sweetman, 4 in referring to the French who made the most of Islamic subject-material in paintings.
Jones\textsuperscript{18} had executed during his stay in Egypt in 1833\textsuperscript{19}. It can be seen, therefore, that this particular aspect of the representation of Islamic culture relied predominantly on the views of the individual Orientalist.

At the \textit{Paris Exposition Internationale} of 1878, the Algerian, Tunisian and Moroccan sections were situated alongside the Egyptian, reflecting the French conquest. The result was an architectural collage incorporating various periods and regions of Islamic civilisation. A large number of mashrabiyyat were on display in the Cairene quarter in this exhibition, including actual fragments from buildings which had been demolished in Cairo. These materials were shipped from Egypt to give a sense of authenticity. One of the architects of the Cairene quarter argued it seemed more authentic than the streets of Cairo, as it was impossible to find untouched streets there. He claimed this was due to the modern houses being built at that time, and that the collectors had ‘salvaged’ the main parts from the old buildings of Cairo\textsuperscript{20} (Figure 1 and Figure 2). In short, a large number of real artefacts, including the rawāshīn, were ‘displayed’ away from their original soil in the 1800s.

Before these exhibitions, images of the Orientalists’ views were published and distributed to the public. The literature of the ‘Orient’ began a decade before it appeared in paintings and images. This literature played a role in inspiring the nineteenth-century Orientalist paintings, for example, in the case of \textit{Thousand and One Nights} which was translated into French in 1704\textsuperscript{21}. In addition, travellers’ letters, diaries and descriptions, such as Lady Mary Wortley Montagu’s letters from Constantinople, were published contemporaneously. Scenes of the \textit{harīm} and \textit{hammām} (bath) featured in the work of the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{18} Owen Jones (1809—1874) was born in London and travelled on the Continent and the Near East in 1830—1833. See Darby, 139.
\item \textsuperscript{19} Nicky Levell, \textit{Oriental Vision: Exhibition, Travel, and collecting in the Victorian Age} (London: The Horniman Museum & Gardens, 2000), 31.
\item \textsuperscript{20} Zeynep Çelik, \textit{Displaying the Orient} (California: University of California, 1992), 51—56 and 75, 76, 83.
\item \textsuperscript{21} See the impact of the Orient on Western art in Lermaries, 52, and Roberts-Jones, 17.
\end{itemize}
French painter Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres were relied upon Lady Montagu’s experiences. Victor Hugo stated in 1829 that: “The Orient, either as an image, or as a thought, has become a sort of general preoccupation for both the intelligence and the imagination.” The imagination of the Orient occupied professions from literature to art and architecture, and contributed to the formation of the concept of the roshan among Orientalists.

Until the end of the eighteenth century only a few artists had visited the Near East. The Arabian Nights played a significant role in impressing the idea of the Orient in people’s minds. The Orient was for many nineteenth-century western writers, a work of fiction, simply an exotic book. For instance, the Victorian novelist William Makepeace Thackeray’s description of John Frederick Lewis’s house is an example of rendering such ideas in text, describing Lewis

22. Lemaires, 8.
23. Victor Marie, Vicomte Hugo (1802—85) was a French poet, dramatist and novelist. His father was a general under Napoleon. As a child Hugo was taken to Italy and Spain. The Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia.
within his house as being "dreamy, lazy and hazy". The way in which such a description is portrayed shows the considerable impact of *Arabian Nights*. The Scottish painter Arthur Melville also described Arabs to remind the reader of the characters in *Arabian Nights*, thus comparing real people to fantasy characters. Stanley Lane-Poole wrote in 1902, “it is easy to dream that we are acting a part in the moving histories of the *Thousand and One Nights*, which do in fact describe Cairo and its people as they were in the Middle Ages, and as they are in a great measure still.” He also claimed that *Arabian Society* by Edward William Lane was a reference for the Orientalists:

> These notes have long been recognized by Orientalists as the most complete picture in existence of Arabian society — or rather of those Arab, Persian, or Greek, but still Mohammedan, conditions of life and boundaries of the mental horizon which are generally distinguished by the name of Arabian.

In fact, the aim of *Arabian Society* was to comment on the manners and ideas in the *Arabian Nights* in the light of Lane’s experience with Cairene society, to reveal the measure of reality in this world. In this way Arabs’ real lives were assumed to be equivalent to fiction depictions. Depictions, whether in text or image, demonstrate scenes of daily life as drawn from *Arabian Nights*; that is, blending real life with fiction, with the express intention of maintaining this impression of the East much as it was rendered in fiction. This reflects Ziauddin Sardar’s claim that the East, or the Orient, as it is customarily referred to, always evokes an imaginative daydream that could, by definition, never be real. Nonetheless, the Orient has always been encapsulated in form of storytelling as fact, fiction and fable. Sardar also adds that, “The Orient of Orientalists is a constructed artifact through which the West explains, expounds, objectifies and demonstrates

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27. Arthur Melville (1855–1904) was a member of the Glasgow Boys. He went to Egypt in 1880 and sailed down the Red Sea to Jedda in 1882. He also visited Aden, India (Karachi), Muscat, Persia, Baghdad, the Black Sea and Asia Minor; he then continued to Mosul and Diar Beker. Thornton, *The Orientalists*, 138–139.
30. In the preface of the *Arabian Society*, Stanley Lane-Poole, the editor, mentions that he rejected some of the notes, which have no value [in his eyes]. See Edward W. Lane, *Arabian Society in the Middle Ages: Studies from the Thousand and One Nights*, 1883, Stanley Lane-Poole, ed. (London: Curzon Press Ltd., 1971), viii.
its own contemporary concerns”\textsuperscript{31}.

Artists reacted similarly in their visual depictions with some painted scenes reliant on Arabian Nights. Most of the Orientalists’ paintings embraced realisations of a mythical world or personal interpretations in the artists’ minds; especially those who had little or no direct experience of the culture. Despite the evident inspiration for Orientalists in fictional representations of the Orient, first hand examples of Islamic culture, as in architecture, also made a significant impression. Owen Jones, who designed a special Alhambra Court based on the real one in Granada for the Great Exhibition in London in 1851, noted that:

> The presence of so much unity of design, so much skill and judgment in its application, with so much of elegance and refinement in the execution as was observable in all the works, not only of India, but of all the other Mohammedan contributing countries — Tunis, Egypt, and Turkey — excited a degree of attention from artists, manufacturers, and the public which has not been without its fruits.\textsuperscript{32}

3. The \textit{Roshān} in the Orientalists’ Images:

Fascination with the \textit{rōshan} is reflected in many Orientalists’ paintings. These works, regardless of the imagined setting, document the existence and the widespread use of the \textit{rōshan} as an architectural feature in Islamic cities. These paintings are not merely still images in art, they tell stories and document history even if these stories are related to the artists’ historical backgrounds, experiences and understandings. There are, to a moderate degree, points of access to some historical architectural fact, regardless of the historical era of these Arabic scenes. In fact, they could be the only reference of visual documentation for this era, despite some misunderstanding or individual interpretations.

\textsuperscript{31} Ziauddin Sardar, \textit{Orientalism} (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1999), 1, 14.
The Reception of the Venetian Ambassador in Damascus of the late fifteenth century may be the first depiction of the roshān (Figure 3). This painting shows the roshān as a wooden box, jutting out from the wall with screened mesh openings. Although the roshān is not elaborately detailed in this painting, it clearly indicates that this architectural feature is an integral part of the fabric of the Islamic city. It also indicates the visual emigration of this feature from the East.

The mashrabiyyat of Cairo attracted many photographers and travellers. For instance, photographer John B. Greene was not impervious to the charm of these windows (Figure 4), whereas Henri Béchard considered them as a place of staging, a place where the gaze was concentrated because it allowed women to see without being seen (Figure 5). During the 1880s and 1890s legions of painters set off across the Mediterranean, their souls filled with sunlit dreams, mashrabiyyat, the twisted columned sūq of Tunis, the red gorges of El-Kantara and the arcades of places in Algiers.

33. The painting is recorded by an anonymous Venetian painter, oil on canvas, Paris: the Louvre. See Howard, 17. It is also recorded to be painted by the Venetian artist Gentile Bellini, who visited the Orient and appreciated its beauty and splendour, as he retained a great love for the East. See Lemaires, 9.

34. John Beaseley Greene (1832–1856) was an American photographer and amateur archaeologist who born in Paris. He travelled to Egypt and Algeria from 1853 to 1854. He then crossed the Nile and visited Beirut, Jerusalem and Damascus. See Roger Benjamin, Orientalism: Delacroix to Klee (Australia: Thames and Hudson, 1997), 252.

35. Henri Béchard (n.d) was a French photographer who worked in Egypt between 1869 and 1880. His studio was in Ezbakiya in Cairo. See Benjamin, Orientalism, 252.

36. Fine Art Society, 57.
In the nineteenth century, Orientalists travelled throughout Islamic regions depicting the roshān everywhere. Cases were not just found in Damascus but also in Jerusalem, Jaffa, Cairo and Constantinople, in Turkey. The image of the roshān was thus disseminated massively, leading to an appreciation of its constructed elements and ornamental characteristics. The materiality of the roshān and its size and scale in relation to the street planning are also illustrated. Scenes of streets shaded by the rawāshīn are depicted mostly in Cairo and in a number of other Islamic cities. The wooden technique of the roshān and its extra lattice screens were also seen in some paintings: In the Bazaar (1878) by Philippe Pavy and The Market Place (n. d.) by Eugène Pavy. Despite some accurate depictions of the roshān as a characteristic architectural element, some Orientalists tended to abstract some of the details or depict it incorrectly. They included Owen Browne Carter, who evidently did not understand certain aspects of architectural detailing, as Street in Cairo Near Bab El-

37. See the CD-ROM: ‘The Roshān and the Orientalists — From Without’, and Carl Haag’s paintings of street scenes in Cairo and Damascus for wooden techniques’ differences.
khark, a plate in Views in Cairo, 1840 (see Figure 6 and Figure 7). E. W. Lane was very anxious in his role as advisor on such matters and complained about inaccuracies in some of Robert Hay's volumes, such as Views in Cairo\(^\text{38}\). In fact, observing the detail of the rawāshīn's construction reveals a marked mistake in the depiction of the wood technique as a wrapping textile or patterned surface.

Social life and activities beneath the roshān are also depicted, especially the shaded area and its seating patterns. For instance, the painting of Almeh Flirting with Armenian Policeman (n.d.) by Frederick Arthur Bridgman\(^\text{39}\) illustrates the mastabah or dakka, a constructed seating commonly used beneath the roshān. Melville also depicted sitting beside the roshān in Cairo Coffee Stall, 1881. These paintings demonstrate another aspect, that is, the presence of women in relation to the roshān. Scenes such as

\(^{38}\) See Darby, 31–32, and Stanley Lane-Poole The Story of Cairo. xiii.

\(^{39}\) Frederick Arthur Bridgman (1847–1928) was the foremost American Orientalist. He moved to Paris in 1866 where he studied with Jean-Leon Gérôme. See Thornton, The Orientalists, 40–41, and Roberts-Jones, 136.
those depicted in *In the Bazaar* and *Almeh Flirting with Armenian Policeman* show an unveiled woman on the street with the *roshān* deployed as a metaphor for the Islamic veil (*hijāb*). However, the relationship between the *roshān* and women may indicate some genuine awareness of the role of the *hijāb* and women in Islam.

Depicting the *roshān* from the interior is similar. The Orientalists tend to associate this mysterious screen with women and view the *harīm* as a segregated section of the Muslim house. This is described by Florence Nightingale in her travel diaries. She notes, "Meshrebeeeyeh: windows which often projected several feet from the wall of a house and which were covered in lattice-worked wooden screens. They were often used by women who were able to look out into the street while remaining hidden from view."40 Despite this impression, some Orientalists illustrated the interior of the *roshān* as a dominant feature in the house, as in Frank Dillon’s paintings of the Sādāt house in Cairo. The others depicted their own interpretations of the Orient where the *roshān* was used as a stage for their imaginative settings. Such paintings embrace the staging of model women as if they were objects displayed in evocative scenes. Doubtless, in such cases, the *roshān* was seen as a visual means of bringing about the fulfilment of Orientalists’ fantasies, in many ways indicating an *Arabian Nights* atmosphere. Even if the *roshān* was not depicted as a whole, part of it would be shown as a symbol of the *harīm*, as seen in *Leila* (1892) by Sir Frank Dicksee and *Dreaming* (1882) by Dorofield Hardy. These pictures provide evidence that the *rawāshīn* were associated with ‘Eastern women’ in any Oriental scene.

This may stem from the idea of Eastern women being kept inside and locked away. Perhaps the tantalising idea of women being kept unseen from the Orientalists’ eyes led them to imagine what they wanted, and would like, to see. As a consequence women, as primary subjects, were depicted in a pleasurable and exotic manner to satisfy Orientalists’ fantasies. In these paintings, the

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woman was a component of a *harīm*; in most cases, she was a composite of the qualities of a *harīm* woman in general — an essence of a *harīm* woman. In these cases, the *roshān* within the *harīm* ‘implies’ a daily-life scene. The *harīm*, the private place, which is normally unseen by strangers, provided a literal stage on which to represent all kind of erotic activities and excesses. Mary Anne Stevens also notes:

> The imaginary exotic Orient was also given a more particular focus in the fascination which Western visitors had for the women of the East. These unobtainable women, with their veils and secretive lives, haunted the Western visitor and goaded him to seek access, if only in his imagination, to the forbidden quarters of the harem and the bath.

The other side of this trend was to depict the *roshān* as a place for social and family activities, being occupied mostly by the women of the house. This notion is represented in some paintings, for example the *Oriental Interior* (n.d.) by Frederick Arthur Bridgman, which may indicate the painter’s awareness of the notion of *hijāb* and women’s status in Muslim societies. This aspect was reflected in some of the artists’ paintings depicting veiled women in streets shaded by the *rawāshīn* in Cairo, as in his painting *An Arab Street Scene*, 1878.

The painting *Interior of a Harem* (1865) by Leon-Auguste Adolphe Belly illustrates a feminine setting of women enjoying their leisure time, where the *hookah* is demonstrated as an element to reflect entertainment. In fact, depicting Eastern women as if they are always idle, enjoying their time, seems to be a fashionable trend in the Orientalists’ artistic circles at that time. Belly’s scene shows women’s activities within the *roshān* and its traditional seating area. However, Oriental artefacts, such as a table and jug of water for washing hands, were placed in

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43. Leon-Auguste Adolphe Belly (1827—1877) was a French artist who travelled to Lebanon, Palestine and along the Red Sea in the 1850s. Roberts-Jones, 23—24.
44. A smoking pipe, which called *nargila* or *shisha* in some parts of the Arab world, is used by men and some women in big cities as a fashionable trend.
the setting and they give an artificial touch to the scene. These artefacts unveil the sense of a studio setting and turned a scene of daily life in the *roshān* milieu into a stage to be watched.

The *roshān*, as an element within the interior, is a crucial part of social life in Islamic culture. The restrictions, which prevent access to family sections of Muslim houses, may have forced Orientalists to evoke their own imaginary scenes. These images could be the first public profiling of the misuse and the misunderstanding of the *roshān*. Orientalists' images place the *roshān* in a restricted framework, without seeing it as a functional Islamic feature. This was the picture of the *roshān* in the Orientalists' minds, an exotic stage or a new theatre for their setting of the Orient that was analogous to *Arabian Nights* scenes. Such an image was interpreted and transferred from the East and distributed in the West through the eyes of the Orientalists, who saw their work as a medium to bring the Orient 'home'. Peltre claims that for some Orientalists, such as David Wilkie45 or David Roberts46, the voyage to the Orient was a transitory experience intended to bear fruit long after their return home47. For instance, Eugène Fromentin complained that if one wanted to earn a living one ought to paint the sort of pictures that people expected48. The misuse of Islamic features and codes of living does not cease, then, it is also found in other spheres, where the Orientalists brought the *roshān* home as an exotic artefact.

The trend for collecting artefacts, especially from the Near East, began as early as 1824, because it was often difficult and dangerous to paint on the spot in cities such as Damascus, or on religious sites and inside the *masjid*. Therefore, the solution was

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45. Sir David Wilkie (1785—1841), a Scottish painter and draughtsman who visited the Middle East in 1840 and died on his return voyage. Wilkie indicated in one of his letters that the West owed a debt to a culture he felt had been completely surpassed. See more on his attitude toward the Arab culture in Thompson, *The East*, 157—158.

46. David Roberts (1796—1864), a Scottish painter who went to Spain, Tangiers and Tetuan in 1835. In 1838 he sailed to Egypt and spent several months sketching and writing letters and diaries. He also visited Sinai, Petra, Jaffa, Jerusalem, Lebanon and Baalbek in 1839. See Thornton, *The Orientalists*, 154—57.


48. Lemaires, 8.
to make use of painting studios at home, where the models were manageable and the atmosphere was safe. In fact, this trend of bringing exotic artefacts home could have occurred as early as the 1720s when Lady Montagu brought costumes home from Turkey; she may also have brought some other artefacts. Edward William Lane is another key figure in collecting trends. Lane practiced as a Muslim Arab in order to safeguard his movements in Cairo, and he continued to practice some Islamic habits until he died. Considering that he married a Greek girl who was brought up in Cairo, it is hard to believe that he did not collect artefacts and brought them home on his return.

4. **Who Brought the *Roshān* Home?**

When John Frederick Lewis returned home from Egypt in 1851, he brought back dresses, Bedouin clocks, musical instruments and arms. Carl Haag decorated his Hampstead home in the oriental manner, while Frederick, Lord Leighton, a Royal Academician who made three journeys to the East, was so fascinated by the Arab world that he altered his Kensington house (now a museum) to incorporate an Arab hall. He also built up a considerable collection of Islamic ceramics and textiles, helped by the explorer Richard Burton. Frederick Goodall even went so far as to have local sheep and goats shipped home to ensure authenticity in his Biblical scenes of rural life.

Although Lewis brought back some artefacts for his paintings, no documentary evidence proves that he brought a *rōshan* from Cairo. These were props for his studio, used in a similar manner to the French artists who started this trend. Among the artists who played a role in introducing an Oriental style to their homes is Lord Frederic Leighton. Leighton came back from the Levant with enough columns, ceramics and basins to build an Arab Hall in his Kensington studio. The Arab Hall, which was built in 1881 in Leighton's house in London, was completed with a real *rōshan* (see Figure 8). This is a well known example, due to the fact that Leighton was a celebrated figure, widely known for his musical

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50. See the case study of 'The Lanes'.
52. Sweetman, 190.
parties. As a consequence, his house has had greater publicity than many others. But who else was fascinated with the Islamic interiors and managed to bring the roshān home? Above all, who experienced living within the roshān at home or abroad? The answers to these questions will be revealed in this section. This analysis not only highlights the use of the roshān in Leighton’s Arab Hall, but it also reveals other earlier instances where a new social context was provided for the deployment of the roshān. Analysis will also made of the impact of Orientalist imagery on the roshān as an architectural element.

The roshān cannot be understood without being placed within an appropriate social and cultural milieu and interior context. The diwān, maqṣad and qa‘a are interior reception spaces in which the roshān is usually found. The Cairene diwān or maqṣad was very common at that time, first evidenced by E. W. Lane in 1836, when domestic life was portrayed in Cairene houses both in words and images. However, the French Pascal Coste demonstrated the Arabic Diwān in an interior scene with its inhabitation in 1839 (Figure 9). John Lowell and Gabriel–Charles Gleyre54 documented their voyages along the Nile in January 1835 in Interior of a Coptic House, Cairo (Figure 11). Gleyre’s representation corresponds closely to Lane’s illustration of a typical qa‘a or qa‘ah, which is furnished with mattresses and cushions. Such furnishing arrangements have been described as ‘divans’ or ‘Ottomans’ on three sides for guests to drink coffee and smoke the traditional pipe. The qa‘a usually has wooden cupboards and shelves for holding utensils and perfumes55. The Hhareem of John Frederick Lewis deployed a family scene within the roshān in 1849, whereas The Reception was executed in 1873—1874 (Figure 10)57. A realisation of the space was described by Thackeray after visiting Lewis’s house in Cairo in 184458.

54. Gabriel–Charles Gleyre (1808—1874) was a Swiss painter who depicted Cairo after his almost four-year journey through Egypt between 1834 and 1838. (See Peltre, 37, and Stevens, 150). John Lowell, Jr. is an American traveller.
55. The Ottoman pronounced the diwan as divan, see ‘Glossary’.
56. For more description on the qa‘ah see (Stevens, 174).
57. See the CD-ROM: ‘The Roshān and the Orientalists — John Frederick Lewis’.
58. See the description of this visit in William M. Thackeray, Notes of a Journey from Cornhill to Grand Cairo (London: Chapman and Hall, 1845).
The Orientalist artists influenced their societies. Their houses were cluttered with props from their travels, especially from the Middle and the Near East. The mashrabiyyat of Cairo were the architectural features that most fascinated many photographers and travellers.

For instance, Carl Haag, a German painter based in London, returned from Cairo to England in 1860 and decorated his studio in North London in the Egyptian style. However, in 1871 he bought another house in Lyndhurst Road where he had a complete diwan with a mashrabiyyah; here he dressed as an Arab (Figure 13). Haag returned to Egypt in 1873 to collect fresh materials. The diwan and mashrabiyyah in Haag’s house may have been acquired from his second journey to Egypt.

Giles Walkley claims that, in 1880 the painter Frederick Goodall’s house near Regent’s Park was also full of mashrabiyyah woodwork.

59. Benjamin, Orientalism, 45.
60. Carl Haag (1820—1915) went to Cairo, Greece and Turkey in 1858. He then returned to Egypt and shared a house in Cairo with Goodall. See Thornton, The Orientalists, 110—113.
and other Egyptian artefacts\textsuperscript{63}, but these may have been installed earlier. The major additions to Leighton's house were started during the 1870s, when Leighton was motivated by his 'rivals', including Goodall\textsuperscript{64}. Goodall had met Haag by chance and they travelled and sketched together; they shared a house while they were in Cairo in 1858. The house was a typical Cairene house with a qā'a, a diwan and a roshān (Figure 12). Accordingly, they both experienced living within the roshān and its authentic traditional interior, and it remained an inspiration. Haag’s studio reflects the intimacy and fascination of the roshān, as he was often photographed as an Arab Sheikh. Observing his studio in London and the one in Cairo proves this nostalgic fascination, evidenced by the presence of the roshān and Oriental furnishing. This may reflect Florence Nightingale’s claim that one wonders why people come back from Egypt and continue to live as they did before\textsuperscript{65}. This statement could explain Edward Lane’s attitude, and others, as will be seen in the case studies.

\textsuperscript{63} Walkley, 164—166. See also Helen Valentine, ed. Art in the Age of Queen Victoria: Treasures from the Royal Academy of Arts Permanent Collection (London: Royal Academy of Art, 1999), 148.

\textsuperscript{64} Caroline Dakers, Artists at Home: The Holland Park Circle, 1850—1900 (London: Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, 1999) 188—189.

\textsuperscript{65} Florence Nightingale was in Egypt from 1849 to 1850. Nightingale, 19.
Figure 11: *Interior of a Coptic House, Cairo*, 1835. Gleyre Charles. 33.1 x 25.1 cm. Watercolour and pencil on paper. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. (Stevens, 161—174)

Figure 12: Haag & Goodall Studio in Cairo, 1858. http://www.goodallartists.ca/images.htm.

Figure 13: Haag's Studio in his house in London, 1871. (Walkley, 103)
Frank Dillon was another painter who depicted *Interior of a Room in the House of Sheikh Sādāt*, Cairo, in 1875 (Figure 14) and another scene from the same house in *The Qa‘ah in the Harem of Sheikh Sādāt*, Cairo, in 1879 (Figure 15). Dillon had created an Arab studio in his house in Kensington in the 1870s, enhancing his collection of Islamic works of art. The studio was inspired by rooms like the one he painted in Cairo of the Sādāt house, and took inspiration from a series of watercolours that he had made of old Mamlūk houses. These watercolours were based on actual measurements of Islamic buildings in Cairo, which Dillon and some friends took on his later visit to Cairo in order to halt the destruction of these buildings. The implication was that these measurements and studies could lend realism to his vision of recreating an authentic atmosphere similar to these houses in Cairo. Perhaps, in the bigger picture, the fact that he played a role in measuring and documenting traditional Islamic buildings helped to convey an ethos of authenticity in his artwork, as well as in his studio.

Arthur Melville was another Orientalist painter based in London, who showed his painting *An Arab Interior* (1881) at the Royal Scottish Academy (Figure 16). This was the same year in which Leighton was recreating such an interior in his own house. The fashionable trend for introducing an exotic element into the house or the studio was common practice among those artists who managed to travel and collect artefacts.

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66. Frank Dillon (London 1823—1909) had first visited Egypt in 1854—55 and later returned there several times between 1861 and 1874. He then went again in 1861—62, 1869—70 and in 1873—74. Dillon made a series of watercolours of certain old Mamlūk residences. Thornton, *The Orientalist*, 74—75.

67. These watercolours are in the Victoria & Albert Museum. See Llewellyn, *The Orient Observed*, 87. But, the question remains who benefited from this work, of these measurements and documentation, which could have been similar to the survey of the French during Napoleon’s expedition.

68. Thornton, *The Orientalists*, 74—75.

69. See Lemaires, 164 and MacKenzie, VI.

70. Dakers, 233.
Figure 14: Interior of a Room in the House of Sheikh Sādāt, Cairo, c. 1875. (Llewellyn, The Orient Observed, 86–87)

Figure 15: The Qā'ah in the Harem of Sheikh Sādāt, Cairo, 1879. (Thornton, Women, 29)

Figure 16: An Arab Interior, 1881. Arthur Melville. (Mackenzie, VI)
like the Arab Hall at Leighton House by George Aitchison. Many were carried out simply because it was fashionable ... Yet others were designed in Islamic styles because it was appropriate ...

The roshān as an element cannot be separated from its interior context. As a consequence, the recreation of the roshān complete with its furniture could not be completed without embracing the Islamic style. Michael Darby suggests that the Arab Hall remains perhaps the most enjoyable of all the Islamic interiors carried out in Britain in the second half of the nineteenth century.

In a manner similar to other artists mentioned, Ludwig Deutsch also decorated his studios in Paris and the south of France in an Islamic style, with mashrabiyyat, carved wooden panels, painted tiles, textile and metal work, which he may also have used as studio accessories.

Jean Léon Gérôme executed his painting Arnaut Fumant in 1865 (Figure 17), in which the roshān was used to give a sense of the Orient. It is likely that Gérôme also collected artefacts from the East. Lynne Thornton stresses that Gérôme's studio was a typical Parisian model designed in the Oriental style. Frederick Arthur Bridgman, an American painter who taught under Gérôme, moved to Paris at the age of nineteen and settled there in 1877, where he had two studios. One of these studios was filled with palm trees, textiles and 'moucharabies', Islamic tiles and 'narghiles', thereby creating a Thousand and One Nights atmosphere.

France was, therefore, another important destination where the roshān was established away from its geographical home, as an exotic trend that followed the Napoleonic expeditions.

The argument of this analysis proposes that images of the roshān separated from their geographical origins become architectural fantasies, boosted by the knowledge of travellers' descriptions.

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72. Darby, 114.
73. Ludwig Deutsch (1855–1935) was a French artist who born in Vienna. He was an ethnographical painter of the Muslim world who begun to exhibit his Orientalist paintings in 1879, and continued until his death. See Fine Art Society, 42.
However, the roshān as an architectural element is also linked to the Orientalist movement through direct experience of Oriental life. John Mackenzie emphasises the evidence that tiles and wooden lattices, mashrabiyyah, were lovingly portrayed, not only because they presented technical problems of pattern, texture and light, but also because they represented architectural adornments that could be, and were being, adopted in the West. Unknowingly, the Orientalists' depictions brought cartloads of Eastern crafts home with them, as well as an obsession with Islamic architecture that provided Western inspiration.

5. The Roshān and the Orientalists' Experiences:

The following case studies underline the roshān not just as an object being brought to a 'new home', but also as an image being mapped and visualised through other media, such as art and literature. This analysis emphasises the term that was used the most among Orientalists, which helps to separate from the ancient traditional idiom of the roshān. There are three case studies, which include text, images and an actual roshān in its milieu. Each case study has its own approach and style of

77. Mackenzie, 62.
analysis, as well as its own colour coding to differentiate them from one other (Figure 18). However, the chronology of each case study and the details of the paintings and the text depictions are arranged interactively in the CD-ROM to provide more in-depth details.

The first case study is the Lanes family, where a number of different generations, are involved in the depiction of the roshān in texts (1825–1845 and the 1890s). Those introduced here are: Edward William Lane; his sister, Sophia Lane-Poole and her grandson Stanley Lane-Poole. This case study highlights the roshān as described in texts and documented in diaries and letters. The Lanes’ case study demonstrates diaries and interpretations in published books by each member of the family, where texts relating to the roshān are accompanied with images from the same book. Due to the lack of images in the case of Sophia Lane-Poole, other Orientalists’ paintings are substituted. Images of the same period of buildings and of people who have experienced living within the roshān are hard to find. Consequently, David Roberts’ paintings might be suitable as they reflect scenes of the same period. Roberts was in Cairo in 1838–1839 and depicted architectural scenes extensively. For scenes of the interiors, Carl Haag and Frank Dillon’s works seem the most closely related paintings, as they experienced living in one of these houses in Cairo.

The second case study centres upon the life and work of John Frederick Lewis, a prominent Victorian painter who lived in Cairo for a decade (1841–1851). It concentrates on the roshān as depicted in images — mainly paintings and sketches of those that depicted the roshān from the Cairene house where Lewis lived in. The study focuses on the house of the painter as the main influential theme of the artist. In order to achieve a holistic understanding of the analysis, these paintings are classified and demonstrated on the CD-ROM and accompanied with

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78. For detailed information see the CD-ROM: ‘The Roshān and the Orientalists’.
information about each. Information is related to the medium of the painting, the date of execution and the background of the depicted scene in relation to the artist’s chronology and background.

The last case study is based on Lord Frederic Leighton, the artist and collector who brought the *roshan* to Britain after visiting the East. His visit culminated in the Arab Hall (1877–1879). This case study focuses upon the *roshan* and its space as creations to complete the exotic milieu. It also emphasises the Oriental theme of Leighton’s paintings, his way of living as expressed in the Arab Hall, and the *roshan* in particular.

Overall, these case studies investigate the experience of the *roshan* and its inhabitation through the variety of media used to depict them, to understand the way the image of the *roshan* has been distributed and absorbed by the public far away from its original home.

5.1. The Lanes Family and the Experience of the *Roshān*:

This analysis is centred upon the contribution of the Lanes family and their experiences of living within the *roshan*. It also considers the ways in which everyday life, and a number of special occasions, are experienced by the Lanes in Cairo. This case study provides an introduction to the family and their outlook on life at that time; it then emphasises the terminology of the ‘*roshan*’ and its use. Finally, it demonstrates their experiences of the *roshan* from without and from within, as well as underlining historical issues about the disappearance of the *roshan*.

5.1.1. The Lanes in Cairo:

Edward William Lane (1801–1876) was a traveller and an Arabic–English lexicographer. By the 1820s he had joined a group of young British artists and architects who had begun to look at Islamic architecture in a deliberately analytical way. This group (the Hay Group) had two clearly stated aims: to try to find new
Figure 18: The interactive case studies in the CD-ROM with different pattern and colour coding.
explainatory categories, and to search for principles that might
guide their own work. The originator of this group was Robert
Hay, but its most important thinkers were Edward Lane and
Owen Jones. Lane was the most influential member in the
group.

In 1825 Edward Lane first travelled to Cairo, where he stayed for
three years, living an Arabic-Islamic way of life. He was intensely
interested in Arabic as a language of the people and, then, in
their manners and customs. Four years later he returned,
residing in the Arab-Muslim quarter in Cairo under the name of
‘Mansoor Effendi’. Sheikh Ahmad was a key figure and Lane
found him very useful, as Ahmad was able to assist Lane in
matters of local manners and customs. In 1840 Lane married
a Greek woman from Egypt, named Nefeesah, formerly a slave
in Egypt. Lane returned to Egypt in 1842 for the third time,
spending seven years there. He was now accompanied by his wife
and his sister, Mrs Lane-Poole, and her two sons. By that time he
was collecting materials for a great Arabic lexicon, derived from
the best and the most copious Eastern sources, to be made into
a large collection of significant words. This was his longest visit,
during which he worked on the last project to which he devoted
his life when he finally returned to England in 1849.

Lane produced a number of highly influential works including: An
Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians
(1836), his translation of The Thousand and One Nights (1839—
41), Selections from the Qur’an (1843) and The Arabic-English
Lexicon (1863—93). One of his important works was never

80. Robert Hay (1799–1863) entered the Royal Navy in 1812, and visited the Near
East for the first time in 1818. His expedition to Egypt took place from 1824 to 1828.
(Darby, 139).
81. Mark Crinson, Empire Building: Orientalism and Victorian Architecture (Manchester:
82. On Lane’s fascination of Egypt see, Edward William Lane, Description of Egypt,
Jason Thompson, ed. (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2000), x.
83. Effendi is equivalent to Mr, which was common during the Ottoman time.
84. A. J. Arberry, Oriental Essays: Portraits of Seven Scholars (London: George Allen &
Unwin Ltd., 1960), 94.
85. Leila Ahmed, Edward W. Lane: A study of his life and works and of British ideas of
the Middle East in the nineteenth century (London: Longman, 1978), 39 and 49.
published; it was a book-length manuscript entitled ‘Description of Egypt’\textsuperscript{86}, which would have been Lane’s first book. This was the culmination of youthful ambition originating when Lane worked as an engraver’s apprentice in London in the early 1820s, where his imagination was captured by Egypt\textsuperscript{87}. As a result Lane ‘went native’ and lived as an Egyptian scholar; in 1825 he said:

\begin{quote}
As I approach the shore, I felt like an Eastern bridegroom, about to lift the veil of his bride, and to see, for the first time, the features which were to charm, or disappoint, or disgust him. I was not visiting Egypt merely as a traveller ... but I was about to throw myself entirely among strangers; to adopt their language, their customs and their dress; and in associating almost exclusively with the natives, to prosecute the study of their literature. My feeling therefore … partook too much of anxiety to be very pleasing.\textsuperscript{88}
\end{quote}

By the time he returned to England, from his visit in 1828, Lane had become thoroughly ‘Orientalised’: his friends addressed him or referred to him by his adopted Arabic name. He learned practical details about Islam and he entered Cairo’s masājid (mosques) and prayed individually or at Friday prayer\textsuperscript{89}. Until his last years, when he settled down in Worthing, West Sussex, Lane was practising the Islamic way of living in every aspect, even beginning his day by saying ‘Bismillah’ in the name of Allah\textsuperscript{90}.

Sophia Lane-Poole (1804—1891) was Lane’s sister who accompanied him, with her two sons, on his last visit to Cairo. Her two sons were both interested in oriental issues; the older Stanley A. Poole became a well known Arabic scholar who died at a young age. The younger son, Reginald Stuart Poole, was an Egyptologist. Mrs Lane-Poole lived in Cairo, collecting information on the ḥarīm of Mohammed Ali. This information provided the basis of her book \textit{The Englishwoman in Egypt 1842}, 3 & 4, volumes that would supplement Lane’s book \textit{Customs}\textsuperscript{89, 90}.

\textsuperscript{86} This book is edited by Jason Thompson and published in 2000.
\textsuperscript{87} Thompson, Lane, \textit{Description of Egypt}, ix.
\textsuperscript{88} Ahmed, 1. From the draft of the \textit{Description of Egypt}, by Lane.
\textsuperscript{89} Thompson, Lane, \textit{Description of Egypt}, xi. It is difficult to ascertain whether Lane adopted an Islamic lifestyle for the purpose of collecting information more easily, or whether he adopted it for its own sake. In the first he could be seen as an authentic narrator to convince the reader.
\textsuperscript{90} See more claims by Stanley Lane-Poole in Ahmed, 101.
and Manners of Modern Egyptians. The Englishwoman in Egypt was originally published as three volumes of letters from Sophia Lane-Poole to a fictional friend in England. The first two volumes, with letters dated from July 1842 to April 1844 were published together in 1844. The third appeared two years later and contained letters dated January 1845 to March 1846. She also experienced being in the ḥarīm in her brother’s house while she was in Cairo and experienced wearing the hijāb. The female accounts by Sophia Lane-Poole are embodied in the women’s section of the Islamic house, that is, the ḥarīm; the most imaginary and fanciful place depicted most by the Orientalists. Such accounts will enrich the research in many aspects.

Stanley Lane-Poole (1854—1931) was of another generation in the family, being the son of Stanley A. Poole, the Arabic scholar. Lane adopted him as he adopted his father before. Stanley Lane-Poole lived with Edward Lane and Sophia Lane-Poole, where he became fascinated by his great grandfather’s devoted work. Mr Lane-Poole went to Cairo many times between 1883 and 1895 and later became fascinated by the roshān. Mr Lane-Poole also produced various works complementing his great grandfather’s interest. One of his books, Cairo: Sketches of its History Monuments and Social Life, was published in 1895.

5.1.2. The Lanes and the Terminology of the Roshān:
Lane experienced living among Arab Muslims for a decade as Sheikh Mansoor, which was a privilege for a non-Muslim and indicated his esteem within that society. He was the only Orientalist who recorded the terminology of the roshān as an old term used in Cairo and during the Mamlūk era. Due to his linguistic studies in English and Arabic he mainly researched

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91. Lane had no access to the women’s section (ḥarīm) and their private lives; but his sister tried to cover this lack with her own account. Apparently she managed to observe the ḥarīm of Mohammed Ali, which covered the upper class only. See Melman, 332.
92. Ahmed, 45.
93. To avoid confusion Edward William Lane will be called Lane, Sophia Lane-Poole will be called Mrs Lane-Poole, and Stanley Lane-Poole will be called Mr Lane-Poole.
94. Stanley A. Poole, the father, accompanied Lane to Cairo with his mother Sophia Lane-Poole in 1842, 3 and 4, and lived in the same house. Whereas Stanley Poole lived with Lane in the same house in Worthing, until Lane died.
95. Lane-Poole, The Story of Cairo, 304.
old terminologies that were observed by him in Cairo as early as 1825. Such interests indicated that he clearly understood the roshān and its structure as an architectural element in the house. Lane described the roshān parts in text accompanied by an explanatory image.

The windows of the upper apartments generally project a foot and a half or more, and are mostly made of turned wooden lattice-work, which is so close that it shuts out much of the light and sun, and screens the inmate of the house from the view of persons without, while at the same time it admits the air. They are generally of unpainted wood; but some few are partially painted red and green, and some are entirely painted. A window of this kind is called a “ro’shan,” or, more commonly, a “meshrebeeyeh”.96

Although Lane records ‘ro’shan’ as the old term for this kind of a window in Cairo, he also highlights the commonly used one ‘meshrebeeyeh’ as well. Mrs Lane-Poole writes meshrebeeyeh in exactly the same way as Lane, whereas Mr Lane-Poole writes meshrebiya. Later on this term is written differently among

Orientalists, especially among the French. An inherent danger occurs when altering local or traditional terms to satisfy the public or commonly used terms. The alteration of terms may seem an innocent gesture, but the consequences can be far-reaching and negatively influential. Using the term mashrabiyya, in whatever spelling, to substitute the old and original term roshān is problematic and can mean the loss of specific local and historical knowledge.

Lane also describes the act of screening as one of the roshān’s functions. Therefore, the metaphorical use of the veil is the main factor in Lane’s conception of the roshān. The nature of the opening of the window is to admit air and control light and sun, whereas the most important function of the roshān is to screen or to veil the occupants. Lane adds that: “the principal aim of the architect is to render the house as private as possible; particularly that part of it which is inhabited by the women; and not to make any windows in such a situation as to overlook the apartments of

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other houses. In 1895, Mr Lane-Poole stated the same point as a feature of Islamic architecture.

The Eastern architect’s art lies in so constructing ... and to closely veil the windows with lattice blinds, which admit a subdued light and sufficient air, and permit an outlook without allowing the passing stranger to see through the delicately carved reticulations. The wooden screens and secluded court are necessary to fulfil the requirements of the Mohammedan system of separating the sexes.

The description of the function of the roshan concludes with an acknowledgment of its veiling function as its main purpose. The Lanes understood that veiled windows are necessary requirements in Islamic architecture, and not solely for environmental or climatic effects. Lane also underlines another feature of the roshan that later on becomes its most common function, and shifts the terminology from its original meaning. The extra projected part of the roshan, described as ‘a little meshrebeeyeh’, is added for cooling water jars, ‘shar’ba’.

Sometimes a window of the kind above described has a little meshrebeeyeh, which somewhat resembles a ro’shan in miniature, projecting from the front or from each side. In this, in order to be exposed to a current of air, are placed porous earthen bottles, which are used for cooling water by evaporation.

This projecting screen is primarily for the privacy of the inhabitants, where openings behind it remain unlocked, therefore catching light and air during the whole day. This can also be used for another function: cooling water jars; although this is not always the case. In fact, this element (shish) is not exclusively for the roshan. Lane indicates that this feature is found in both inferior and wealthy houses, flat windows and rawāshīn alike. He notes that many of these flat windows in inferior houses have a little ‘meshrebeeyeh’ for the water-bottles projecting from the lower part.

Mr Lane-Poole focuses also on the relationship between this feature and the terminology used. The similarity between

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98. Lane-Poole, The Story of Cairo, 13.
99. Lane, An Account of the Manners, 17.
100. Lane, An Account of the Manners, 17.
meshrabiyya and shar'ba, as they sound in Arabic, gives a general impression of its frequency of use among the Orientalists.

The name is derived from the root which means to drink which occurs in “sherbet”, and is applied to lattice windows because the porous water-bottles are often placed in them to cool. Frequently there is a little semi-circular niche projecting out of the middle of the lattice for the reception of a kulā or carafe.\(^{101}\)

Such an explanation reinforces the previous debate regarding the terminology of the roshan and the confusion with the mashrabiyya. In conclusion, there is clear evidence to prove that the term roshan is ancient. Lane pinpoints the function of these projected little niches, which could be added to the rawāshīn as well as to ordinary flat windows. He also stresses that this element resembles the roshan but it is not the roshan itself. This indicates the stage at which the term starts to disappear.

5.1.3. Experience of the Roshān from Without:

Lane concludes his terminological and the structural description of the roshan’s components\(^{102}\): the upper part of the roshan, the fixed part, is made of wooden boards or wooden panels full of coloured glass. Wealthy houses have the latter as a significant feature of coloured glass with ornaments in several of the upper rooms. Lane describes these as follows:

[t]here are, besides the windows of lattice-work, others, of coloured glass, representing bunches of flowers, peacocks, and other gay and gaudy objects, or merely fanciful patterns, which have a pleasing effect. These coloured glass windows ... are mostly from a foot and a half to two feet and a half in height, and from one to two feet in width; and are generally placed along the upper part of the projecting lattice-window, in a row; or above that kind of window, disposed in a group, so as to form a large square; or elsewhere in the upper parts of the walls, usually singly, or in pairs, side by side.\(^{103}\)

Lane describes the appearance of the houses with projected windows from outside.

\(^{101}\) Stanley Lane-Poole, Cairo: Sketches of its History, Monuments and Social Life (London: J. S. Virtue & Co, Ltd., 1898), 126. See also Lane-Poole, The Story of Cairo, 13.

\(^{102}\) See Lane, An Account of the Manners, 17, and the CD-ROM: ‘The Roshān and the Orientalists — Edward William Lane’.

\(^{103}\) Lane, An Account of the Manners, 19.
The superstructure is of brick; and its front projects a foot or two beyond the lower part. It has either projecting windows of unpainted wood or of boards, or flat windows, which are generally partly formed of lattice-work, and partly closed by hanging shutters.  

The upper windows, whether projecting or flat, are more heavily shuttered and screened, especially in the family and women’s quarters. Lane himself experiences the benefits of these projecting windows both from within and without the house. From without, Lane describes the shade produced on streets and narrow alleys as:

The houses being thus constructed, and the streets so narrow, many of the projecting windows would quite meet, face to face, were it not that few of them are placed so as to be exactly opposite, one to another. These streets have, of course, a dull appearance; and the more so as the principal windows of the larger houses look into an inner court; but they afford a delightful shade; and, to heighten the luxury obtained by the exclusion of the sun, the people in sultry weather, frequently sprinkle water before their comparative solitude, to the bustle witnessed in the greater thoroughfares.

Mrs Lane-Poole gives a similar description for these projected windows from a female perspective; as she notes, “The meshreebeeyeys, or projecting windows, facing each other, above the ground floors, literally touch in some instances; and in many, the opposite windows are within reach”\textsuperscript{106}. She goes on to describe these houses of Cairo: “Their fronts, above the ground floor, projecting about two feet, and the windows of wooden lattice-work projecting still further, render the streets gloomy, but shady and cool”\textsuperscript{107}.

The roshan, as an architectural element, is also admired by Mr Lane-Poole, not just for the appearance of the delicate wooden woven fabric, but also for the benefits of its function. He notes that these lattice windows provide shade to the streets, and they lend an airy atmosphere to the alleys below. Mr Lane-Poole also states, “when, as not seldom happens in the quiet by-ways, the

\textsuperscript{104} Lane, Description of Egypt, 79, describing the dookka’n (shop) in the streets.

\textsuperscript{105} Lane, Description of Egypt, 79 and 80.

\textsuperscript{106} Sophia Lane-Poole, The Englishwoman in Egypt: Letters from Cairo (London: Charles Knight, 1844), vol. 1, 64.

\textsuperscript{107} Lane-Poole, The Englishwoman in Egypt, vol. 1 and 144; describing shops and houses of Cairo in November 1842.
meshrebiyas almost meet across the road, it may be questioned whether the concealment is always so complete as it is intended to be; and one can easily imagine a comfortable flirtation carried on between two proximate lattices, with a little doors ajar” 108. Gustave Flaubert also notes that, “dazzling sun effects when one suddenly emerges from these alleys, so narrow that the roofs of the moucharbiehs [shuttered bay windows] on each side touch each other” 109.

Mrs Lane-Poole observes the roshan as a social dimension that dominated the habits of daily life. Due to the shaded areas beneath the roshan, these spots act as gathering and socialising areas for chatting and conducting business, which can be seen in many Orientalists’ paintings 110. Mrs Lane-Poole describes:

> The deep shade in the narrow streets, increased by the projecting windows — the picturesque tradesman, sitting with one friend or more before his shop, enjoying the space afforded by his mastabah — these will be no more; and while I cannot but acknowledge the great necessity for repairing the city, and removing the ruins which threaten the destruction of passengers, I should have liked those features retained which are essentially characteristic — which help, as it were, to group the people, and form such admirable accessories to pictures. 111

This is actually the men’s theatre, a place where the rawāshīn overlook the streets below and provide shady and cool places to socialise. The roshan plays a vital role in cultural and social customs. Just as the roshan could be a theatre for such scenes from without, the reverse could also be the case. During special occasions and festivals, the roshan becomes an observation turret with the street below staging the theatrical scenes. Lane portrayed a picture of the annual scene of the Mahmal 112, where the rawāshīn play a role in documenting cultural festivals in the open air:

108. Lane-Poole, Cairo: Sketches of its History, 10 and 128.
110. See the CD-ROM ‘The Roshān and the Orientalists — From Without’.
111. Lane-Poole, The Englishwoman in Egypt, vol. 2, 49.
112. The Mahmal is a procession to celebrate the cover (Kis’wah) of the Ka’ba from Cairo to Makkah.
Next came several camels, and then the "Mahmal." Many of the people in the streets pressed violently towards it, to touch it with their hands, which, having done so, they kissed; and many of the women who witnessed the spectacle from the latticed windows of the houses let down their shawls or headveils, in order to touch with them the sacred object.113

In 1850 Flaubert observed the Mahmal and he noted, “we get up early and stand in the street near the Bab el-Futuh to await the caravan. Women peering from windows under the eaves of the moucharbieh — they veil themselves as soon as they notice they are being looked at”114. On the other hand, Mrs Lane-Poole records the same scene from within saying that, “The windows of the first and the second floors were perfectly full of women, children and slaves; and here and there a richly embroidered dress was seen through the lattice”115. Perhaps this is the first scene to portray the roshan from within which indicates the capacity of the roshan alcove to accommodate such a large number of inhabitants. In fact, a scene of such a procession is rarely depicted on canvas, as Thornton states:

Many of the ceremonies, festivals and rites of the Eastern world, with their complex rituals and rich traditions, were generally not witnessed by Westerners, nor did the latter even suspect their existence ... Besides the personal, family celebrations ... there were those of a more religious nature, for instance, the departure and the arrival of the mahmal, the sacred carpet that was taken every year from Cairo to the holy city and they were also present in the crowd that gathered to acclaim travellers as they returned from their long journey.116

The image, in Figure 19117, shows the Mahmal with its colourful ceremony and gathering of people, men, women and even children. Getting a glimpse of such a ceremony is a precious thing and is also an honour for the crowd and for the viewers’ souls. The Mahmal scene reflects interpretations of the narrative of the roshan from the perspective of both genders. This

113. Lane, An Account of the Manners, 492.
114. Steegmuller, 78, describing the return of the Mahmal from Makkah.
115. Lane–Poole, The Englishwoman in Egypt, vol. 1, 122.
depiction enriches the pictured experience of being within the roshān.

5.1.4. Experience of the Roshān from Within:
Being inside the roshān is another experience that can be portrayed to reveal cultural customs together with ways of inhabitation. Lane describes the male section of the house, primarily the reception area, and how its characteristically large window is furnished; this sitting area is called the Deewān. This manner of furnishing shapes the main layout of the Arabic reception room as Lane describes:

[0]n the ground-floor, an apartment called a mun'dar'ah, in which male visitors are usually received. This has a wide, wooden, grated window, next the court. The floor is paved with common stone, or with marble; and a small part of this pavement (extending from the wall to the opposite side) is about half a foot lower than the rest. Every person who enters the room slips his feet out of his shoes or slippers before he steps upon the raised part of the floor; which is covered with matting or a carpet, and has a mattress and cushions placed against the wall of each side ... composing what is called a deewa'n. In most large houses, the mun'dar'ah has, in the middle of the depressed part of the floor, a fountain, which plays in a small, shallow pool, lined with coloured marbles, &c. the walls are plastered: the ceiling is of wood.

118. This is the correct pronunciation and terminology for the Arabic sitting area. "In 1825 Lane tried to collect the original terms such as Deewan or much common Divan". This clarification was written in 1882 by Stanley Lane-Poole who edited Arabian Society in the Middle Ages, which is written by E. W. Lane in 1859. In the preface, Stanley Lane-Poole admitted that he did slightly alter the spelling of Oriental names. See Lane, Arabian Society, 146.

119. Lane, Description of Egypt, 90, describing private houses from inside, see also Lane's description in Lane, Arabian Society, 145—146.
The previous panorama highlights the experience of the senses within the roshān, where the reverberation of the fountain from inside could be mixed with ambient or chattering sounds. This scene is the most essential in terms of the experience of being within the roshān, and the most influential one among the Orientalists as it is widely depicted. It is mirrored in John Frederick Lewis's paintings and Leighton's Arab Hall in London. The description embodies the roshān's milieu in relation to its surrounding context. It also illustrates the variety of materials used in the space, reflecting the experience of being within an ornate, wooden box-like environment. Most importantly, the setting reflects daytime social and cultural customs, stimulating the senses within the interior. The reception space reflects the importance of hospitality as a cultural custom, alongside the privilege of receiving guests and visitors within the roshān. This raised part of the room reflects this honour and emphasises the roshān as a multifunctional stage. Accordingly, the use of this area varies throughout the day, from its use as a venue for receiving, dining and sleeping. This reception area becomes a guest room to fulfil all purposes. Mr Lane-Poole provides a similar description of this room:

We leave our outer shoes on the marble before we step upon the carpeted part of the room. It is covered with rugs, and furnished by a low divan round three sides. The end wall is filled by a meshrebiya, which is furnished within with cushions, while above it some half-dozen windows, composed of small pieces of coloured glass let into a framework of stucco, so as to form a floral pattern, admit a half-light. The two sides, whitewashed where there is neither wood nor tiles, are furnished with shallow cupboards with doors of complicated geometrical panelling.

He also emphasised that the roshān caught cooling breezes, becoming, as a result, a cooling place for human beings and water jars alike. In fact, the furniture of this section had to be suitable for all such functions. Lane describes a similar scene:

The windows, which are chiefly composed of curious wooden

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120. Cf. Lane's description with J. F. Lewis's paintings of The Hareem and The Reception, in relation to the Arab Hall layout of Lord Leighton's house, and his letters describing the Moorish interior. See the CD-ROM for visual comparison.

121. Describing the mandara, the guest room, as an example of the ordinary dwelling room. See Lane-Poole, Story of Cairo, 14.

122. Lane-Poole, Cairo: Sketches of its History, 127.
latticework, serving to screen the inhabitants from the view of persons without, as also to admit both light and air, commonly project outwards, and are furnished with mattresses and cushions. In many houses there are, above these, small windows of coloured glass, representing bunches of flowers, etc. the ceiling is of wood, and certain portions of it, which are carved or otherwise ornamented by fanciful carpentry, are usually painted with bright colours, such as red, green, and blue, and sometimes varied with gilding; but the greater part of the wood-work is generally left unpainted.\(^{123}\)

The *diwân*, as an interior space, has its own features including the raised platform which Lane describes: “The latter [leewan] is generally paved with a mat in summer, and a carpet over this in winter; and a mattress and cushions are placed against each of its three walls, composing what is called a "*deewân*, or *divan*"\(^{124}\). A similar account of this raised part of the room and its furniture was also depicted in a description of a Turkish house by Lady Montagu, in 1717\(^{125}\). The *roshân* itself could also transmit sounds within the house itself, especially if it overlooks a court (*hasil*) and is not exposed to the streets. In such contexts the *roshân* allows the inhabitants to call each other easily. Lane depicts this through his account of the common Cairo habit of calling servants through the *roshân*:

Sometimes the visitor’s own servant attends him with his pipe ... The usual mode of summoning a servant or other attendant who is not present is by clapping the hands, striking the palm of the left hand with the fingers of the right. The windows being of open lattice-work, the sound is heard throughout the house\(^{126}\).

Thackeray depicted a similar scene when he was in Cairo visiting Lewis’s house in 1844. He described Lewis as a noble Bey calling his servant, “he shuffled off his outer slippers before he curled up on the *divan* beside me. He clapped his hands and languidly called ‘Mustapha’.”\(^{127}\). Mrs Lane-Poole claims that the *roshân* is an intermediary between the house and the outside world, which is emphasised by narrow streets where the projecting *rawâšin* face each other, even touching in some instances. In many, the

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\(^{123}\) Lane, *Arabian Society*, 147.

\(^{124}\) Lane, *Arabian Society*, 146.

\(^{125}\) See, Scarce, *Domestic Culture*, 56—59.

\(^{126}\) Lane, *An Account of the Manners*, 213.

\(^{127}\) Thackeray, 211. Notice the use of the term *divan* instead of *diwan/deewan*.
opposite windows are within reach. She also describes noises during the time of Ramadān, when the drum is used to wake up people to get their second meal (ṣahūr) before fasting starts. She describes how a man would call out loudly, using the drum, to rouse people, adding that; “the open lattice windows oblige us to hear all the noises I have described. Our windows are furnished with glazed frames, in addition to the carved wooden lattice-work, but the former are only closed in winter.” This is a religious occasion, depicted from within, which occurs before the early hours of the morning and again before dusk (iftār). It is a call to define when to start and then when to break fasting.

Mrs Lane-Poole depicts a scene of women and the roshān in the harīm quarter, saying that: “their lives are opposite to us: a good old woman, a devotee, who is a sort of Deborah to the quarter, and who passes judgment from her projecting window on all cases which are proposed for her opinion, much to our edification.” Here, the roshān works both as a theatre and a control room; more like a place to deliver guidance and to educate younger women. The standing of the occupier in this case is also indicted, with the old woman delivering guidance from above, reflecting a higher position in location and status. Similar scenes could be witnessed until recently, where formerly the man of the household delivered orders from his roshān.

Mrs Lane-Poole also mentions that the upper floors are furnished with these projecting windows, with some overlooking the lake, and some are used for different functions, for example, in some, women could water their gardens from above. Although these screens can maintain the requirements of privacy and veiling for the women of the house; Mr Lane-Poole puts this matter of concealment in an imaginative way.

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128. See the description in Lane-Poole, The Englishwoman in Egypt, vol. II, 64.
129. The month of observing Saum (fasting).
130. Ṣahūr/ṣuhūr is the meal before fasting that is usually eaten before dawn. It is written in the reference as sohor.
131. Lane-Poole, The Englishwoman in Egypt, vol. I, 111.
132. Lane-Poole, The Englishwoman in Egypt, vol. 2, 18, the scene is from the harīm of Mohammed Ali’s family.
133. See Section Five.
134. Lane-Poole, The Englishwoman in Egypt, vol. 2, 44 and 38.
The delicately turned nobs and balls, by which the patterns of the lattice-work are formed, are sufficiently near together to conceal whatever passes within from the inquisitive eyes of opposite neighbours, and yet there is enough space between them to allow free access of air ... and at once a convent-grating and a spying-place for the women of the harim, who can watch their Lovelace through the meshes of the windows without being seen in return. Yet there are convenient little doors that open in the lattice-work if the inmates choose to be seen even as they see.135

Through these delicately turned wooden windows, the inhabitants can enjoy dramatic and fluctuating views of daily scenes. However, seeing the rawāšin from beneath is an entirely different experience, Mr Lane-Poole states: “as we thread the winding alleys, where a thin streak of sky marks the narrow space between the lattice-windows of the overhanging stories ...”136

5.1.5. About the History of the Roshān:

Some of the documented events described by the Lanes during the time they were in Cairo, demonstrate the history of the roshān and its disappearance. Generations of the same family in Cairo chronicle the fading of the roshān from the traditional fabric of architecture, starting from the change of its broad use term to a restricted local one. As it was highlighted earlier, Lane recorded the time when the terminology of the roshān declined before the common local term mashrabiyya in 1825. This could be the stage when the ancient term started to disappear in Cairo. However, Mrs Lane-Poole stressed on the necessity to repair the city; this was in 1842 to 1844 when the decline of traditional features started to take place. She also admired the use of the mastabah, being shaded by the projection of the rawāšin, as a social spot in daily life. Equally, in the 1880s and 1890s, Mr Lane-Poole described another dilapidated building:

From the top one may look down upon the dilapidation remains of what was once the aristocratic quarter of the capital. Among the wilderness of flat roofs, we can trace the course of the Saliba street, which connects the Citadel with the south–west angle of Cairo, and here some of the most beautiful examples of the fast-disappearing lattice windows may still be seen.137

135. Lane-Poole, Cairo: Sketches of its History, 127, 128, referring to Bab Zuweyla.
136. Lane-Poole, Cairo: Sketches of its History, 2.
137. Lane-Poole, Cairo: Sketches of its History, 24.
This is a description of the Fatimy city, the old city of Cairo, which dated back to 909–1171. Mr Lane-Poole documents a crucial era in the history of the roshan and the stages of its disappearance. The first manifestation was the persuasion of people that the roshan was an old architectural element that could not function in modern life. The rawashtn were portrayed as a means of collecting dust and reflecting backwardness in comparison with modern architectural fabric. Mr Lane-Poole claims that there are different reasons for the disappearance of the rawashtn. He thought that the chief reason was the high prices realised by ‘well-made meshrebiya’ when the Frank, as he puts it, entered the market, tempting many householders to dispose of lattice windows. He also thought that these lattice windows were poor defences against cold winds\textsuperscript{138}. He also claims that the threat of fire is another cause for these windows disappearance; as he describes in Darb el-Ahmar:

\begin{quote}
Most of the house meshrebiyas are comparatively modern, though it is impossible to fix their precise date. Their inevitable disappearance is an aesthetic loss that nothing can replace; but it must be admitted that they formed the most dangerous conductors of fire from house to house and street to street that the ingenuity of man could well devise.\textsuperscript{139}
\end{quote}

Considering that Stanley Lane-Poole was from the last generation of the family who depicted the roshan, his work still featured the roshan as late as the 1890s. What is significant is picturing the danger of the roshan’s slow disappearance. This is likely to have been the stage when an awareness of the roshan was more widely disseminated beyond the Islamic world, in countries where the roshan started to be classified as an artefact or a beautiful object for collectors, rather than as a functional architectural element. In Cairo, in 1883, Mr Lane-Poole stated, “Here there is no sign of life; the doors are jealously closed, the windows shrouded by those beautiful screens of net-like woodwork which delight the artist and tempt the collector”\textsuperscript{140}. He also added that

\begin{quote}
Fire is the same factor being used as an excuse to justify the abandon of this wooden cladding in the traditional architectural of many Islamic cities including the rawashtn of Makkah as previously declared.
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{138} Lane-Poole, Cairo: Sketches of its History, 128.

\textsuperscript{139} Lane-Poole, The Story of Cairo, 285.

\textsuperscript{140} Lane-Poole, Cairo: Sketches of its History, 10.
he was himself one of these collectors who was so keen to bring such artefacts home to Britain. He wrote:

I visited Egypt shortly after the war, at the request of the Committee of the Council on Education ... I was still able to bring home some four hundred specimens, including a complete room, with its large lattice window and eleven coloured glass windows above it; another entire mashrabiya, with the corbels and carving beneath ... and a large collection of casts from the arabesque and Kufic decoration of the mosques and other buildings of Cairo.  

Saying that he was still able to do it strongly implied that he had done it before. It is not known where this entire mashrabiya was kept. Mr Lane-Poole also highlighted the powerful position of the collector and the ease with which these kinds of artefacts could be taken away from their original locations. He noted that in the collection of M. de St Maurice’s official position in the household of the ex-Khedive Ismā il, there was a great mashrabiya with its lattice panels, enclosing an Arabic inscription. Mr Lane-Poole also added, “Mr Purdon Clarke gave a fresh impetus by the removal to the Museum of an entire room, of a fine period, from its home in Damascus, and by many purchases of windows and woodwork”. This, then, represented a large and significant collection of such architectural elements being brought to Britain.

By the late nineteenth century there was a high demand in the marketplace for such goods, with collectors benefiting from the trend of architectural dilapidation and neglect despite the rising prices. In order to keep up this momentum, people were persuaded that a better life maybe acquired from selling their heritage treasures, in this particular case the roshān. That is, owners were forced to abandon their rawāšin under such pressure. Mrs Lane-Poole stated that direct consequence of such dilapidation was that modern new facades started to replace these ‘embroidered’ architectural ‘fabrics’.

141. Lane-Poole, Cairo: Sketches of its History, 116—117.

142. Lane-Poole, Cairo: Sketches of its History, 116. He also mentions that a large number of the very finest specimens, of Mamlūk carving, were taken away from their lawful guardians during the reign of the Khedive Ismā il, and even earlier, and have found their way to the Museum at South Kensington. Lane-Poole, Story of Cairo, 283.
The main question is what was the point of collecting the rawāšin to be applied to a different ambience, if they were poor in function as previously claimed. In fact, the main function of these embroidered screens is purely Islamic. These are not just aesthetic wooden cladding to adorn house façades; they provide a means of screening to veil the inhabitants of the house. Mr Lane-Poole himself indicated that Eastern architects tended to closely and metaphorically ‘veil’ the windows with lattice blinds to prevent passing strangers from seeing through, before going on to state that wooden screens and secluded courts were necessary components for fulfilling the specific requirements of Islamic architecture. He said:

In these solitary courts we may still see the meshrebiyas which are becoming so rare in the more frequented thoroughfares. The best lattices are reserved for the interior windows of the house, which look on the inner court or garden; but there are not a few streets in Cairo where the passenger still stops to admire tier upon tier and row after row of meshrebiyas which give a singularly picturesque appearance to the houses.¹⁴³

Despite the existence of some examples of these lattice windows in some streets of Cairo, the danger of this disappearance was already documented in 1883:

[t]he exquisite meshrebiyas with their intricate turned lattice work are nearly all gone to make way for Italian persiennes, and the stone benches in front of the shops have disappeared in deference to the modern exigencies of carriages.¹⁴⁴

The above observation reflects the turning point of the history of the roshān, from being a functional element in Islamic architecture to a mere fanciful artefact, greatly in demand as a collector’s item. Sadly this demand did not exist in the local market, but in a market far from the original soil. These recorded events, which were experienced and documented by the Lanes between 1825 and 1883, reflect the status and the history of the roshān. However, there was another factor that took place before the Lanes arrived in Cairo, which played a significant part in the disappearance of the roshān. In 1881, Mr Lane-Poole highlighted

¹⁴³. Describing a scene in Bab Zuweyla in Cairo, see more in, Lane-Poole, Story of Cairo, 11, and Cairo: Sketches of its History, 126.

¹⁴⁴. Lane-Poole, The Story of Cairo, 5, describing Old Cairo.
the European impact on Islamic cultural traditions in big cities such as Damascus, Baghdad and Cairo; he said:

European influence has been busy in demolishing it, Cairo has long been trying to become a bastard Paris instead of the picturesque city of El-Mo’izz and Salāḥ-ed-Deen, and to forget its traditions of the palmy days of Islam and its memorials of the chivalrous heroes of crusading times.145

This threat of forgotten traditions and cultural values was already underlined by William Holman Hunt; who was concerned that traditional customs were being threatened with extinction, together with the ancient costumes and hereditary taste146. Mr Lane-Poole blamed the expedition of Napoleon Bonaparte147 for the ruin of Cairo and the loss of its architectural heritage. Napoleon entered Cairo in July 1798, and the destruction of the people’s faith and heritage started. This was precisely when the expedition started to document domestic life separately from Islam as the dominant religion. Although the expedition left Egypt in 1801, the army went home with the treasures of their collective research that was compiled in the Description de l’Egypte148. In fact, what happened in these four years guaranteed a massive change in culture and heritage, including the use of the roshan as a part of social and domestic life as stated by an Arab scholar:

[The French] authorized the destruction of the Husayniyya [quarter in Cairo], along with the residential quarters and neighbourhoods, mosques, bathes, shops, and tombs standing outside Bab al-Futuh and Bab al-Nasar. When they raided a house to destroy it, they did not allow its occupants to remove its contents, nor take any of the debris. They plundered and destroyed it, they carried away any usable floor tiles and pieces of timber for their own buildings, and sold the broken timber for firewood to the people at the highest price...149

In other documents the heritage is shown to have been in the process of being eradicated and culture values were also being

145. See Lane, Arabian Society, xi.
146. See more in Stevens, 30.
147. In 1798, Napoleon landed near Alexandria, Egypt with an army of 40,000 men. In their company were 165 of the best and brightest young French scientists, engineers and artist of the time. See more in Juan Eduardo Campo, “Orientalist Representations”, 30.
changed. This does not happen to benefit the native people; it is rather the taking away of cultural items to be displayed out of context of their origins. The situation could reflect Eduardo Campo’s claim: “the properties of those opposed to French rule were to be destroyed, usurped. Islam and Egyptian houses alike were to be presented and revivified only on a French tableau”\textsuperscript{150}. There is very often a lack of awareness and understanding when discussing the link between Islam and domestic life. The practice of the Muslim daily life is interwoven within religion. Islam is absorbed and administrated as part of the daily routine. Observing and studying aspects of Muslim daily life, including architecture and inhabitation, cannot be excluded from Islam as the dominating factor. In dealing with domestic life where the roshān plays a part of activity within the house, the same is true.

However, the religious practice within the Muslim domestic space has been neglected in Orientalists’ descriptions and representations. Lane either overlooked this issue and reduced it to the status of superstition, or pushed it to one side to leave room for negative remarks. Consequently, what is written in relation to domestic daily life practices, including the roshān inhabitation, was taken for granted and generalised as the stereotype. This produced a biased conclusion that was reverberated even more loudly in works produced by Orientalist scholars after E. W. Lane, such as in the work of Lane’s great grand-nephew Stanley Lane-Poole who took what his great grandfather wrote for granted\textsuperscript{151}. This Orientalist bias was not only evident during Mr Lane-Poole’s time. Mark Crinson also claims that Lane’s book, An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians, can be used as an authoritative reference work of Islamic architecture\textsuperscript{152}. Perhaps this is the key reason why Lane insisted on going ‘native’ in describing the domestic daily life in Cairo. Was this to convince the public back home of the authenticity of his documentation, or his belief that he could not obtain genuine information unless he practiced

\textsuperscript{150} Campo, “Orientalist Representations”, 35.

\textsuperscript{151} See more in the neglect of religious issues and the biased opinions of scholars who come after Lane in Campo, “Orientalist Representations”, 38.

\textsuperscript{152} See more in Crinson, 29.
Islam? This may have been to convince the people in Cairo that he was honest, or to indicate that he was aware of the role of Islam, which is practiced in every aspect of daily life.

5.2. John Frederick Lewis and the Experience of the Roshān:

John Frederick Lewis was born in 1812 in London. He began his exotic career in Andalusia, Spain, in 1832, and remained there until 1834\textsuperscript{153}. Before returning to England, Lewis made a short trip to Tangiers in Morocco, where he had his first glimpse of Islamic life. The years 1832 to 1834, when he visited Spain and Morocco, marked an important step in his career: it introduced him to Islamic architecture, changed his palette (washes of almost pure red, yellow and blue) and established his reputation\textsuperscript{154}. In 1835 he published *Sketches and Drawings of the Alhambra*, focusing mainly on Granada, followed by *Lewis's Sketches of Spain and Spanish Character*, in 1836. In the winter of 1837, Lewis stayed in Paris before he moved onto Florence, Naples and finally Rome. Two years later he left for Egypt, presumably to explore Islamic


\textsuperscript{154} Thornton, *The Orientalists*, 131.
culture after his short visit to Morocco. At this destination Lewis got his first real taste of the Islamic world that was to absorb him for a decade.

Lewis embarked for Egypt in 1841, where he was to stay for ten years in Cairo in a fine Mamlûk house. It was the turning point of Lewis’s life when he decided to return to England in 1851, soon after he had married Marian Harper in Alexandria. He then devoted the rest of his life depicting Eastern scenes from memory. Little is known about Marian’s life, but they were devoted to one another in their later years. However, when Lewis died in 1876, Marian almost certainly destroyed all letters and papers in the ‘traditional manner’, and in the process destroyed evidence about herself.

5.2.1. John Fredrick Lewis in Cairo:

Lewis was the first, and for many years the only, British artist to spend an extended period in the Near East as a resident. From 1841 to 1851, he lived in one of the old Cairo houses, as he went completely native, he appears to have made a deliberate effort to loosen the ties of his culture. He has a little contact with his compatriots, despite the presence of many English tourists in Cairo in the 1840s. Only a few English visitors allow glimpses of Lewis’s life in Cairo. His numerous sketches, some inscribed and dated, indicate some of his activities, the rest must remain speculation based on what is known of Cairene society in the mid-nineteenth century.

While Llewellyn’s claim focuses on the assumption that Lewis went completely native or had little contact with his peers, other evidence indicates the opposite. In fact, Lewis attended the consul dinner in 1842, as claimed by Sir Thomas Phillips who reportedly met Lewis at a dinner with the British Consul. Colonel Burnett recorded this at the time in a letter to his brother. In

157. Charles Newton, the curator of the Searight Collection in Victoria & Albert Museum, in personal interview with the author, July 6, 2004. See also the documented paper from the analysis of the Museum Reading Room Collection.
158. Llewellyn, "Islamic Inspiration", 129—130.
159. A claim by Briony Llewellyn, see Llewellyn, "Islamic Inspiration", 131.
the same year James Wild\textsuperscript{160}, the Orientalist and British architect, visited Lewis in his house. In addition, Lewis was host to various friends, including Thackeray in 1844\textsuperscript{161}. Elphinstone, the governor of Madras, who was a friend of Lewis's brother, F. C. Lewis, also visited Lewis in 1845 and noted that Lewis was living in the most Ottoman quarter\textsuperscript{162}. Most importantly, Lewis met Marian Harper and married her in 1847. Therefore, he was not as cut off from other Orientalists as it is sometimes claimed.

Towards the end of Lewis's stay in Cairo in 1850, British tourists found Lewis sketching and his wife reading to him in a boat up the Nile, according to Florence Nightingale. Nightingale stayed in a hotel in \textit{Ezbekiya} in 1849—1851, which suggests that the area was already full of tourists\textsuperscript{163}. Stanley Lane-Poole described Lewis's life in Cairo as a 'terrestrial paradise'\textsuperscript{164}. Yet what was his real motivation for being in Cairo? Even Thackeray questioned why Lewis was in Cairo at all\textsuperscript{165}. Knowing that Marian destroyed Lewis's letters and papers raises a major question about his motivations. Although he was studying the characters of the costumes of people in Cairo, there is no existing documentation to indicate the purpose of these studies.

During Lewis's stay in Cairo, he made countless sketches of \textit{masājid} (mosques), covered \textit{sūq} (bazaar), narrow streets and courtyards. He also painted portraits of Mohammed Ali Pasha, the viceroy of Egypt, \textit{Prince Hassan and his Servant} (1868), and some of the aristocracy in Cairo\textsuperscript{166}. Lewis also depicted a prosperous Egyptian aristocracy with which he identified and

\textsuperscript{160} James Wild was interested in Islamic domestic interiors. He was Owen Jones' friend and a brother-in-law. In the 1840s Wild joined the Hay Group and gathered around E. W. Lane (Crimson, 98—107). This could show the link between Jones, Lane and the Hay's group, as well as J. F. Lewis. Cf. the link between Wild, Jones and Lewis, as well as the link between Jones, Lane and the Hay Group.

\textsuperscript{161} See Thackeray, 208—211. Lemaires, 135 and Peltre, 133.

\textsuperscript{162} Lewis, John Frederick Lewis, 21.

\textsuperscript{163} Nightingale, 37.

\textsuperscript{164} Briony Llewellyn, "A 'Masquerade' Unmasked: An aspect of John Frederick Lewis's Encounter with Egypt" in \textit{Cairo Papers in Social Science: Egyptian Encounters}, Jason Thompson, ed., vol. 23, no. 3 (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2003), 136. The first note is a letter to Joseph Bonomi in 1851. The second note is from a second letter to him in 1851 from Edward Stanley Poole (1830—1867). Joseph Bonomi (1796—1878) was a draughtsman and Egyptologist, and one of Lewis's close associates in Cairo. See footnote no. 5, in Llewellyn, "A 'Masquerade' Unmasked", 135.

\textsuperscript{165} Thackeray, 212.

\textsuperscript{166} Thornton, \textit{The Orientalists}, 132.
which was quite different from the popular milieu preferred at the time by French artists, from Gérôme to Belly. This may suggest that he was not idle during his stay in Cairo, with personal contact with Pashas and Turks’ Beys. He lived there as a Turkish Bey, and his way of living and appearance may have given the impression of him being treated like a Bey. He could well have entered masājid under this disguise with the authorities’ protection, as his painting of Interior of Mosque or Afternoon Prayer (n.d.) suggests. Lewis was accepted by Cairene society, and his way of life allowed him to sketch people and scenes without hindrance. It is notable that Lewis chose to live as a noble Bey among Turkish Beys and the upper classes, and not as an ordinary local person as Lane did. Such experience reflects another slice of the Cairene fabric of life, and the roshan of the Mamlük house in particular.

5.2.2. The Artist’s House in Cairo:

Lewis lived in a Mamlük-style house situated in the Ezbekiya quarter in Cairo, not far from Masjid Sultan Hassan and Bab el-Luq. The area contained the palaces of Ibrahim and Abbas Pasha, some of the finest buildings in this quarter, as well as the new Hotel d’Orient (see Figure 20). Therefore, the area was full of palaces of ruling emirs and merchants' houses, even before Napoleon’s expedition in 1798. Living in this quarter indicates that the house was not one typical of local people, but of wealthy inhabitants. In fact, the house is believed to have originally belonged to Kiani [Qiani] Bey from the Mamlük period (1250—1517). This gives an indication of the history of the house.

167. Peltre, 133.
168. See the CD-ROM: John Frederick Lewis — Studies’.
170. Ezbekiya (‘ورایع’), is named after the Emir Ezbek Ibn Tushtush. In 1798 when Napoleon’s army occupied Cairo and settled in the area, they found some of the grandest houses of the ruling emirs and wealthy bourgeoisie. Later in the 1850s the area was full of hotels to accommodate tourists and residents. See Peltre, 97. The name is also written as, Azbakiyya, Ezbekiya or Ezbekeeyah. See Juan Eduardo Campo, The Other Sides of Paradise: Explorations into the Religious Meanings of Domestic Space in Islam (University of South Carolina Press, 1991), 78.
171. It sometimes spelled el-Luq or al-Luq.
172. See Lewis, John Frederick Lewis, 22.
174. Lewis, John Frederick Lewis, 22.
and the roshān, in particular. Knowing this fact is a crucial factor in documenting the history of the roshān and its existence in the Mamlūk time; as Darby indicates:

Under the Mamlouks, the domestic architecture of the growing merchant class was to reach a high degree of sophistication and the Mamlouk house was to remain the standard type in Cairo until the late nineteenth century, in spite of Ottoman rule and influence. The typical two or three–storey courtyard house was developed to accommodate the extended family and the business needs of the merchant. These interiors were later to fascinate European visitors, especially those who spent a long period living in Cairo. In the early nineteenth century E. W. Lane described in graphic prose the houses and the way of life in the urban middle class. Similarly, the painter Frederick Lewis depicted the luxurious interiors and streetscapes of Cairo, in glowing watercolours and oils. Interior scenes of families, with graceful ladies reclining on rich coloured textiles before alcoves lit through elaborate mashrabiyya windows, attracted enthusiastic crowds when they were exhibited in the 1850s at the Old Watercolour Society in London.\(^{175}\)

Lewis’s house played a major role in most of his paintings; several of his works evoke its interior court and its large rooms decorated with the trellis–like wood screens\(^ {176}\). The house has also been depicted in images by James Wild and in text by Thackeray. Wild drew some interiors in Lewis’s house; the mandarah and the bath of the house were among the collection of Wild’s depiction of Cairo in 1842\(^ {177}\). However, Thackeray

\(^{175}\) Danby, Moorish Style, 47.

\(^{176}\) Peltre, 133.

\(^{177}\) Crinson, 101—103. These drawings including the plan of the house, sections and elevations are now in the Victoria & Albert Museum.
describes his experience of being in this recessed room thus:

He conducted me into a great hall, where there was a great, large Saracenic oriel window. He seated me on a divan ... Opposite the divan is a great bay window, with a divan likewise round the niche. It looks out upon a garden about the size of Fountain-court, Temple; surrounded by the tall houses of the quarter. The garden is full of green. A great palm-tree springs up the midst, with plentiful shrubberies, and a talking fountain...

Lewis depicted the same scene shown in The Recess in a Chamber of the Painter's House in Cairo, in the 1840s. Analysing both images reflects the differences of interpretation between the artist's and the architect's points of view (Figure 21 and Figure 22). Although the painting of this chamber is believed to be a study of Lewis's own house in Cairo, the painting could also be seen as an amalgam of the studies of Cairene domestic interiors. The house could be the same house which was later occupied by another British resident in Cairo, Mr Lockwood. It was visited and drawn by Thomas Seddon.

178. Thackeray, 209—211. See the CD-ROM: ‘John Frederick Lewis’.
179. Thomas Seddon (1821—1856) was born in London and was described as ‘the purest pre-Raphaelite landscape painter’. Seddon went to Egypt in 1853 and to the Holy Land with William Hollman Hunt in 1854, he then returned to Egypt in 1856 and died there (Stevens, 227).
in 1854 as *Interior of the Deewan*.

5.2.3. *The Roshān in Lewis's Ḥarīm:*

This analysis focuses on the *ḥijāb* as the main function of the *roshān*, therefore this criterion will be used to examine whether these scenes behind screens are authentic and could be seen in Muslim cultures. Lewis's paintings of the *roshān* seem imaginary, and give the idea of the artist’s speculation of what was behind these screens. Lewis may understand some of the main concepts of Islamic society, regarding the *ḥijāb* and segregation between genders in relation to the Islamic architecture. This may justify his tendency to link the *roshān* with the ḥarīm or family sections in most of his paintings. He imagined the pattern of inhabitation of the *roshān* as he could have experienced it himself. For instance, the first domestic scene of the ḥarīm was captured in detail in 1849. Although *The Hareem* is inspired by Lewis’s house in Cairo, the setting is repeated in many of Lewis’s imaginary ḥarīm.

Lewis was interested in sketching Islamic architecture and studying the impact of light and shadow; but after his marriage, he added figures to this architectural background. It would have been difficult to draw people in action outside, as living in an Arab quarter with the aim of building trust with native people would have made it difficult to get models to pose. Lewis may have understood women’s status in Islamic culture and modelled his household to play this role instead.

The two important paintings in Lewis’s collection that reflect the sense of the *roshān* are *The Hareem* and *The Reception*, the former is sometimes spelled in some references *The Hhareem*. Perhaps Lewis relied on the account of ḥarīm visits by women travellers or by stories he could have been told by his wife who, as a woman, might have visited ḥarīm sections in Cairo. Lewis often used his wife as a model for his ḥarīm paintings and may

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180. See more in Stevens, 205.
182. In some references it is written as *Hhareem* as in Benjamin, *Orientalism*, 79–81. Lewis may try to write the correct spelling of the ḥarīm, as the first letter 'C' cannot be pronounced as 'A': that is 'H' in Latin.
The Hhareem was the first painting executed in Cairo in 1849—50 (Figure 23), however; there are at least four major harim paintings. The harim as a space is depicted to narrate different stories of inhabitation behind screens. The story of The Hhareem of 1849 is believed to have been written by the artist himself, as the spectacle of an Abyssinian slave being introduced into the harim of a Mamluk Bey. The scene gives the viewer some idea of the cultural hierarchy contained in Lewis's paintings, as he assumes the character of a Turkish Bey with his wife or wives, children, a slave and a servant. Lewis may have come across stories or was perhaps aware of gossip about Pashas and Beys, and he tried to put these stories onto canvas for exhibition back home. Staging these stories behind the roshān reflects the painter's stay in Cairo, especially as he does not maintain any form of written documentation. His sketches and paintings reflect what he experienced there or wished to. Therefore the stories behind his roshān reflect his interpretation of his own experience of being in a Mamluk house, living as a Bey.

Another Lewis painting of the harim, which is believed to be a fragment of the previous one, is in the Victoria & Albert Museum (Figure 24). It is similar to a portion of the original painting of The Hareem. The same scene is depicted, for the third time, in oil with a different message to that of 1849. An Intercepted Correspondence (1869) has almost the same setting as The Hareem, with some other architectural details of the room in a wider perspective, though the Bey is older (Figure 25). The Study of the Hareem is more like an incomplete watercolour painting or a sketch. This coloured sketch is now in Australia, and is believed to date from 1850 (Figure 26). The finished painting, of almost the same scene of the study, is in the Birmingham Museum,

183. See the analysis of The Hhareem in Benjamin, Orientalism, 80.
184. See more in Lewis, John Frederick Lewis, 39, and in Benjamin, Orientalism, 82, which stressing that The Harim setting is repeated for several of Lewis's imaginary harim.
185. Lewis wrote this in the Royal Scottish Academy Catalogue of the 27th Exhibition, 1853. See Benjamin, Orientalism, 80.

186. Benjamin, Orientalism, 79—81. I have personally seen the original version of the painting in the Victoria & Albert Museum, in 2005.
called *The Hareem*\(^\text{188}\), and is undated (Figure 27). However, the painting seems to be the reverse of the previous one of *The Hhareem*, unless it is the other side of the same room in Lewis's house. The scene shows the entrance of the room, which could be another part of the artist's house. This portion of the painting is also depicted in many of Lewis's paintings.

By comparing the sketch and the painting of the *harīm* and its study, some different details can be identified. The final painting is in oil, which means that the painting could have been executed sometime after 1858. The proportion of some of the architectural elements varies in the sketch; for example, the wall beside the wardrobe works as a background for the standing woman and as a space before the entrance arch. More importantly, the scene demonstrates that the *roshān* is big enough to accommodate a group of women within. Through the arch there is another view of the *roshān* from the front. This painting, and the other

\(^{188}\) There is no date on this version, but according to Benjamin, the sketch is dated 1850. The sketch is in Melbourne, Australia. See Benjamin, *Orientalism*, 79.
Figure 25: An *Intercepted Correspondence*, 1869. (Thornton, *Women*, 131)

Figure 26: *Study of the Hareem, Cairo*. 1850. (Benjamin, 82)

Figure 27: *The Hareem, Cairo*. n.d. (Benjamin, 82)
of the ḥarīm, shows that the house is full of rawāshīn which are depicted from different views, at close range and at a distance. These paintings are clear indications of Lewis’s passion for these architectural elements and their impact on the interior both architecturally and socially.

Another small detail, which is rarely seen in domestic scenes in the Islamic world, is of a dog lying down in the same seating area as the inhabitants. So that the place could be kept clean and ready for people to perform their prayers anywhere, dogs have never been kept inside the house. The depiction of the dog indoors is an entirely different issue for Lewis as an animal lover. It seems that he did not consider the Islamic perspective before depicting this ḥarīm scene; or he included a dog in order to please the public, in this case, the Victorian viewers. In this ḥarīm painting, and in the first painting of 1849, there is a curtain which could be interpreted in a similar way to the use of curtains with the roshān in Cairo. The curtain in this scene is light and translucent in comparison to the heavy one in the first ḥarīm painting.

Jennifer Scarce claims that the wealthy people in Cairo furnished their homes with handsome textiles, but that the use of carved wooden lattice screens across the wide and deep windows left no space for velvet and brocaded silk hangings and curtains, which would have been too thick and heavy for the climate of Cairo. Mrs Lane-Poole, on the contrary, describes windows furnished with muslin curtains in white with coloured fringes, including some pinks and blue in one of the Pasha’s ḥarīm, but she describes no curtains in the house which the Lanes occupied. Curtains may have been used to obscure figures, to prevent dust, or to weaken direct light and, more importantly, to provide privacy. But in the case of Lewis’s painting, they probably would

189. The dog in Islam is highly prohibited unless used for security purposes. Islam has special way of cleaning if the dog’s mouth touches any cloth that could be used by human. “The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: The angels do not enter a house which contains a picture, a dog ...”: Sunan Abu-Dawud, Book 32, no 4140.

190. Scarce, Domestic Culture, 63.
191. Sophia Lane-Poole, vol. 2, 55.
have represented luxury. In fact, Lewis depicts these kinds of screens with curtains in another painting, *Life in the Harim, Cairo*, 1858 (Figure 28). This could be an indication of the status of the inhabitants, and in this might be included Lewis’s house in Cairo as an example of wealthy housing.

*The Reception* was executed in 1873 (Figure 10), a decade after Lewis’s return to England. The painting is mainly based on *Mandarah of my House at Cairo* 1840–51, a sketch of his house, together with studio props, costumes, vases and other objects. The setting of the painting, the architectural atmosphere and its furniture, could be the one described by Thackeray in his visit. However, the proportions seem different, or, at least, the view of the perspective in the painting is different to that of the sketch. The massive roshan in the mandarah is claimed to be a depiction of a visit of ladies from another harīm. The screened windows are painted with meticulous accuracy, showing diffused light from the lower turned wood sections compared with clear-cut shadows from the coloured glass patterns set in the higher panels. What is certain in this painting is Lewis’s admiration for the geometric and organic designs of his Cairene house and their ability to subordinate the human figures on canvas.

Llewellyn claims that the setting and the costumes of *The Reception* are authentic, where Lewis depicts women not in the upper rooms of the house but in the mandarah or men’s reception. The scene resembles an everyday occurrence in Cairo, which could parallel an ordinary Victorian one. The mandarah could be used by women in the absence of the men of the house and their visitors. However, the use of extra screens for the opening of the roshan or curtains in this area would be essential, in order for women to be secured and secluded. Such a setting, with its lack of privacy for women, raises questions of authenticity.

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195. Llewellyn, “Islamic Inspiration”, 133.
In the *harim*, as a women’s section, privacy is strictly required, but the scene does not reflect this necessity. In fact, the *roshān* in most of Lewis’s scenes remain open, and the outside scenery is clear from the inside. Although Lewis paints a curtain to indicate screening, the setting is not authentic in this sense. In these paintings the artist demonstrates the link between the inside and the outside through the *roshān* and how the occupier can experience this notion. He sometimes succeeds in giving the impression of the *roshān* as a link between the inner house and the outer space; but not when it comes to the *roshān* as a screen and a *hijāb* device.

The area within the *roshān* illustrates the sitting area and the interior furnishing. In Lewis’s scenes, the seating area and furniture within the *roshān* is depicted with features of an Arabic interior. Either high or low seating is common in a *roshān*; both styles are furnished with mattresses and side cushions covered with white lace. Lewis depicts similar seating in *Life of the Harim, Constantinople*, in 1857 (Figure 30), and again in *Oriental Interior* (n.d.)196. This seating arrangement was used in Cairo and in Constantinople (Turkey), it is still used there today, and in some other parts of the Arab world197. This style of seating has been used in the Arab world and has been distributed throughout the Islamic world, it is known, mistakenly, as *divan*. The style of arranging mattresses and back or side cushions and the way of clothing them is called ‘*Jalsa Arabi*’ or Arabic seating. The *Jalsa* may be adjacent to a *roshān*, a window, or may just surround the room on three sides, as shown in *Oriental Interior* and previous Orientalists’ paintings. Lady Montagu also described this style in Turkey, in 1717:

> The rooms are all spread with Persian carpets, and raised at one end (my chamber is raised at both ends) about two feet. This is the sofa, and is laid with a richer sort of carpet, and all around it a sort of couch, raised half a foot, covered with rich silk according to the fancy or magnificence of the owner. Mine is of scarlet cloth, with a gold fringe; round this are placed, standing against the wall, two rows of cushions, the first very large, and the next little ones; ... They are generally brocade, or embroidery of gold wire upon white satin:—nothing can look more gay and splendid. These seats are so convenient

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196. See the CD-ROM: ‘John Frederick Lewis — Studies’.
197. See Section Five.
and easy, I shall never endure chairs as long as I live.198

The high seating, or the inner *dakka*199 covered with the same cloth as the mattress and the cushions, can be seen in most of the artist’s paintings. The floral golden fabric is also repeated in most, if not all, of Lewis’s work, especially his earliest *harîm* scenes, such as *Life in the Harîm, Cairo* (1858). This fabric is likely to be authentic, as Lewis may have brought it home with the other artefacts that he imported from Cairo. The same fabric is repeated in another painting, entitled *Hareem Life, Constantinople* (1857), which is described as follows: “the sofa itself is a golden yellow with patterns of green leaves, yet this is only seen in a small area because the rest is covered with white fabric perhaps used to save the fine material from fading in the light”200. In fact, this is the traditional way of dressing such cushions with white lace or transparent muslin in order to unify the row and hide the edges of each cushion; but not, as claimed earlier, as protection from the light.

This way of furnishing was common by the nineteenth century, and has remained a fashionable trend in the Arab world until recently201. This style of furnishing does not exist solely in Turkey. Lewis depicted a similar scene from Cairo in *The Hareem* (1851). He also depicts this type of seating with the same fabric in another picture with the same title *An Oriental Interior, Constantinople*, painted in 1863 (Figure 29). However, he drew the same seating in the sketch of *The Hareem*, in 1850 (Figure 26).

Elizabeth Malcolm claims that Lewis painted his *harîm* as a religious painting that elevates the status of the *harîm* women and makes a statement for the tolerance of Islam as an equal spiritual and civilised faith202. Mackenzie also argues that Lewis

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198. Scarce, *Domestic Culture*, 59. Cf. the description of E. W. Lane and Lord Leighton of the same kind of seating from their experiences.
199. See the *Dakka/mastabah* of the street where men can socialise and finish business in the CD-ROM: ‘The Roshân and the Orientalists’.
201. See more on the furniture and the inhabitation of the roshân in Section Five.
202. Malcolm, “John Frederick Lewis”, see also Mackenzie, 60.
Figure 28: *Life in the Harim, Cairo, 1858.* (Yeazell: Figure 41)

Figure 29: *An Oriental Interior. Constantinople, 1863.* (See the CD-ROM)

Figure 30: *Harim Life in Constantinople, 1857.* (Sweetman, the cover)
was impressed by the manner in which religion entered the fabric of everyday life. This may indicate Lewis’s awareness of the role of Islam in the fabric of the domestic life, which he attempted to demonstrate through his paintings; perhaps to introduce manners that could be adopted back home. Héléne Gill agrees that the wooden lattices, *mashrabiyyah*, are lovingly portrayed, not only because they presented technical problems of pattern, texture and light for Lewis, but also because they represented architectural adornments that could be, and were being adopted in the West.

Reina Lewis argues that Lewis’s painted Orientalism more closely resembles works by Bridgman and Frederick Goodall, both of whom indulged in several less explicit fantasies in their Oriental paintings, and who tended to present Islamic women in bourgeois Victorian terms. In depicting the *roshān*, Lewis depicts the *harīm* not just as a place for women, but also as a space where the family gathered and socialised. In the first *harīm* scene, Lewis depicts a child with the parents and the other wives of the household. These figures are portraits of Lewis himself, his wife and Zulikha, who is believed to be Lewis’s housemaid. In fact, the *roshān* becomes a theatre for daily social life, which is reflected in Lewis’s interpretation of women gathering behind the *roshān* as a significant place inside the house.

The major factor in Lewis’s *harīm* scenes is in these screens that filter light into the space. His fascination is reflected in the use of shadow to create a dramatic effect. The dramatic panorama of these scenes is embodied in the golden threads covering different surfaces within the interior. The woodwork of the *roshān* emphasises the contrast in colours with the interior as a background. It also provides warmth and absorbs the bright, strong sunlight entering from outside. The themes and the richness of the Islamic ornamentation are represented

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203. Mackenzie, 60—62.
everywhere, with geometric motifs on the woodwork and floral
designs on the fabrics.

5.2.4. Experience the Roshān from Within:
Associations between the roshān and the presence of women
in family scenes are notable in Lewis’s paintings. However,
some paintings show part of the roshān as a background in
different stories, such as Pipe Bearer (1856) and A Turkish
School (1865)²⁰⁷. In both scenes the roshān is used as a means
of incorporating light and shade in the interior. The first painting
may represent the artist with his servant while he was in Cairo
(Figure 31). The same scene could interpret Lane’s description
of calling the servant from the roshān, as previously discussed in
the Lanes case study. A Turkish School demonstrates the same
scene in his house, but narrates a different story, that is, the
madrasa²⁰⁸ (Figure 32). In such schools the teacher had a stick

²⁰⁷ This painting is believed to be based on an earlier watercolour of 1853, which is
far simpler. See Stevens, 206.
²⁰⁸ Madrasa means school in Arabic. cf. this image with the one in the Lanes’ case
studies where the sheikh and the children are sitting beneath the roshān in an outdoor
scene and some other paintings in the CD-ROM.
to hit pupils for punishment, for instance, if they fell asleep — like the girl in the first row. The unusual presence of girls with in the madrasa may undermine the subject’s authenticity; as such practices were uncommon. The presence of pigeons or a cat that may disrupt pupils’ concentration is also unlikely in an educational place, where the Qur’ān is a major subject of learning. While having a school within the roshān is possible, through the employment of a private teacher (Au’staz or Sheikh) to teach the children of the house or palace, and Lewis might be aware of such schools. Lewis depicts the scene in his own way, imagining it to be staged in his house.

The same architectural background of the previous settings is repeated in another three paintings. The first is Life in the Harim, 1858, where Lewis shows the importance of the roshān in domestic interiors, not just for the sake of lighting and ventilation, but also for socialisation and for women in particular.

The roshān is the vehicle with which to observe the outer world from within; simply, the roshān is the ‘veiled eye’ of the house. This scene demonstrates two different aspects of the roshān: the closer is the view from the side, whereas the one depicted frontally is distanced and works as a background. The roshān dominates the scene, as the power of the light coming from it is tangible. It is impossible to ignore the impact of this element within the interior.

The scene of Life in the Harim, Cairo, also places emphasis on an important aspect of Arab culture: hospitality. This setting highlights the experience of having a guest, with the lady of the house serving a coffee. Benjamin claims that the mirror and the entering woman’s welcoming smile create an intimacy between the viewer and the scene. The woman entering is Lewis’s wife and the servant behind her could be ‘Zulikha’, the same person depicted in many of Lewis’s paintings. This depiction emphasises the pattern of using the space within the roshān as

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209. Lane conceded that some privileged girls were occasionally taught with boys in a public school, although they were generally veiled. See more in Stevens, 206.

210. Benjamin, Orientalism, 84.
a reception area. Guests and the lady of the house could enjoy coffee together and chat. Lewis may have understood the notion of hospitality in Arab culture, especially among women. In Arab custom it is an honour for the host to serve the guest personally, even if the house is full of servants. The servant may prepare everything, but the lady of the house will carry it to the guest. However, even among wealthy people, the privilege of serving the guest also indicates the status of the guest in relation to the host.

According to an interpretation of this painting by Malcolm, the seated woman, possibly modelled on Lewis’s wife Marian, gazes thoughtfully at a bouquet of flowers in her lap. Malcolm then questions if the girl entering the room is another wife, thus suggesting polygamy, which was considered uncivilised by ‘Victorian viewers’. In fact, the smile on the woman’s face could not suggest such a situation. In Arab culture this would be seen differently. On the one hand the seated woman may suggest that she has come for the first time to visit a friend or a neighbour, as she gives the impression of shyness in her eyes. The bunch of flowers could represent a gift to the lady of the house, as it is customary to bring something on one’s first visit. On the other hand, the hostess would try to ease the visitor’s anxiety and the smile would deliver this message. Therefore, interpreting the scene as two wives meeting, as Malcolm does, seems imaginary and overstated, without knowing Lewis’s intention.

In another interpretation, Benjamin argues that the Victorian audience was familiar with the idea of nosegays in Eastern harîms, which are used to communicate ‘illicit messages’. The scene in this respect suggests that the young woman is dreaming of a lover outside the harîm. It seems that this is typical of

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211. Malcolm, “Hareem Life, Constantinople and Life in the Hareem, Cairo”. See more on the comparison with another painting Friendship Endangered by Frank Stone in the same year. Interestingly, the latter painting is interpreted as friendship whereas the former is related to polygamy, because the scene is oriental.

212. This could reflect the Arabic way of interpreting the scene: a woman with awareness of related cultural issues within the domestic interiors of Arab culture in which polygamy is still experienced.

213. Benjamin, Orientalism, 84.
the interpretation of any oriental scene, whether exercised by the artist or by ‘ordinary’ Victorian viewers at that time. Harîm scenes, if they are not reflecting polygamy and the severity of male Muslims in keeping women for their own pleasure, have to show the potential immorality of the females of the house as a result of segregation214. This is the stereotypical thinking of what is being practiced behind these heavily screened rawâshîn, and is the imaginary interpretation of an alien culture that reflects nothing but exotic and erotic manners. The above interpretations show the impact of the fantasy of the Arabian Nights, as previously discussed.

Lewis also shows a very small part of the roshân in The Caged Doves, 1864 (Figure 33). The painting captures the colour and texture of the interior. The dark colour of the wood in the roshân and the wooden cupboard with the colour of the fabric of the mattress’s cover, and even the costume’s ornate fabric, all render a feeling of warmth. The scene also shows the contrast between such rich colours and the light colouring of the wall, especially when the wall is washed by the lustrous light coming from the roshân. The scene records pleasurable time spent within the roshân; a place where one could enjoy hobbies or spend time with a domestic pet215. The roshân works as a private corner for the lady of the house to have time on her own, similar to a ‘boudoir’. Whatever is depicted in these scenes indicates that being within the roshân could be a haven or a stage for women to act and to socialise.

The third painting that is associated with the corner of the roshân is Indoor Gossip216, 1873 (Figure 34). Malcolm presumes that the subject of this painting is one woman helping another to adorn herself for a special occasion. Travel accounts related that when a woman was chosen to spend the night with the Pasha, the other

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214. See more in this debate of the harîm and the fantasy of the role of women in Reina Lewis, Gendering Orientalism. (London: Routledge, 1996), 111—112.

215. Pets, in Islam, mean domestic animals except dogs.

216. The painting is exhibited at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition in 1874 with a companion painting, namely Outdoor Gossip, Cairo’. See more in Benjamin, Orientalism, 87.
woman would help her to dress. However, after the painting was exhibited in 1874, the *Atheneum* stated that the painting shows women chatting, with the usual harem accompaniments: dazzling effects, plump, rosy female faces and exuberant forms, with the apparently inexhaustible wardrobe of the artist’s atelier217.

The statement records the oriental artefacts and props that Lewis utilised in for his paintings, including even the wooden wardrobe in his atelier218. Here are two women experiencing the *roshān* in a feminine way, chatting about beauty and accessories. This painting complements the previous one by depicting the *roshān* as a women’s haven. It also reflects the way women commonly inhabited and socialised within the *roshān*. A picture representing a ‘Pasha’s preparation’, as suggested, would be completely different to this intimate and friendly scene.

It has been suggested that the mirror in Lewis’s paintings,

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217. Malcolm, “Lewis’s Late Paintings”.
such as in *Indoor Gossip*, was a feature derived from the Dutch painting style. Whatever purpose the mirror performs, it can be seen as a means of providing a detailed window for some features in the interior. Lewis uses this ‘window’ to highlight the detail he desires, as in this scene where a sample of the textile of the mattress’s cover is depicted. In *Life in the Harim*, the mirror reflects the lattice of the window and reveals the unseen part of it. In both paintings the mirror is on the side wall of the roshān. In Arab culture it is highly unlikely that a mirror of such size would be located in this position. The scene of *Life in the Harim* is the reverse of *A Turkish School*. Comparing both scenes to *The Hareem, Cairo*, shows that they appear as a portion of this harīm depiction. Lewis repeatedly included the roshān in the majority of his paintings when he returned from Cairo. In each painting he depicted the roshān from different vantage points, as if the house was filled with rawāshīn and there was nothing but the rawāshīn.

However, the roshān in *An Oriental Interior, Constantinople*, is poorly depicted in terms of details and the notion of such screened windows. What is depicted is not a screened window, nor a roshān: it is more like a fixed screen that lacks architectural detail. The fascination with the roshān was still evident in the artist’s mind, but the reconnection of its image had faded. This is similar to the painting of *The Siesta* (1876), when the screen enveloped and created the setting with no sign of the principle of the hijāb that lies behind the roshān. In *The Siesta*, Lewis paints a woman asleep in her chamber. The pose of the woman and the location of the unbarred lattice to the ground suggest the possibility of approaching and gazing at the unaware woman. There is a sense that the viewer is an intruder on the woman’s privacy, which would not be the case in Islamic culture. The space within the roshān could be used as a sleeping area, but it would not have been used as such if the occupier were a woman. The scene shows the dilemma in Lewis’s mind between satisfying the

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220. Culturally, what is the function of the mirror in this corner of the harīm area, especially in the seating area where the mirror may reflect the scene of the sitting area from different angles? If the mirror is for a purpose related to women and beauty it would be bigger and would definitely not be beside or close to the roshān.
public, and mainly the critic, and fulfilling his dreams, memories and nostalgia for Islamic architecture and culture. The sense of light within the interior is not the major subject here; rather, the woman’s position is of major importance. The roshān is only used as a stage or a background for such a pose.

5.2.5. Experience the Roshān from Without:
Lewis depicts the roshān in Cairo from the outside, such as in busy streets and bazaars, where the roshān is scattered everywhere. However, the most detailed and significant paintings of the roshān are seen in the depiction of the courtyard (ḥosh) of the artist’s house in Cairo. The sketch he drew while he was in Cairo gives a picture of the main architectural features of the ḥosh including a roshān. This scene could well be the basis for the majority of Lewis’s paintings that depict the roshān from without. The sketch illustrates the roshān structure and its details from different perspectives. It also demonstrates the various woodwork techniques found in the roshān, such as turning, engraving and the richness of ornamentation. The enclosed space beneath the roshān in the ḥosh in Lewis’s painting is similar to Lane’s image and text descriptions which were published in 1836. Analysing both images demonstrates that the wall on the right is empty in Lewis’s painting, whereas Lane’s depiction shows a terrace overlooking the courtyard. The similarity of these two images can be seen in the large roshān and the seating area beneath, which is supported by a column: a common feature in these houses (Figure 35 and Figure 36).

The first painting of the artist’s courtyard, The Hosh of the Painter’s House (Figure 37) was rendered in watercolour in 1851. The scene reflects Thackeray’s description of the courtyard he visited in the autumn of 1844, illustrating the covered alley, lattice and projected windows, camels, pigeons and an attendant dressed in blue with a turban. Lewis shows his experience of the roshān and the areas beneath it. The first version of the ḥosh shows that the area is a male domain, where windows are kept clear, with no sign of women’s presence. What Thackeray

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221. See Lewis, Rethinking Orientalism, 244, and 142—149 on ‘Eroticised Bodies’.
spotted as black eyes peeping behind the roshān is depicted in the second painting of the hosh. The seating area beneath is to welcome male visitors and the household; otherwise the space could be used by the family in the absence of strangers (if the area is not overlooked by neighbours).

The second version of the same scene, Courtyard of the Coptic Patriarch’s House, was executed in oil in 1864 (Figure 38). The scene was different in some details. The artist adds a fountain in the middle of the court that does not seem to be an authentic feature of his house. Comparing Lewis’s two sketches and Thackeray’s description of the artist’s hosh proves that, in fact, the fountain is similar to the one in the mandarah that was depicted in The Reception. Women are added to the scene, ignoring the concept of privacy and the necessity of the hijāb in the Islamic society. The upper part of the painting is almost the same as the previous painting, but the foreground, with the fountain and women, may have been added to allow a different interpretation. The scenery as a whole gives the impression of
an outdoor scene, rather than an indoor one. It is not hard to recognise that the background could be authentic, that is, based on Lewis’s sketch of the courtyard, but the treatment represents the artist’s own interpretation in depicting his house as nostalgic scenery.

Lewis’s intension to remain in the market and to produce Oriental scenes is evident. In 1875, Lewis depicted the same courtyard in a different mode in *The Midday Meal* (Figure 39). Again turning an indoor scene of *The Hosh* into an outdoor one, in which Lewis deployed nostalgic memories of his house in Cairo. The substantial body of Cairo sketches that Lewis generated was vital, not only to enrich his paintings and to trigger his memories, but also to prove that he was able to draw Cairene themes until the end of his professional life. Lewis uses the same background from his sketches to deliver different messages: here is the Eastern way of serving a meal. The scene shows cushions to sit

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222 The Arabic way of having a meal in open spaces and terraces is simple, therefore setting a table for a meal is handy anywhere in and out. What is needed is a mat to sit on and another straw mat or a table to display food.
on, cushions or mattresses surrounding the table, and explores the experience of having servants and being served as a Pasha or a Bey. The painting reflects Lewis’s experience of being treated like a Turkish Bey while he was in Cairo. However, *The Midday Meal* looks similar to the courtyard depicted in Lane’s scene (Figure 36), as the terrace overlooked the courtyard could be seen from a different perspective.

*The Midday Meal* emphasises the area as a male domain, where the courtyard is turned into a street or a passage to enrich the outdoor sense. Women are absent, but pigeons are scattered everywhere, reminding the viewer of Lewis’s reputation as an animal lover. The *roshān* in the scene is depicted in the same position as the one in the sketch of the court with the covered portico and the column, to highlight the notion of shade and shadow created beneath the *roshān*. A *Street Scene Near Bab El luk* (1855) is one of the scenes that shows a closer view of the *roshān* in public spaces. The artist demonstrates the *roshān* as a significant feature, providing shade for areas below, for gathering people and to be used as trading sites. He also shows the role of textiles and uses fabric in order to obtain more shade to cool the areas below. The scene shows a *dokan* (shop) that benefits from the shade of the *rawāšin* alongside alleys and projected parts of the buildings. Lewis depicts the experiences of sitting beneath shady alleys and covered bazaars as in his painting *The Carpet Seller, Khan El-Khalil, Cairo* (1860)\(^{223}\).

In 1856, Lewis depicted the *Scene in a Cairo Bazaar* (Figure 40). The scene illustrates the experience of socialising and gathering beneath the *rawāšin* in shady streets. Llewellyn claims that Lewis understood Egyptian life in his watercolours, where he depicts the performance of a storyteller or a poetry-reciter with musical accompaniment from a *raba’ba* (a kind of violin). The crowd consists of a wide variety of people, as would be usual in Cairo bazaars and busy streets. Among them are a wealthy merchant with his two wives and servant\(^{224}\). The story shown here is of a

\(^{223}\) See all the images in the CD-ROM: ‘John Frederick Lewis — Outside’.

\(^{224}\) See more in, Llewellyn, *The Orient Observed*, 131. The street is believed to be Shari’ Bab Al-Wazir.
storyteller or a poetry-reciter as a form of entertainment for men gathering outside a café or on a street corner. Lewis may have experienced such an occurrence while he was in Cairo; a scene that was likely to be found in major Arab cities. He modelled himself and his wife in the scene as the merchant and his wife; however, showing the wife enjoying the action among passing men seems unlikely. The lack of privacy is clearly identifiable, as women in the painting are exposed directly to outsiders. In fact, if Lewis were a Pasha or a merchant it is more likely that he would bring the storyteller home where women could observe and listen to stories from behind screens. Although there are some veiled women in the scene, indicating the sense of the hijāb, Lewis portrays his wife’s face as if she is looking at the viewer. Other fantasy scenes are displayed, such as the child serving fruit, the other controversial images of women wearing a hijāb and the proportion of the buildings to the figures beneath. Simply, this is Lewis’s interpretation and his painted version of a storyteller. The scene also includes the roshān in the background, with extra lattice screens, to indicate privacy, and the use of the

Figure 39: The Midday Meal, 1875. Art Renewal Center, http://www.artrenewal.org/asp/database/image.asp?id=30755

Figure 40: Scene in a Cairo Bazaar, 1856. (Llewellyn, The Orient Observed, 131)
space behind it. Llewellyn claims that this painting was a private commission and that it was not exhibited. These conditions may explain the oriental story and the lack of authenticity of the painting, in common with paintings such as *The Arab Scribe*, Cairo (1852) and *The Prayer of Faith Shall Save the Sick* (1858)\(^{225}\).


5.3. **Lord Frederic Leighton and the Experience of the Roshān:**

Frederic Leighton was born in Scarborough, Yorkshire, in 1830. He was the second child, between two sisters. In 1838 Leighton enrolled at University College, London, for one year, and then travelled with his family through Paris, Rome, then to Germany and Switzerland, from 1839 to 1841. However, in 1852 Leighton arrived in Rome with his imagination filled with images of the Early Renaissance in Italy inspired by his movement in a large artistic circle, which included Thackeray and some of the most important French painters of the time.

The start of his friendship with Adelaide Sartoris and other friends including George Aitchison, can be dated to 1853. After his return to England, Leighton was elected an associate of the Royal Academy in 1864 and became a full member in 1869. Between 1870 and 1871, he started the first of the annual
musical parties, which became one of the events of the season. In 1878 he was elected president of the Royal Academy and this was followed with further recognition of his work in 1894 when he was awarded a gold medal by the Royal Institute of Architects. In 1896 he became a baron (Baron Leighton of Stretton), the only English artist to receive this honour. Unfortunately this was a short lived honour as he died in the same year.

5.3.1. The Impact of the East on Leighton:
Following the first encounter with the East, in Algiers, Leighton described its influence as follows: “This visit made a deep impression on me, I have loved the ‘The East’ as it is called ever since”.

What struck Leighton in the East in 1857, in Algiers in particular, were the similarities between the scenes there and the classical school of Athens. That is, he tended to compare daily scenes with his knowledge learned in art school. This first visit was also the most influential. It made such an impact on Leighton that he also travelled to North Africa (Tangier, Telmcen and Algiers), even in 1895 shortly before his death. In a letter to his friend Steinle, dated 22 October 1857, Leighton wrote:

I have just comeback from Africa, where I have spent some weeks with extreme pleasure, and, I believed, not without great benefits, indeed, I might say that an artist cannot perfect his sense of form so well anywhere as in the East! ... however, I believe I have learnt a great deal by my observations. I have already made a resolution to become acquainted with the Egyptian race in the near future.

However, this impact is not just indicated in his paintings alone; it is also clear from his first journey to the East. This passion for the East is reflected in his work and sketches, which brings another dimension to his skills as he claimed, “I do not believe that more perfect drawings, better defined or more entirely realised, than these studies of heads of Moors, camels, &c., were ever

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226. Dinners, parties and studio visits by eminent or wealthy individuals became a necessary element on the road to success. See Mark Girouard, “The Victorian Artist at Home: The Holland Park Houses — I”, Country Life 16 (November 1972): 1280. Such events could introduce the Arab Hall including the lattice windows to a broad community, and not just among artists.


executed by the hand of man”\textsuperscript{229}. Even in Spain in 1866, Leighton showed a great interest in depicting Islamic scenes, such as the Ruined Moorish Arch at Ronda. In 1867 he visited Turkey and painted a most crucial scene that has common features with the Arab Hall\textsuperscript{230}, that is, the Courtyard of a Mosque at Broussa. This complex in Turkey has a masjid, a madrasa and a mausoleum. The building is called Muradiya Complex, which was built in 1426–1428 for Murad II\textsuperscript{231}. Leighton’s journey to Egypt in 1868 inspired him differently, as he became interested in women wearing wrapped textiles. This concept of covered women, repeated in Leighton’s paintings, could have been introduced after his visit to Egypt, or possibly Algiers. Leighton used the term ‘veil’ to describe scenes in Egypt in his letters from there. He also described veiled women and how women wrapped their bodies with robes.

\textsuperscript{230}. A discussion of the similarities between the visual language of the Arab Hall and Leighton’s paintings with the Muradia complex was the argument of the paper “An Arab Woman within the Arab Hall”, by Al–Murahhem, July 2005.
\textsuperscript{231}. See the CD–ROM: ‘The Roshān and the Orientalists — Leighton’s Paintings’.

Leighton may have encountered similar scenes of women fetching water in Algiers, when he depicted the figure in his painting Lieder Ohne Worte, in 1861. The figure carrying the vase shown from behind is veiled and enveloped in an Eastern garment. Other paintings and sketches also reflect Leighton’s admiration for the veil and the tactile expression of textiles wrapping women’s figures, such as Odalisque in 1862. Consideration of the veil and women is expressed in Leighton’s admiration for textiles and in the beauty of wrapping figures in his scenes. Such evidence could be seen in his sketch of Various Studies of Arab Men and Women in 1857\textsuperscript{233}. This sketch...
demonstrates some of the figures in Leighton’s paintings. These paintings are studied, here, in relation to the Arab Hall as a concept to understand what lies behind the philosophy of these artefacts, which Leighton collected from the East.\textsuperscript{234}

Leighton went to Damascus where he sketched Islamic architectural designs, mainly the traditional houses and their courtyards and other features, in 1873. His famous paintings from there were: \textit{Old Damascus: Jew’s Quarter}, 1873 (Figure 41) and \textit{The Interior of the Grand Mosque of Damascus} (1873–75). The first painting has a marked similarity with some features of the Arab Hall, in the details of the arches, striped marble and ornamentations. The latter is also detailed, in terms of the wooden works of the \textit{minbar}, the hanging chandelier and the general architectural milieu with Islamic motifs (Figure 42). This painting is based on a small oil sketch made during Leighton’s visit to Damascus in 1873. Moreover, the detailed sketches of the lamp and the \textit{minbar} are in his sketchbook, which is kept in the Royal Academy\textsuperscript{235}.

5.3.2. Lord Leighton — The President of the Royal Academy:

I would urge them to remember that if every excellent work is stamped with the personality of its author, no work can be enduring that is stamped with a borrowed stamp; and ... The other maxim also I would urge on them – that true genius knows no hurry, that patience is of its essence, and thoroughness is constant mark; and lastly, I would ask them to believe that the gathered experience of past ages is a precious heritage and not an irksome load; and that nothing will fortify them better for the future, and free development, than the reverent and loving study of the past.\textsuperscript{236}

In Leighton’s advice to students and young artists, he puts emphasis on the author’s personality, as simplified in one’s thoughts, emotions and impressions. The above statement epitomises Leighton’s own interpretations of using the Arab Hall’s authentic artefacts: the merging of the oriel window and

\textsuperscript{234} For images and the complete analysis see the CD-ROM: ‘Leighton’s Paintings’.

\textsuperscript{235} See Stevens, 207.

his studio. Leighton manages to bring Eastern artefacts, as a gathering of experiences from the past, to create his own version of *Arabian Nights*. Leighton also emphasises that genius knows no hurry, therefore it would seem likely that he patiently gathered materials and artefacts for the Hall when he travelled to the East.

Leighton also urged his students to believe in gathering the experience of the past ages of humankind as a precious heritage. As he valued the study of the past, Leighton studied the heritage of the Eastern destinations he visited. He was inspired by classical and Roman heritage and he gave talks on Egyptology and Greek art. In the style of some of his paintings there is a clear depiction of Islamic architectural scenes, even when he was painting in Spain and Greece. In order to build the Arab Hall he must have been aware of the Arabic or 'Moorish' heritage to understand the link between artefacts and their cultural ambience. In Leighton’s library there are books related to Islamic and Arabic culture that
may indicate knowledge related to the Arab Hall. On the one hand the motto reflects Leighton’s own way of thinking as an artist and an academic. On the other hand it reflects the process and the development of the Arab Hall.

5.3.3. The Arab Hall — The Milieu of the Roshān:

The Arab Hall is in Leighton’s house, which is currently 12 Holland Park Road, London. The Hall is studied as a milieu of the roshān, in which the roshān cannot be considered separately from its surrounding. Leighton was fascinated by the East and the Eastern house from the time he first went to Algiers in 1857. Much evidence has been found in his letters from Algiers to his mother. He was so keen to enter one of the interiors when he was there, that he wrote to his mother from Algiers on Monday, 29 September 1857:

[O]f course, one of my great desires was to see if possible a Moorish intérieur; ... I have made the acquaintance of one Achmet, son of Ali Pasha ... I have been twice to his house ... it is a type of all Moorish houses in this part of the world. The whole of the centre of the building is taken up by a little cortile, open to the sky and surrounded by two storeys of arcades of a graceful shape, on to which the room open as in Greek houses ... The rooms, I said open on the corridors and have no windows (except little peeping holes) on the street; they are consequently always wrapped in a sort of clear, cool, reflected twilight that is inexpressibly delightful and soothing in hot, glaring weather. Each room takes up one side of the house, and is therefore a long narrow strip; immediately opposite the door is an alcove, containing a raised, handsomely cushioned and carpeted divan ... Admiration of being in such an interior was evident in his letter, and the image remained vivid in Leighton’s mind when he was looking for an ideal house and a well-lit studio in 1859. Later in 1868, Leighton was in Egypt travelling up the Nile after a reception in the Pasha’s Palace. This experience of being in the Pasha’s environment, where he could be treated as a Bey, was another picture in his memory of the Eastern culture. These experiences helped Leighton to evoke another dimension for the Arab Hall and the privileged experience of being in one of

[237. In the visit to the Arab Hall, I noticed Leighton’s book collection in his own library, including: Islam Under the Arabs, Islam Under the Khalifat of Baghdad and others. This could be an indication of the impact of the East and Muslim culture on Leighton’s background.

[238. Barrington, vol. I, 300—302. See the CD-ROM for the complete extract.]
the *Arabian Nights* settings. From lolling in a *diwan* in Algiers to being a guest in a palace in Egypt, the dream of the Arab Hall grew as time went by. Layers of experiences, blended with nostalgia and fascination, accumulated into the image of an Arabian setting. Who could not imagine himself being a prince in this well known fantasy legend? The hope of fulfilling this dream provided the impulse to explore Eastern cultures and travel to regions where authentic artefacts were available.

Leighton knew Richard Burton and his wife through meeting them in Vichy, France, in August 1869. From that time Leighton developed his friendship with Burton and secured his aspiration of evoking an *Arabian Nights* image in his house. Burton was a famous traveller and a diplomat. Knowing a Consul in Damascus is more than an honour, and this helped to guarantee Leighton a great source of inspiration and material for the Arab Hall. Simply for Leighton, it was a dream come true, as he found ‘the right man for the right job’. This might also explain why Damascus was the chosen destination for Leighton compared to the other Middle Eastern cities; as it is noted: “It is interesting to note that Leighton was already thinking about acquiring large architectural panels of tiles as early as 1869, as it implies that he had already conceived the idea of adding an Arab Hall to his house in Holland Park”.

In fact, this claim reinforces other evidence, based on the letter sent by Burton to Leighton regarding to the issue of supplying him with tiles. Burton wrote to Leighton in 1871 from Damascus saying that he and his wife were quite willing to help fulfil Leighton’s tiles, but had difficulty in finding a house with tiles. Burton also added: “My wife and I will keep a sharp look-out for you, and buy up as many as we can find which seem to answer your description. If native inscriptions — white or blue, for instance — are to be had, I shall secure them, but not if imperfect”.

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239. Richard Burton (1821—1890) was an Orientalist and traveller, who was infamous for having entered the sacred Islamic cities of Makkah and Madianh in 1853 disguised as an Indian Muslim doctor.


Hence it was not just a matter of finding tiles from Damascus, because Leighton had a specific description to complete the scene in his mind. He was a selective collector, who built the Hall he wanted. It seems that Leighton planned how the hall was to be in advance of his trip to Algiers. After this visit he was keen to collect materials needed and related to the theme of the Hall, whether they were images or drawings of architectural scenes or artefacts and other appropriate objects. He intentionally collected specific materials to bring the Hall to life.

The Burtons lived in Damascus for two years in a house at El Salahiyyah. Inside the house was a courtyard with a fountain, a reception room “furnished with rich Eastern webs and a large dining room; while a terrace forming part of the upper story also served as a pleasant housetop in the cool evenings”242. Comparing this description with Leighton’s letters from the East, there is no evidence to prove that Leighton had visited Burton’s house in Damascus, nor that he lived in the Burtons’ house when he went there. However, being friends for a long time, it is likely that a description of the house would have reached Leighton by means other than by visiting or living there himself.

The house that Leighton lived in while he was in Damascus in 1873 gave Leighton a great chance to understand this type of Eastern dwelling. This chance offered him an enormous knowledge of the layout of the Islamic house and gender segregation. That is, to absorb the idea of the harim, and the notion of the hijāb in the Islamic house. However, when Leighton went to Damascus, he explored old houses, made sketches and ordered photographs. He also wrote a letter to his father describing the court, the interiors of old houses including the marble floors, the vivid sparkling leaves and the unceasing song of the bubbling fountains243. This was a scene Leighton was unable to forget, and he had his own fountain built in the Arab Hall.

242. See Jones, et al., 171.
243. See Jones, et al., 172.
When Leighton travelled to Damascus in 1873, Burton was no longer a British Consul. However, Leighton contacted Burton’s friend Dr William Wright, who had lived in Damascus for a long time, and who eventually played a significant role in securing most of the artefacts for the Hall. With him, Leighton searched for oriental draperies, but was mainly interested in tiles, plates and long-necked jars with a blue background and white flowers. This was the colour scheme he was looking for in his overall collection, including the tiles. Within a few weeks Leighton was able to lay the foundation of his fine collection. Wright had become Leighton’s good friend and continued to supply materials from Damascus. He ultimately gave his own collection to Leighton. Leonée Ormond believes that Old Damascus: Jew’s Quarter is painted to document the architectural features of Damascus; he states:

244. An Irish Presbyterian missionary and amateur archaeologist, who knew Damascus intimately and spoke fluent Arabic. Personal interview with Daniel Robbins, the curator of the Arab Hall Museum.
245. Sweetman, 190.

The real subject of the painting is undoubtedly the building — a particularly elaborate example of polychromy, wall-painting and tile-work. The courtyard has a surprising variety of asymmetrical arches, doorways and windows, with an equally complex series of patterns — striped, circular, floral and geometric. The various materials from which the building and the other objects in the scene are constructed provide yet another layer to this scene of decorative abundance — wood of more than one kind, and painted in more than one colour, marble, stone, ironwork, tiles and earthenware.

It is not difficult to notice the similarities between the features of the Arab Hall and this painting: the striped marble, the woodwork, colours, the arch and its ornamentation and above all the concept of the courtyard and its privacy. The pre-eminent feature is the fountain, which completes the scene and invokes sound as a fourth dimension to this scene, just as he had often narrated in his paintings. The fountain that Leighton described to his father is depicted in another painting, Fountain in Court at Damascus, 1873. It is a scene, presumably from the same

247. See Jones, et al., 173.
248. This could reflect his passion for sound in his paintings’ themes and the passion for music as heard at his parties.
249. Ernest Rhys, Frederic Lord Leighton: Late President of the Royal Academy of Arts — An Illustrated Record of his Life and Work (London: George Bell & Sons, 1898).
house of the Farhi’s but in another part of the open court, where the walls were painted in stripes and with trees and plants. The walls in the real house in Damascus are from striped marble, rather than being painted as in the Hall.

Leighton visited Damascus to bring materials to the Arab Hall, despite its hostility towards Orientalists. However, he came back from the Levant with enough columns and basins to build an Arab Hall in his Kingston studio. Burton, meanwhile, travelled to Makil Hill on the banks of the Indus River and made a small collection. Sir Caspar Purdom Clarke was another active figure in collecting materials for the Arab Hall; he was commissioned in 1876 by the South Kensington Museum to travel to Greece, Turkey and Syria to collect ‘art objects’. This was a great chance for Leighton, who asked Clarke to go to certain houses in Damascus and try to purchase certain tiles. By that year Clarke and Burton managed to buy tiles on Leighton’s behalf from Damascus and elsewhere.

When the Hall was completed in 1881, it was used as an after-dinner smoking room. The current curator of Lord Leighton’s house, Daniel Robbins, claims that the Hall was not built primarily to fulfil a practical function; it was more of a memorable setting for the display of the tiles and an enjoyable project for both Leighton and the architect George Aitchison. Robbins also argues that it would be wrong to imagine that Leighton and his friends then played out an Arabian Nights fantasy within its walls. This seems hard to believe as the Arabian Nights played a significant role within Victorian society as an image of the East. Harry How described the evocation of these tales when he visited the Hall in 1892:

One can only stand and listen to the splashing of the fountain falling beneath the golden dome at the far end of the court, and conjure up recollections of the fairest of scenes and grandest of palaces described in the Arabian Nights. We are

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251. A director of the South Kensington Museum, now the Victoria & Albert Museum.
252. See the chronology of the architect in the CD-ROM: ‘Leighton House’.
in Kensington; but as one stands here it would not come as the least surprise if the court were suddenly crowded with the most beautiful of Eastern women reclining on the softest of silken cushions in the niches in the corners; if the wildest and most fascinating dancers of the Arabian Nights were to come tripping in, and to the sound of sweetest of strains glide across the smooth plaques.\textsuperscript{254}

Leighton’s determination, and the fact he paid a lot of money for these artefacts, cannot be justified for having the Hall just to accommodate his collection. It must have seemed obvious to Leighton that studying the correct style and culture would bring the collection to life. Perhaps Islamic architecture was the setting that Leighton had in his mind. This may reflect Witold Rybczynski’s claim, “When a house contains a collection of antique furniture, it is also reasonable to create an appropriate setting ... they are intended primarily to create an appropriate mood”\textsuperscript{255}. In order to create the intended milieu, Leighton drew on the images of his own version of the East to be lived as a real example. The Hall was a long-term project, and not just a setting for a collection of purchases from specific places and in specific colours. Nevertheless, Leighton’s own journeys to Damascus fed the final touch of his dreams; the result is, according to Stevens, a fanciful imitation of an Islamic interior that contains tiles, stained glass and woodwork brought back from Damascus, augmented by modern British furnishings designed in a matching style\textsuperscript{256}. Before starting to examine the inhabitation of this roshan away from its initial context, it is worth considering its origin first.

5.3.4. The Origin of the Lattice Window:

\[i\]mmEDIATELY opposite the door is an alcove, containing a raised, handsomely cushioned and carpeted divan, and ornamented invariably with three florid gilt looking-glasses. At the foot of the raised divan is another lower one for those who like low seats; other such divans run along the wall, and a few highly wrought, embossed chests and other oriental articles of furniture complete the decoration of the room ... You would have laughed to see your son lolling on a Turkey carpet and puffing away at a long pipe.\textsuperscript{257}

\textsuperscript{254} Darkers, \textit{The Holland Park Circle}, 197.


\textsuperscript{256} Stevens, 201.

\textsuperscript{257} Barrington, vol. I, 300—302.
Leighton’s description above seems to be the main motive behind having the roshān in the Arab Hall. Leighton’s passion and enjoyment is documented in the first trip to the East. The last line exemplifies the scene that he was aiming to achieve and build his dreams on. This part of the house is Leighton’s own interpretation of the alcove with the ‘divan’ he had experienced in Algiers. This alcove, with its raised step for sitting, has inspired Western artists and architects alike. Leighton was trying to experience and to live the scene of lolling on a Turkish carpet within a roshān on a ‘raised divan’, as he described to his mother in 1857. The result is not just evident in the Arab Hall; it is also found in the mystery stage designed on the first floor overlooking the Arab Hall, which fulfils Leighton’s dream the most.

Mrs Lang was struck by the small painting-room, accessible from the studio, ‘a little antechamber which has a raised divan, looking through a screen of old Cairo wood-work into the Arab Hall below. In the centre of this screen is a Persian pot of beautiful design and colour, while the sides of the alcove have panels of blue and white Persian tiles.

The aim of this analysis is to identify the age of the roshān. Is it from the visit to Cairo in 1868, or the visit to Damascus in 1873? It is has been argued that the lattice window was brought from Damascus, as a result of Leighton and Burton’s friendship that started in 1869. Benjamin claims that Burton helped Leighton to get tiles from Damascus and the seventeenth-century mashrabiyya for the Arab Hall. Whereas Darby and John Sweetman argue that the carved wooden latticework in the windows and the first-floor gallery are from Damascus, which dated from the seventeenth century. However, Aitchison claims that:

During his visits to Rhodes, to Cairo, and Damascus, [Leighton] made a large collection of lovely Saracenic tiles, and had besides bought two inscriptions, one of the most delicate colour and beautiful design, and the other sixteen feet

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258. Delacroix depicts this kind of Algerian alcoves in Arab Interior (1825), as previously discussed in Section Two.


260. Benjamin, Orientalism, 106.

long and strikingly magnificent, besides getting some panels, stained glass, and lattice-work from Damascus afterwards; these were fitted into an Arab Hall.\textsuperscript{262}

It is also claimed that the lattice window was brought from Cairo, but it is not known if it is in the roshān in the upper floor or one of the two in the Arab Hall. In the booklet of the Leighton House Museum\textsuperscript{263}, it is written that the balcony or zenana and the tiles were brought from the Middle East. To add to the confusion, the Leighton House Museum calls the roshān a ‘zenana’. Why zenana? This is a term that is neither Arabic nor related to Cairo or Damascus\textsuperscript{264}. In this booklet, and referring to the Silk Room on the upper floor, the zenana (lattice projected window) is mentioned again as being brought by Leighton from Cairo. In the updated version of the Leighton House website, in 2006, it is written that ‘the zenana, circa 17th century’ was acquired by Leighton from a mosque in Cairo and ingeniously incorporated by Aitchison into the design of the Arab Hall. The whole structure is cantilevered over the Arab Hall, allowing glimpses into the Hall and of the ceiling of the dome\textsuperscript{265} (see Figure 43).

This projected window is displayed as an ‘artefact’ with a wooden frame to picture it as an exotic element (see Figure 45). It is also described as if the architect had made a great effort, even an invention, to solve the layout of the Hall in relation to the lattice window upstairs. If it is from a masjid, as it is mentioned on the website, it would be a different matter. This could lead to a complex ethical debate about bringing an ‘artefact’ from a religious space to fulfil one’s dreams! However, the woodwork technique has the appearance of work from Cairo, rather than from Damascus, as the fine delicate wood-turned skill is famous in Egypt (Figure 44). This feature can be noticed clearly in comparing the example in the Arab Hall with Orientalists’ paintings, especially Carl Haag paintings of the rawāshīn of

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[264] See more in the meaning of the term zenana, in relation to the hijāb and the roshān in the following section.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Cairo and Damascus, which reflect the differences in wooden techniques\textsuperscript{266}.

5.3.5. Experience, Living Within the Rosh\=an:
Although Leighton had a lattice window in his house in London, he never used it in his paintings or as a stage to pose his models within. Moreover, it is peculiar that this part of the house, and the upper lattice window in particular, is rarely depicted or photographed, or even mentioned in terms of its inhabitation or the way Leighton occupied it. Few images have been executed to demonstrate this element in the upper floor compared to the rest of the house.

The Arab Hall was open to visitors, whereas the upper room with the projected lattice window, which overlooked the Arab Hall, was used as a small painting room. In a letter to Octavia Hill\textsuperscript{267}, Leighton wrote: “you and your friends, the poor people from Whitechapel will be very welcome to the Arab Hall and Ground Floor in my absence — they may see everything but the studio”\textsuperscript{268}. So the rosh\=an is a part of the studio, and Leighton prevented visitors gaining access to this space in his absence. This corner is for himself, and nobody but himself. This could demonstrate awareness of the rosh\=an as a private stage, or as a haven for the family and the women of the house, or whatever havens Leighton wanted it to be. Perhaps he wanted to feel this ‘Eastern experience’ within the rosh\=an, as he first encountered it in Algiers. This first ‘divan’ Leighton describes to his mother influences the rest of his life, and he keeps this joy in mind when shaping his home.

How did Leighton occupy the rosh\=an? Is it as Sir Joshua

\textsuperscript{266} See the CD-ROM: ‘The Rosh\=an and the Orientalits’ — Who Brought the Rosh\=an Home’.

\textsuperscript{267} Octavia Hill (1838—1912) a housing and social reformer and Leighton’s friend who did charity work helping poor people. (Oxford Dictionary for National Biography).

\textsuperscript{268} Jones, et al., 24.
Figure 43: The *roshān* view from outside. (Al-Murahhem, 2005)

Figure 44: View of the *roshān* from within, overlooking the hall. (Al-Murahhem, 2005)

Figure 45: The raised *diwān* displayed as an exotic element. (Al-Murahhem, 2005)
Reynolds said about nostalgia and memory, is it a passion of the possessive being surrounding by artefacts? Or is it a sense of the traveller’s mode of self-indulgence and showing off? Or is it a privileged way of living as he was brought up by his family? No answers are entirely satisfactory except that the roshān and the Arab Hall in general reflect Leighton’s passion to the East and Algiers, in particular. This passion is described by Mrs Russell Barrington, “He decided on leaving England for two months, and fixed on Algiers as a dry climate likely to suit his health. It had lived in his memory also ever since the first visit in 1857, as a country singularly fascinating to him”\(^{270}\). Whereas the inhabitation of this secret part of Leighton’s life is described by J. F. Jungling, in 1882, two years after his death:

> From the landing whence most of these things were visible, you entered at once the great studio. Round the upper wall ran a cast of the Parthenon frieze, and beneath this the wall on one side was riddle and windowed, as it were, with innumerable framed pictures, small studies of foreign scenes.

... Opposite these, below the great window [roshān], were mainly of the artist’s miniature wax models and studies. Else, the ordinary not unpicturesque lumber of an artist’s studio was conspicuously absent. The secret of Leighton’s despatch and careful ordering of his days, was to be read, indeed, in every detail of his work-a-day surroundings. Even in a dim antechamber, with a trellised niche most mysteriously overlooking the Arab Hall, at one end of the studio ... \(^{271}\)

In fact, the only image I have come across regarding the habitation of this lattice window in the upper room of the Arab Hall is seen in (Figure 46). This image demonstrates the Arabic low seating, where back cushions, side cushions and a carpet occupied the dakka. The corner is similar to Haag’s corner which was fashionable by that time, especially among artists and travellers. In Leighton’s case, this corner is kept beside his studio to be occupied by him and not by visitors.

Perhaps this antechamber is not just a studio or a part of it; it could be Leighton’s own private world where he contemplated his thoughts, like a nostalgic haven to remember the Orient.

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269. Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723–1792) was the first president of RA in 1768. See the similarities of concepts between Reynolds and Leighton in the CD–ROM: ‘Leighton House’.


271. See Rhys, 67–68.
This could be similar to Haag's case when he dressed as an Arab in his diwan of his house in London. The Arab Hall is an important part of the upper roshān with its sense of overlooking the inner court as a complete milieu. Leighton's dreams of lolling on Turkish carpets within this niche could not be fulfilled if he had not built a replica with an authentic atmosphere. The sense of being within the roshān, of being veiled and sitting behind the screen, listening to the sparkling fountain, was there to be experienced by Leighton for the rest of his life. This experience was completely different than being behind one of those screens on the ground floor of the Arab Hall. It is a vivid scene, which always remained in Leighton's mind, representing his admiration for the East. In fact, the experience of sitting within the roshān and looking down to the Arab Hall through its small aperture, can guarantee a moment of nostalgia that brings sensual memories of the East.

The matter is debatable when it comes to the authenticity and originality of the whole milieu. Although Leighton tries to bring original artefacts to enhance the final outcome of the Hall, the appearance of the Hall reflects the artist's own interpretation. Comparing the roshān to the equivalent element in the East,
from a native perspective, raises some issues. The scene cannot be marked as fake, but it could be seen as a collage. First, in an original milieu, tiles would not be used on the ceiling of the roshān. The ceiling itself would be made from the same material as the roshān, but not from tiles (see Figure 45). The wooden treatment could be repeated in the ceiling of the room where the roshān is located, to give the sense of unity to the space. Second, the tiled panel by the side of the roshān symbolises another unauthentic treatment, where the panels are framed in a displaying manner, rather than being naturally positioned. Exhibiting the tile panels as antiquity ruins the natural feeling of being in an authentic place. Third, and the most importantly, the roshān is set in a theatrical way by adding two steps on both sides. Although the roshān could be seen as a stage for the family of the house, it would not be positioned in this manner as an ‘artefact’ rather than being a functional element.

Leighton may have justified his own arrangement, by his motto that emphasises the creation of identity through representing past heritage, or it could simply be that the Arab Hall was the only way to accommodate his collection in a way that pleased him. However, the way Leighton furnished this part of the house is not documented nor depicted in images. Accordingly, speculations cast a shadow on the mystery of the way he furnished and inhabited the roshān. Were there Oriental carpets with mattresses and cushions resembling the Arabic lower sitting arrangement, where he can loll, as he described it in Algiers? The secret of the inhabitation of this corner with its roshān remains mysterious, as Leighton himself may have wanted to keep it.
Section 4

The Roshān and the Ḥijāb
1. The Concept of the \textit{Hijāb}:

This section argues that the roshān is a form that is derived from the principle of the hijāb (حجاب), and considers the significance of women to the roshān. The hijāb, as a concept, governs women’s daily life of Islam, and the roshān, as an enclosure, provides a screen masking the openings of a house. These screened windows are like the eyes of the house: having the windows screened protects the interiors and respects the householder’s privacy. The hijāb is central to Muslim daily life; yet, the veiling of women is just one form of a broader range of its implications.

The word hijāb, as a noun, comes from the Arabic verb hajaba (حجاب) from the root \textit{ḥ-j-b} (ح-ج-ب), which means ‘to hide from view or to conceal’. It can mean to screen or draw a curtain or a barrier of any kind. The verb hajaba translates as ‘to veil, to seclude, to screen, to conceal, to form a separation and to mask’, whereas the noun ‘hijāb’ translates as ‘cover, wrap, curtain, veil, screen and partition’\textsuperscript{1}.

\textit{Hājib} (حجاب), as a noun, means an eyebrow that protects the eye and enhances its beauty. In this respect, a rain protection component added to a car window (windscreen) and the protective canopy or the crown on the upper part of the roshān are elements designed for protection, and each is called hājib. The hājib concept is in marked contrast to the hijāb (veiling) of women, where the concealment of the bodily form is intended to hide its beauty. Hājib also signifies a guardian who is in charge of monitoring who enters to the Caliph or the Sultan, watching over and controlling the passage of the entrance with a curtain to conceal what is behind. This curtain, which is called sitāra or sitr, was a political partition to conceal the ruler from the public and the householder of the house. The hājib, as a custom, was introduced into Islam by the Umayyads (661—750), and it was known in Fatimid (909—1171) receptions and in political events

\textsuperscript{1} El-Guindi, 157.
where the ruler made speeches while hidden behind a curtain.\(^2\)

This tendency of screening continues throughout Islamic history, taking various forms, with all related to guarding and ensuring security in the Caliph’s section and in women’s sections of palaces. Orientalists depict similar scenes with black slaves or eunuchs guarding the Caliph or Sultan’s entrance and women’s sections in the harîm. Examples are in *The Nubian Guard*, 1895 (Figure 1) and *Entering the Harem*, 1870s (Figure 2). In both, the presence of curtains and the guard are clearly distinguishable. The curtain itself implies the concept of the hijâb, as does the hâjib. The job of guard has been seen in the Ottoman Empire and as recently as the nineteenth century, as evidenced in Orientalists’ depictions.

Examining the Mughal period in India, the naqib might be seen as equivalent to the hâjib (guard). The naqib is the announcer who publicises the comings and goings of royalty. In Lahore Fort

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there is a path called Hathi Paer (Elephant Path, or Elephant's Feet), that is a passage with a giant staircase with low and broad steps so that elephants can carry royalty to and from the palace. The western wall of this passage has niches both in the lower and upper storeys in which the khwaja sara (eunuch) and the naqib used to stand.

Sitr or sātir (سِتَّر) are both nouns of the verb satar (سَتَر), from the root s–t–r, the verb means 'to cover, to conceal, to screen, to shield and to guard'. Both nouns imply concealment and screening, physically and metaphorically, whereas sitār (سِتَّار) or sitāra (سِتَّار) means a curtain, a screen or a barrier. Metaphorically, both terms imply privacy as well as indicating boundaries and limitations where no access is allowed without strict regulation. All of these terms related to the hijāb are used in spoken dialects and in Islamic traditions as they embody the notion of dress and sanctity.

For instance, Muslims can perform the salāt (prayer) anywhere, at the appropriate time, even if there is no specific prayer area nearby. However, boundaries are identified by what is called sutra (سُتْر), which could be an object like a pillar, wall or stick, a spear etc. It should not be less than a foot high and must be in front of a person who is performing the salāt, thus acting as a symbolic barrier. That is, to draw boundaries and to identify a space where one can pray, the sutra is the barrier between the prayer and the surrounding.

Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones notes that 'veil', as a general term, is used in a hazy and a non-descriptive way in some English dictionaries. In his study of women and veiling, Llewellyn-Jones claims that, the noun 'veil' is a generic term for a garment that has many names in a wide variety of languages, especially in the languages of modern veil-societies, and a corresponding number of styles and wearers. He also states that 'the veil' is still

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an emotional subject for many people who see it as the classical apotheosis of the suppression of women, particularly in the Middle East. The veil as a woman’s garment is, as Llewellyn-Jones argues, associated to a great extent with the containment of women and the notion of Oriental ‘Otherness’.

The veil is also associated with fluidity, that is, something difficult to grasp firmly and giving an impression of ambivalence. The symbolic ambiguity of the veil is related to the difficulty of clearly discerning a woman’s contours and features from her silhouette, in loose, flowing garments. The Muslim veil, as a religious emblem, is still assigned contradictory values by non-Muslims, including those of sensuality, freedom of movement in the public sphere, religiosity and oppressiveness against women.

The dialectical relation between the hijāb, which implies both enclosing and transparency, could be applied to the roshān. The roshān will be inspected closely from this angle to provide a brief understanding of the hijāb and its forms in Islamic architecture.

The main focus of this section is to correct the popular misconception of the hijāb outer garment in parallel with the misconception of the roshān as an Islamic architectural element based on the hijāb. Intersections between Orientalists and the hijāb are only considered in this analysis in relation to the roshān.

The necessity of segregation, which shapes women’s quarters within Islamic houses, is another concern in this debate. This is to highlight the misleading notion of using women as the main character in representing the veil as a garment, and the roshān as another form of garment that conceals the house.

2. The Ḥijāb and Islam:

The main function of the hijāb is to provide protection and privacy. It does not have to be attached to the body that one wants to be concealed; the aim is to wrap and to preserve.

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Similarly, it is preferable to cover valuable items so that they are wrapped and protected in some way. The pearl in its shell or a diamond in its coal coat cover demonstrates the main idea of the hijāb. The hijāb has been applied by the prophet Muhammad (Al-ʾNūr) in the second year of the Hijra⁹, and it has been written in the Qurʾān, to play a significant role in Muslim daily lives.

Both veiling and the segregation of genders are fundamental principles in Islam that have been applied and implemented in Muslim countries for centuries. Simply, the hijāb is concerned with the safeguarding of family honour, as reflected through āyāt¹⁰ (verses) from the Qurʾān. These āyāt demonstrate the obligation of the hijāb as a principle to be applied in Muslim domestic life, where women are seen as beautiful figures who need to be concealed, protected and valued for their own sake. In sūrat¹¹ Al-ʾAhzāb, it is stated that:

[a]nd when ye ask (his ladies) for anything ye want ask them from before a screen (hijāb): that makes for your greater purity for your hearts and for theirs.¹²

A prophet! Tell thy wives and daughters and the believing women, that they should cast their outer garments over their persons (when abroad): That is most convenient that they should be known (as such) and not molested and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.¹³

In the first āyah (verse) ‘his ladies’ mean the prophet’s wives, whereas the second āyah involves women believers. Sūrat Al-ʾNūr¹⁴ focuses on personal privacy and domestic manners, the matters of intimacy, connected with spiritual teaching that Muslims are obliged to observe and learn. This sūrah commences with the nature of the punishment of sex offences and adultery. Such a strong approach is taken to demonstrate the necessity of the hijāb and to indicate that the unveiling issue should not be taken lightly¹⁵. Moreover, the sūrah emphasises privacy and other

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⁹. Hijra/Hijri is the Arabic calendar.
¹⁰. Āyāt pl. of āyah, which means verse.
¹¹. Sūrah or Sūrat means a section or a chapter in the Holy Qurʾān.
¹⁴. This Sūrah is a real manifesto that draws on rules in Islamic domestic manners since the seventh century. Al-ʾNūr means ‘the Light’.
¹⁵. See more on this issue in Llewellyn-Jones, 301.
rules of appropriate domestic behaviour within the house. The message of these Qur’anic verses is to emphasise the obligation of the hijab, to describe the way of the hijab as a garment and to draw attention to the strict limitations placed on those involved in hijab wearing. The āyah also places great emphasis on the details of women’s ornaments and provides guidance on the ways to conceal women’s beauty.

And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what (must ordinary) appear therefore; that they should draw their veils over their bosoms and not display their beauty except to their husbands, their fathers, their husbands’ fathers, their sons, their husbands’ sons ... and that they should not strike their feet in order to draw attention to their hidden ornaments. And O ye Believers! Turn ye all together towards Allah, that ye may attain Bliss.16

The last āyah asks women to lower their gaze and starts by asking men to do the same, but without the order of the hijab. Commands are applied to men and women alike. However, women are obliged to cover up more due to the inherent differences between the genders. Equality between them is in relation to Allah according to their deeds. Abul’ Ala Maududi describes the covering of the face which is to be done either by drawing a part of the outer garment in front of the face, by a veil or in some other way17. This major debate as to whether the face should be covered or not continues in current times. Regardless of the present-day debate on the hijab and its application in Islam; the principle of the hijab lies behind the existence and the practice of the roshān and the hijab garment alike. This application takes many forms within the house as screening or cladding, which may have occurred in the Prophet’s time as a result of religious obedience.

While the Qur’ān reveals the rules of the hijab, the Hadith, the tradition of the Prophet (ﷺ), clarifies the issue in greater detail:

“Ayesha (Radi Allahu ‘Anha — May Allah be pleased with her)


reported that Asma’a the daughter of Abu Baker ‘Radi Allahu Anhu’ came to the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) while wearing thin clothing. He approached her and said: O Asma’a! When a girl reaches the menstrual age, it is not proper that anything should remain exposed except this and this. He pointed to the face and hands." Many other Ahādīth focuses on the virtues of the hijāb and link it to Allah (ﷻ). The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Allah, Most High, is Heaven, is Ha’yeii (Bashful), Sit’teer (Shlder). He loves Haya’ (Bashfulness) and Sitr (Sheilding, Covering)”¹⁹. The application of the orders of the Qur’ān are reflected in this Hadith: “When the verse ‘That they should cast their outer garments over their persons’ was revealed, the women of Ansar came out as if they had crows over their heads by wearing outer garments”²⁰. This is how women look with their outer garments during the Prophet time, when the hijāb verses were descended. Such a scene demonstrates application of Islamic law among the first generation of Muslim women and a phenomenon that could be observed until today in major Islamic cities.

Islam imposes an absolute way of living that affects all aspects of being: public, private and spiritual across the Islamic world. There are always reasons for obligatory commands in the Qur’ān, they are for the benefit of the people and the community. The hijāb can be seen as one issue of these rules. Elizabeth Cooper states that actions of the Muslim woman, whether in India, Egypt, Persia or Algiers, have been controlled by Islamic laws since the seventh century and, even to-day, these rules govern each act of domestic life and the world outside the home²¹.

The veil has been at the centre of a civic law code used by Assyrians since at least 1250 BC. Veiling was practiced in many ancient civilisations. Islam is perhaps one of the last world civilisations to maintain its cultural integrity at all levels. A

²¹. Elizabeth Cooper, The Harim and the Purdah: Studies of Oriental Women (London: T. Fisher Unwin, Ltd., 1915), 26—27. The time mentioned as ‘to-day’ refers to 1915, however, the situation still exists in some regions of the Islamic world.
‘covered civilisation’ as the last great bastion of tradition, has not allowed for the possibility of adapting to or adopting modernity. Consequently, women in the Islamic world continue to operate in an existence fundamentally rooted in a time-honoured past. However, veiling and the covering of the face is frequently used as a symbol to criticise Islam’s supposed patriarchal subordination of women, despite the fact that veiling has been practised to various degrees in a number of other cultures. Veiling is also practised in some communities where Islam was the dominant religion; including Spain and Greece, where a scarf is used to cover the head.

3. The Ḥijāb and Women:

3.1 The Ḥijāb and Women’s Etymology:

In Arabic, Ḥijāb means concealing and veiling, whereas Ḥarīm (حرم) means women, and Ḥurma (حرم), the singular, means woman. All such words derive from the verb ḥaram (حرام), which means prohibited. Ḥārim is a well-known term beyond the Arab world and popular among Orientalists as well. It is also presented through travel narratives as a space of non-freedom, evil and idleness, simply as a world of fantasy packed with women who are always kept indoors.

The word harim is much misunderstood by the people of the Western world. The Arabic word harim simply means the women’s quarters ... while the harim-like are the apartments reserved for the female members and children of the family. The literal meaning is exclusiveness, seclusion, privacy. In its restricted sense it embodies the two meaning of the women of the household and their exclusive apartments.

For the West, the image of the harim remains a delightfully shocking one of polygamy and sequestration. Ḥārim, as a space, is the separate, protected part of a household where women, children and servants live in maximum seclusion and

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22. Llewellyn-Jones, 24 and 175. The obvious exception is the current time, when in some Muslim countries women are not practicing a complete Ḥijāb.


privacy\textsuperscript{26}. Most importantly, \textit{hurma} (حرم) means a woman and literally means sacredness. \textit{Hurma} and its cognate \textit{haram} (حرم) is a customary way of making respectful reference to a man’s wife. She and the women in the house are the foremost repository of the house’s \textit{hurma} (sanctity, sanctuary). \textit{Haram} and \textit{hurma} are still used in Arabic, among middle and upper classes, as a respectful form of address to a married woman. For non-Arab Muslims, such as those in Turkey and Iran, the equivalent term is \textit{Hanum} or \textit{Khanum}\textsuperscript{27}.

\textit{Haram} (حرم) means sacred, and the sanctuaries of Makkah and Madinah are called Al-\textit{Haram} Al-Sharif. \textit{Harām} is another noun derived from the same verb, which means prohibited, forbidden and punishable, from a religious point of view\textsuperscript{28}. \textit{Ihrām} (إحرام) is another derived term that implies a state in which one is prohibited to practice certain deeds that are lawful at other times.

The pilgrimages of ‘\textit{umra}\textsuperscript{29} and \textit{Hajj} are performed during such a state, and special clothes need to be worn to participate in such events\textsuperscript{30}. \textit{Mahram} is also derived from the verb \textit{haram}; it means a person whom a woman cannot marry due to the close familial relationship (blood relatives such as a father, a brother, etc.)\textsuperscript{31}, or her own husband who will also be a \textit{mahram}. The \textit{mahram} ought to travel with the woman for her protection and so she will not to be alone.

All of these terms — and many more derived from the same verb \textit{haram} — embody the concepts of sacredness, protection and respect, as well as religious restrictions and rules to be performed and acknowledged. Houses are the most respected of places and have their own \textit{hurma}. This includes the houses of Allah (\textit{masājid}), the Prophet’s house in Madinah and ordinary houses. Sacredness is the common factor, indicating ownership and privacy, restricted access and the observance of rules. Rules

\textsuperscript{28} Az-Zubaidi, 1046.
\textsuperscript{29} The lesser pilgrimage to Makkah, which is optional and can be taken at any time.
\textsuperscript{30} Az-Zubaidi, 1047.
\textsuperscript{31} Az-Zubaidi, 1043.
govern the houses of Allah, especially in Makkah and Madinah where non-believers cannot enter. However, the Prophet’s house has its own rules for access, which are discussed in detail in the Qur’ān. Similarly, ordinary houses are respected as territories belonging to their occupants who also have the right to set their own rules within the boundaries of Islam.

Overall, women are the main consideration in the broader concept of the ḥijāb. The term ḥurma (woman), embodying the literal meaning of sacredness, obliges the drawing of a screen or a curtain in order to convey respect. Privacy is highly demanded as a means of protecting the ḥurma and its several dimensions, the ḥurma of the masjid, the ḥurma of the tomb and mainly the ḥurma of the house and its households. Therefore, the concept of the ḥurma and the presence of ḥarīm (women) play a crucial part in the ḥijāb and the roshān as a screening device. The most common use of the word ḥarīm is to denote the space in the family home reserved for women, suggesting a clear idea of ḥijāb and segregation. The ḥarīm, as a space, is a zone within the house that is governed by the concept of the ḥijāb, once more for the ḥarīm (women) as the main occupiers. Ḥarīm, from Arabic, is an architectural term used to define a space utilised by women and the family of the house. Haremlik, as a Turkish term, commonly referred to the same space, during the Ottoman period. Regardless of the different words used to describe the same space, both ḥarīm or haremlik were disseminated via the Orientalists’ movement. In fact, ḥarīm is not just an enclosed space for women, it is a name for a group of women or any area which has been occupied by women without any physical boundaries. Literally, it is a defined place for a specific gender, but it does not have to be an enclosed space.

In Hindi, Harem derives from the Arabic ḥaram, whereas ḥarīm is applied to the women of the family and their apartments. This word is not now commonly used in India; zenana is the

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32. Some English studies refer to the term ‘Haremlik’ and document how it was introduced to the Victorians. See Melman, 149.
current word for the same description\(^3\). Zenana, from Farsi zanāna, is derived from zan, that is, ‘women’; and designates the apartments of a house in which the women of the family are secluded. This Islamic rule of female seclusion has been largely adopted by the Hindus of Bengal and by the Mahrattas. Zanāna is also the term used for the women of the family themselves\(^34\). Zanana is a Mughal term used to describe the women’s quarters in a palace or house\(^3\). It is also written as zenana, which means the same as haremi\(^3\). Considering the Persian cultural impact on the Islamic Mughal, this term is used to describe segregation which is evident in whichever language is used among Muslims. That is, both terms harim and zanāna mean women and are used to describe women’s quarters.

Zenane is commonly used in the Sind (southern Pakistan) and in the Indian subcontinent, where strict rule of purdah (hijāb) is applied, and thus develops gender segregation\(^37\). Partha Mitter warns against the misuse of old terms, as he states, “The zanana (women’s quarters), misleadingly called the Jahangiri Mahall, impressed us with its red sandstone and marble work and deeply carved surfaces”\(^38\). Perhaps the case is similar to the use of the term zenana to describe the wooden projected window in the Arab Hall. This misleading usage could bewilder and change the fact that this window was actually brought from the Middle East and not from India.

Zenana is used in Persia and Turkey; however, in India the notion of being behind a screen can be expressed by saying: ‘She is purdah–nashim, or simply purdah.’ the purdah is the screen that shuts the woman away from the outside world. A similar

\(^{33}\) Henry Yule and A. C. Burnett, Hobson-Jobson: A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Phrases, 2\(^{\text{nd}}\) ed. (Kent: Linguasia, 1903), 411, s.v. “harim”. The reference highlights that this term is used in English literature during the 1700s to describe women’s sections in palaces.

\(^{34}\) Yule and Burnett, 981, s.v. “zenana”.

\(^{35}\) Petersen, 316. See also McGregor. Oxford Hindi–English Dictionary, 356, in saying that Zanāna (Persian, zanāna) adj. means women’s (rooms, compartment, work, institution), women’s department.

\(^{36}\) Gunther, 2002, Glossary of Indian Art: s. v. ‘haremi’, and ‘zenana’.

\(^{37}\) Cooper and Dawson, 72, 112 and 111. Muslim communities in Patan and in Gujarat region have a great link with the Arabian Sea and trade route. See Balkrishna Doshi, “Expressing an Architectural Identity: Bohra Houses of Gujarat”, Mimar 19 (1986).

\(^{38}\) Mitter, 102.
expression with a similar meaning is used in Egypt: ‘Yes, my daughters go to school’ a mother will say, ‘but they are kept harim’\textsuperscript{39}. In Hindi, purdah orpardā is a term from Persian ‘parda’, meaning a ‘curtain’, especially a curtain screening women from being seen by men. A woman of position who observes such rules of seclusion is termed parda-nishin, or ‘one who sits behind a curtain’\textsuperscript{40}. The term in Hindi and Farsi has an interwoven and a metaphorical meaning: a curtain, hanging, screen, partition or blind. It also means veil, lid (of the eye), thin covering, layer, veneer, film, seclusion (especially of a Muslim woman) and privacy\textsuperscript{41}. Purda is also known as an area for women which is screened from the sight of men by a curtain\textsuperscript{42}. In Arabic purd or purda means a black square narrow dress\textsuperscript{43}, or a garment with strips for wrapping or clothing the body\textsuperscript{44}. In Persia, enderun or zenane reflects the exact concept of a secluded space within the house\textsuperscript{45}. This reflects the metaphorical concept of the hijâb as it is written in the Qur’ān: ‘behind a screen’. However, the physical form of this concept can be seen in the construction of the Islamic house layout that focuses on gender segregation.

As a term, the hijâb is known in the Arab and the Islamic world alike; however, in some regions local terminology substitutes the Arabic term while the concept remains the same. Accordingly, hijâb is not restricted to the house, where segregation is needed, but it can be seen everywhere. Once a screen is draped, the sense of women’s presence is evident and substantial. Anywhere in the Islamic world, even today, it is easily spotted. The hijâb (screen) follows women wherever they go as a shield for protection, more for privacy, and to enable to move with ease and comfort without coming to harm. The dual meaning of the term harîm, encompassing both a space and its occupants, is parallel to the connection existing between the roshān and the hijâb as

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\textsuperscript{39} Cooper, 26.
\textsuperscript{40} Yule and Burnell, 744.
\textsuperscript{41} McGregor. Oxford Hindi-English Dictionary, 603.
\textsuperscript{42} Slesin and Cliff, 294.
\textsuperscript{43} Az-Zubadi, 1043. The pronunciation is similar in Arabic, Farsi and Hindi.
\textsuperscript{44} Al-Wasit, vol. 1, 48.
\textsuperscript{45} Croutier, 13. It is also claimed that ‘andarun’ is the inner quarter reserved for close family members and female visitors, See Scarce, Domestic Culture, 32—38.
\end{flushright}
a concept. Although the space is mainly for the family and the women of the house, it has been constantly claimed as a world of fantasy; as Cooper puts it:

One hears the word *harîm* and instantly conjures up *Arabian Nights* scenes of rare hangings, subdued lights, and beautiful odalisques lounging on soft divans, slaves, incense, and a general air of sensuousness pervading the entire place. 46

The conflation of the *hijâb* and the *harîm* terms and forms is also misrepresented by the Orientalists.

### 3.2 The *Hijâb* and the Orientalists:

The majority of westerners, however, took little account of social nuances in practice of veiling. They were simply fascinated or shocked by the sight of veiled women in city streets, visible yet invisible. For western men in particular, the veil presented a challenge to the imagination. Writers, artists and photographers dwelt on the ‘mysteries’ which lay behind this piece of cloth. 47

Veiled women, as an exotic foreign costume, fascinated travel-writers and the travelogue reading public. The dress and the physique of these veiled women seemed entirely different from those of the Orientalists’ own cultures 48. This fascination could be because the veil and the *harîm* stood for the opacity that marked a radical difference from Western cultural norms 49. The fantasy and mystery surrounding veiled women extends to involve the *harîm* quarter, which is intensively used as an arena for imagining and staging *Arabian Nights* characters by the Orientalists. Alev Lytle Croutier has noted:

> [t]he exquisite beauty of these women of many nationalities fascinated the entire world. Everyone was curious to know what happened behind the harem walls – but no one was allowed behind them. Foreign ambassadors and artist reported accounts obtained from peddlers or servant women who had entered, but such narratives were often muddled by wishful exoticism. To this day, the reality is difficult to ascertain. 50

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46. Cooper, 24–25.
47. Graham-Brown, 134.
50. Croutier, 29.
A significant number of women travellers practiced wearing the veil during their stay in the East (Middle East) and, in a few cases, after they returned home. Julia Pardoe, Sophia Lane-Poole, Isabel Burton, Anne Blunt and Isabella Bird Bishop are the best-known examples. The Renaissance traveller Bassano da Zara described the veil of women seen outdoors in 1545, as follows:

They wear a towel (a cloth or woollen underscarf) round the neck and head, so that one can only see their eyes and mouth, and these they cover with a thin silk scarf a palm’s width each way, through which they can see and not be seen by others. The scarf is fastened with her pins to a suitable part of the head above the forehead, so that when they go through the street and meet other women, they raise the scarf that hangs over their faces and kiss one another.

The depiction demonstrates the *hijāb* as a garment, describing its material and the mechanism of wearing it. It also shows the recognition that occurs among veiled women themselves when they meet on the streets. In 1717 Lady Montagu, during her two years stay in Turkey, found it convenient to dress in the local style, although this was, in her opinion, more for reasons of novelty than for ease of travel; she stated:

> no woman of what rank so ever being permitted to go in the streets without 2 muslins, one that covers her face all but her Eyes and another that hides the whole dress of her head ...
> You may guess how effectually this disguises them, that there is no distinguishing the great Lady from her Slave, and ‘tis (sic) impossible for the most jealous Husband to know his Wife when he meets her, and no Man dare either touch or follow a Woman in the Street. This perpetual Masquerade gives them entire liberty of following their Inclinations without danger of Discovery.

It is not true; in fact, that a husband cannot recognise his wife, and that the *hijāb* is to disguise. The main purpose of the *hijāb* is to hide women’s beauty and figures to strangers and men on the streets. In 1842–44 Sophia Lane-Poole described the *hijāb* thus:

> “Imagine the face covered closely by a muslin veil, double at the upper part, the eyes only uncovered, and over a dress of coloured silk an overwhelming covering of black ...”

51. See more in, Melman, 119.
52. See Croutier, 76.
53. Melman, 86. See also Thornton, Women, 12.
54. Lane–Poole, *The English Woman in Egypt*, vol. I, 63.
The description of the *hijāb* as a garment is essential in all depictions drawn by non-Muslim women, in both text and visual images. The layers of fabric enveloping a woman’s figure, especially the upper part, are similar to the *roshan* construction parts as wooden layers. This description emphasises the way that both means of veiling provide transparency and control over the ways in which women may be seen and screened. They also acknowledge the sense of comfort and satisfaction among women, who experience the Islamic *hijāb*.

As a result of this veil, which aims to protect women, women can go out without being noticed and are therefore considered to be in a safe environment. This outer garment, as a barrier, does not just control women’s behaviour; it also governs the public sphere when they are out. Billie Melman claims that travellers repeatedly comment on the safety of the streets of Turkey and Egypt’s major cities. It is worth noting that women’s liberties are by no means limited to the enclosed domestic sphere. It is asserted that Ottoman and Arab women enjoyed a freedom of movement guaranteed by the veil. Most significantly, they were free of intrusion. Melman then states that in the eighteenth century the veil, as symbol of licence, was transformed by the Victorians into a trope for female virtue and respectability.

Thomas Allom depicted the *hijāb* in Turkey; he painted the exterior lattice screens associated with veiled women in *Summer Houses and the Castle of Europe, on the Bosphorus* in 1846 (Figure 3). He also imagined women observing through screens from within in *The Favourite Odalisque* in 1838—40 (Figure 4). Allom wrote admiringly in 1845:

> The costume of these Orientals is extremely gorgeous: their hair, which, though fine and glossy ... is hidden by the folds of the embroidered handkerchiefs that form their headdress — fastened and decorated with bodkins of diamonds and emeralds — jewels they are extremely fond of displaying.

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55. Melman, 111.
56. Thomas Allom (1804—1872) was an English engraver, architect and one of the most well known Orientalists who recorded Turkey and the Holy land in 1834—1836.
Allom demonstrates the desire to imagine and fabricate what might be behind these screens and outer garments. This tendency is to portray the 'Other'. Despite these imaginative interpretations, some images link the hijāb to women, in instances where a screen, veiled women and a guard would have been a common scene in the Islamic world. Gérôme depicted these elements when women are outside as in Harem in the Kiosk (1875–80) (Figure 5), and in Harem Outing (1869) (Figure 6). He also painted images of veiled women, such as Woman of Constantinople, 1876.

Lane describes the veil and illustrates its details in text and image, especially a burko', which is a kind of coarse black crépe, and a dark-blue tarhah of muslin or linen (Figure 7 and Figure 8). Lewis depicted the hijāb in his paintings, such as Head of a Spanish Girl.

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60. Lane, An Account of Manners, 60–62.
Wearing a Mantilla\(^{61}\) (Figure 9). The black lace veil is depicted in many other paintings by Lewis, which is produced after his return from Spain. The mantilla is shown frequently in a devotional and religious context in a number of Lewis's paintings. Leighton's fascination with the hijāb is also depicted in many forms in his paintings, such as Light of the Harem (Figure 10). The hijāb is approached and depicted in many forms in Orientalists' images\(^{62}\).

It is not hard to find veiled women in Orientalists' depictions, even in extravagant and implausible poses. When considering Orientalism, mystery and fantasy as a discourse should be considered. Orientalist representations of veiled women are so prevalent and so persuasive, that it is hard not to end up believing the historical reality of the fantasy of their quarters, garments and their life in an apparent oppressive environment. Philippe Roberts-Jones has also describes that: “For orientalism is also sensuality; using as an excuse for

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\(^{62}\) See the CD-ROM: 'The Roshân and the Orientalist'.

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Figure 7: Details of the veil (Burqū).
(Lane, *Accounts of the Manners*, 62)

Figure 8: The ḥijāb garment from Cairo. (Lane, *Accounts of the Manners*, 60)

Figure 9: *Head of a Spanish Girl Wearing a Mantilla*, 1838. J. F. Lewis.
(See the CD-ROM: ‘The Roshān and the Orientalists’ — Lewis)

Figure 10: *Light of the Harem*, 1880. Lord Frederic Leighton. (See the CD-ROM: ‘The Roshān and the Orientalists’ — Leighton)
erotic fantasy, the mysterious excitement of glimpsed nudity, under transparent veils, or behind those moucharabiehs which are a windfall for voyeurs, as they allow one to observe without being seen. The legacy of Orientalism means that it is hard to talk about the roshān without including the Orientalist fantasy of this Islamic architectural element, as a setting for the harīm, segregation and mystery.

The misconception of the hijāb as a garment, and the roshān as an architectural element, starts with images being transferred and interpreted with an incomplete knowledge of Islamic culture. This was the image transferred by Orientalists until the middle of the nineteenth century, and the situation remains the same, to some extent, today. That is, Orientalists’ projection and imagination result in the distribution of enormous representations of the hijāb in clothing and architecture outside the Islamic world.

Benjamin argues that from 1850 certain photographers used costumes and accessories in their studios to clothe Europeans posing as Arab figures without hesitating. The roshān and the veiled woman were depicted together as a popular photographic theme since the late nineteenth century and thereafter. Studios had Oriental ‘sets’ that included a latticework or mashrabiyya (see Figure 11). For instance, the cover of Femina magazine, published in 1906 in Paris (Figure 12), is a studio photograph that shows a woman wearing a burqā at an open, lattice window. 'Egyptian Love' is another imaginative scene that includes a woman with a child and a man crammed into one of the roshān apertures (Figure 13). In fact these were not only fabricated clichés about the lives of women in the Middle East, masquerading as ‘real’ scenes, but were often reproduced alongside writing that further elaborated these Orientalist fictions. These images suggest that the ‘East’ existed solely for the pleasure of the Orientalists, and that they might invent it as they saw fit.

63. Roberts-Jones, 16.

64. Benjamin, Orientalism, 191.

65. A face cover or the upper part of the hijāb garment.

66. See more in Graham-Brown, 44 and 75.
Figure 11: A veiled woman and a roshān. (Lane, *Accounts of the Manners*, 189)

Figure 12: *Egyptian Love*. Probably by Zangaki. (Graham-Brown, 45)

Figure 13: *Captive in her Palace*. Cover photograph from Femina magazine, Paris, 1906. (Graham-Brown, 44)
Women wearing the *hijāb* and the seclusion of the *harīm* have always been a challenge for travellers who lack the understanding of Islamic culture. This misapprehension applies to female and male travellers, such as the frustration of the French female traveller who accompanied her husband on his visit to Iran in the 1880s.

This hunger in depicting Eastern women veiled or behind a screen, remained a mystery until it became fashionable for women to travel to the East and visit the *harīm*. Lack of cultural understanding underpins the circulation of images of 'the East' based on personal opinions and misconceptions. Thus, images from inside the house show the *roshān* and women in unrealistic scenes. The *roshān* becomes a stage for the Orientalists imagination and fantasy, a stage for their daydreams of their own version and interpretation of the *Arabian Nights*. Such scenes are to be seen in Eugène Giraud's paintings: *Interior of an Egyptian Harem*, n.d. (Figure 14) and *Lord of the Harem*, n.d. (Figure 15).

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67. See Graham-Brown, 77.
This use of the *roshan* as an exotic artefact to stage fantasy scenes may mark the start of its change in value, where its signification exceeds its function in the Orientalist mind. In the nineteenth century, the *roshan* was forced to become just memorabilia from the East, evoking nostalgia and nothing more. However, the *hijāb* as a symbol still maintains a potent currency. It triggers the imagination and evokes memories, even in the twenty-first century. The appearance of veiled women is still a subject of debate today.

No single item of clothing has had greater influence on Western images of Middle Eastern and North African women than the veil. The fascination of Western writers, artists, and photographers with the veil reflects the voyeuristic nature of our interest in what is strange and ‘other’.70

The *hijāb*, as a concept, has been misunderstood, misjudged and widely mistreated. The *hijāb*, as a garment, is also being forcibly abandoned and has been marked with backwardness. The journey of the *hijāb* in all its different facets, including the *roshan* and the outer garment, is identical, where the face veil is removed under the force of occupation in some parts of the Islamic world. Frantz Fanon71 describes the status of the veil in occupied territory, particularly in relation to Algerian women:

In the beginning, the veil was a mechanism of resistance, but its value for the social group remained very strong. The veil was worn because tradition demanded a rigid separation of the sexes, but also because the occupier was bent on unveiling Algeria. In a second phase, the mutation occurred in connection with the Revolution and under special circumstances. The veil was abandoned in the course of revolutionary action. What had been used to block the psychological or political offensives of the occupier became a means, an instrument. The veil helped the Algerian woman to meet the new problems created by the struggle.72

Inderpal Grewal has claimed that to remove the veil and the notion of the *harīm* was to civilize the colonies, such as in the case of India. The first step for this strategy of civilisation was to create a docile populace; this was established through the travel narratives of writers, especially female writers who had

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71. The French psychoanalyst and photographer (1925–61). He served in the Free French army during the Second World War, both in north Africa and in Europe.

access to the harim. The image distributed was of the oppression and incarceration of ‘Eastern’ women and the harim as a space of non-freedom, idleness and evil. This provoked a positive response in some regions of the Islamic world, where plans based on this kind of civilisation were partially successful. Incongruously, the use of the roshan as another form of the hijab has declined under the name of modernity and ‘civilisation’.

The veil discourse is huge and complex, the current discussion places emphasis on the link between the roshan and the hijab garment. Tackling such an issue, however, is difficult without touching on many disciplines in Muslim daily life, including Islamic principles. The artist Zineb Sedira, as a Muslim, has noted the challenge of representing Muslim experience in a non-Muslim culture, as she asks: “How can I write about the subject of the veil in the West without worrying that my writing reinforces Orientalist fetishes, commodifying experience?” In spite of this dilemma, examining the practice of the hijab is essential to explore the actual experience of wearing this outer garment from those who believe in doing so. These experiences give fuller impression of the real sentiment of women ‘behind a screen’.

73. Grewal, 50.
3.3 The Experience of the Hijāb:

Hijāb is practiced across the Islamic world, both physically and metaphorically. Hijāb is not just an outer garment for concealment and privacy; it is also a means to seclude private emotions. Croutier, who experienced being within a secluded ḥarīm in Turkey, said ‘Our private lives must be walled’\textsuperscript{76}. This is not just a Turkish proverb; it is also common in Arabic, as well as Islamic cultures. Women’s lives, their private lives in particular, must be ‘walled in’ by every means. This includes segregation within the house, as hijāb is another form of being walled in to keep their beauty intact. It is believed, in Islam, that women are like jewels needing to be treasured and hidden away from others’ sight and away from strangers.

Practising the hijāb evokes many emotional sensations inside a woman’s soul including a sense of shyness, modesty and being valued. Being concealed while outside does not mean that women can show themselves to strangers inside. The hijāb, as a rule, should be applied outdoors and indoors alike. The sense of enclosure and screening extends to women’s portraits displayed within the house. Mary Walker\textsuperscript{77}, a female artist who depicted women in their ḥarīm in Turkey in the 1880s, stressed that the major priority for the ḥarīm women was to conceal any portrayals of themselves. She noted that in Sultana Zeineb’s harim the large three-quarter-length image of Zeineb was hung in the sitting room of her summer palace on the Bosphorus, but it was veiled by a curtain of white silk. The restricted visibility of the portrait reflects the Islamic necessity of the veil to protect even representations from the gaze of the male workers of the house\textsuperscript{78}. If this was the case in Turkey, a Muslim counterpart in other parts of the Islamic world acted similarly, as Cooper stated in Hyderabad, India in the 1900s:

\textsuperscript{76} Croutier, 41.
\textsuperscript{77} Mary Walker, a British amateur artist who lived in Turkey for over thirty years, she was commissioned to paint a number of portraits of the Sultan’s family and wealthy elites. See Jill Beaulieu and Mary Roberts, ed. Orientalist’s Interlocutors: Paintings, Architecture, Photography (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 191.
\textsuperscript{78} See Beaulieu and Roberts, 201, and 193. Sultana Zeineb is believed to be the daughter of Muhammad Ali Pasha, who was a resident of Constantinople.
She laughed apologetically and said: "I know what you think, but I cannot sit here with any degree of comfort if I think someone, a servant or any one of my husband’s guests, might pass by. It is instinct; my mother and my mother’s mother were 'purdah' women, and it is in the blood."[79]

The speaker was about to sit in a room when she noticed that one of the blinds of the window was open. Despite the fact that the windows opened onto a garden, she wanted to ensure that the windows were securely closed so that no one could look into the room. This example shows that the physical practice of the hijāb is performed in India and throughout the Islamic world. It is in the blood; it is exactly as described above[80]. In Yemen in 1979, a similar scene was depicted:

I have observed that, should a girl wish to walk the short distance between her house and that of a friend or relative, she may borrow a piece of material to cover her head and shoulders. Then giggling all the way, she will run the short distance separating the two entrance doors.[81]

The veil is viewed in the way described above by many veiled women. An English woman who lived in the East for a long time and had many Muslim friends with whom she used to visit and communicate also claims:

There is a certain delight and satisfaction in living behind the veil which one can hardly appreciate ... despite the Western perception of its negative aspects, the veil can be considered a liberating garment that frees a woman from the confines of any form of purdah and lets her operate in the public sphere.[82]

There are examples of women who did not take up wearing the hijāb until they embraced Islam. They made the following keenly felt observations:

Many people cannot believe why an English woman would give up her “freedom” and take on a religion which is 'oppressive' to women. In fact quite the reverse is true ... In Islam, women are held in high esteem, by covering their beauty they force men to treat them as human beings.[83]

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79. Cooper, 164.
80. This is from my point of view as a woman who experienced and practiced the hijāb and being brought up valuing it in a holistic sense. Such practice would not be accurately felt by non-Muslims.
81. Llewellyn-Jones, 333.
82. Llewellyn-Jones, 316—317.
83. An English woman who embraced Islam in the 1990s (Muhammad Haneef Shahid, Why Women are Accepting Islam (Jeddah: Darussalam, 2002), 122.
The journalist Veronica Doubleday, who agreed to be veiled when she was living in Herat in Afghanistan in the 1970s, reported that wearing a veil in public initiated an important and subtle change in me, cultivating an aura of modesty self-containment. The hijab aims to save womanly shyness and coyness; and this touch of shyness is seen to enhance feminine beauty. The hijab aspires to increase the sense of purity and modesty, and to protect each gender’s identity. Doubtless, it is the truest test of being a Muslim, as application of hijab is an obligation from Allah.

The benefits of the hijab, in its many forms, are as safeguard of the woman and the family alike. In a recent research, by Amnesty International, the same issue of protecting women and families is raised. The report declares that many people believe that women are partially or wholly responsible for being raped, and more than a quarter believe women are responsible if they wear sexy or revealing clothing. This fact reflects the reason of the ayah of surat al-Nur on the punishment of sex offences, which relates to women’s garments and hijab in its broadest sense. The hijab garment offers protection for woman and it is made for the sake of her safety.

4. The Hijab in Islamic Architecture:

The silhouettes of domes and minarets punctuate the skyline in many Islamic cities like Fez, Cairo, Istanbul, Baghdad, Tehran and Samarqand are marked by these unifying features. The architectural fabric forming these cities has another feature in common, that is screening the houses from the outside. The aim is to fulfil the Islamic rule of the hijab, where the veil is drawn to clad facades, and zones are secluded to achieve privacy. That is, the rawashin as screens and the harim as segregation quarters.

84. See Llewellyn-Jones, 318, and more in the CD-ROM: 'The Roshâr and the Hijab — The Concept of the Hijâb'.
are forms of the *hijâb*.

Observing the *hijâb* as a garment in Islamic architecture indicates that a building’s exterior cladding is treated like fabric. This cladding is not just to cover the body of the building; it also protects it from the outside environment. Fabric, as a material, is the easiest and the most affordable means of fulfilling the need for cover. During the prophet Mohammed’s (*SAW*) time, when wearing the *hijâb* was obligatory, curtain fabric was used as a quick solution for women’s garments⁸⁶, and for segregation between men and women spaces. Curtains were used to divide gender zones in spaces to symbolise *hijâb* in its full meaning.

The curtain does not just serve as a physical barrier, but also as an ethical one. Women try to keep their voices down, respecting the *hijâb*, as sometimes they can stay behind screens unnoticed.

Tents are also shelters made of fabric and are able to fulfil the need for segregation. Moreover, fabrics and carpets are used to divide outdoor spaces and public zones, just as they were used in old Islamic cities to provide protection from the hot sun. The *hijâb* is among these signs and symbols in cloth hung on doors, signalling the presence of women. For instance, in public spaces such as *hammam*, the lifting of the cloth (curtain) is to announce the men’s session is taking place.

The most fascinating connections drawn by travellers are between the *hijâb*, women and textiles. There is an evident role for fabric and textiles in Islamic cities, which perform many functions both indoors and outdoors⁸⁷. The significant use of textiles is still obvious today in Muslim societies, especially during ceremonies. Curtains are used today even in a small neighbourhood *masâjid* during Ramadan’s prayers (*Trawîh*), when women attend the same prayers as men; a curtain is drawn just for this spiritual month. This is the case in small *masâjid* where there is no

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⁸⁶. *Sunan Abu-Dawud*, book 32, no 4089: Aisha, Ummul Mu’minin “Safiyyah, daughter of Shaybah, said that Aisha mentioned the women of Ansar, praised them and said good words about them. She then said: When Surat an–Nur came down, they took the curtains, tore them and made head covers (veils) of them”.

⁸⁷. See the CD-ROM: ‘The Roshân and the Orientalists — From Without’. 
specific prayer area for women; this allows women to experience the same prayer as men, but in private.

In Arabic literature; Islamic cities, buildings and urban planning architecture are described as fabrics or textiles. The sense of textiles is highly noticeable in relation to ornamentation and building decoration. There are distinct similarities between buildings’ exteriors and carpets, the fabric used in Arab costumes and even the written language. It is not just the shared meaning of terms used for fabric and textiles; terms for textile techniques are commonly used in describing ornaments and buildings.

For instance, Tatřže (تطريز) is a term primarily used to describe how fabric is adorned. It is also used as in: ‘the building is mut-aразe with or muzarkash with’ which means to embroider with. It is an indication that the treatment of the architectural facades is similar to a head garment; both garments in architecture or

88. In masjid, women’s prayer places could be behind, in a mezzanine, or to the side of the men’s section, where they are not visible, but they can worship alongside the men. See more in Afaf Mahfouz and Ismail Serageldin, “Women and Space in Muslim Societies”, in: Robert Powell, ed. Expressions of Islam in Buildings (Singapore: Aga Khan Trust — Concept Media, 1990), 86.

89. Clévenot and Degeorge, 205—206.
the means of cladding buildings in any region in the Islamic world. Islamic motifs, including calligraphy, appear in rugs and in building treatment. For instance, the decoration of domes in masājid resembles prayer mats. This fact is also perceptible to scholars of Islamic architecture as noted:

In every attempt to describe Islamic ornamentation, the terms which naturally and insistently impose themselves refer back to the vocabulary of textiles. We may speak of weaving, textile work, interlace or net with reference to certain patterns, of groundwork or texture to characterize certain surface effects. We may speak of lace to evoke carving in stucco or stone. It is also said that this ornamentation covers buildings like a wall-hanging, clothes them like a garment and hides structures like a veil.90

Across the Islamic world, despite the variation in terminologies describing the hijāb, evidence of its impact is distinct and can be observed in the use of textile and architecture throughout the different regions. The hijāb plays a significant role in shaping Islamic architectural doctrine. Even in modern architectural studies Bernard Rudofsky has noticed the link between the Islamic concept of purdah (hijāb) in India and the architectural fabric draping facades and forming screens. He refers to this unique treatment as ‘Oriental architecture’. Perhaps it could be more accurately described as Islamic, to extend its geographical impact. Rudofsky states:

There was a time when a veil was de rigueur for the well-dressed woman, just as lace curtains were meant to lend a touch of elegance to the dreariest of windows. Veils have long been superseded by dark eyeglasses, and curtains have given way to tinted plate glass. Purdah, on the other hand, never fell from favor in countries where women have retained a modicum of mystery. Oriental architecture has its equivalent of purdah in filigree screens—petrified veils, an ingenious element, rarely used in the Occident.91

The trend of fashion textiles towards ornamentation and craft is parallel to the application of motifs to the treatment of the exterior surfaces of buildings and screens. Examples of this crossover can be seen in Cairo and Damascus. Moreover, the

90. Clévenot and Degeorge, 203. This reference claims strongly the relationship between the veil and the screening concept in Islamic architecture.

treatment of textiles and carpets and the ornamentation of cladding with dome decorations can be observed in Iran and in other nearby regions. In the Indian subcontinent, piercing is a common technique that is applied skilfully to both textiles and architecture; and can be seen in the roshān and screens generally.

Hijāb within the house is identified with segregation and not just screening. Segregation in zones within the house, regardless of the varieties in terms of the Islamic regions, also fulfils the hijāb concept. However, screening can be seen in the entrance hall when a curtain is hung to break any direct view from the outside. This rule is observed in Islamic domestic architecture, since no direct view or entrance openings are allowed. A barrier is always provided to screen the inner house from direct view. This could be a wall, a curtain or even a courtyard. The guarding of the Caliph’s entrance and the women’s quarters is a similar situation.

Under Islamic moral codes a man, even the master of the house, should make some noise when he enters the house, as there may be female visitors or neighbours in the vicinity. Therefore, he might say “Ya Sāṭir” just to show his presence. This gesture is to safeguard women from being exposed to men or to the master’s companions. While this is the case in the Hijāz area, the wider Arab and Islamic world has very similar customs. For example, in Gujarat houses in the northwest of India, every aspect of the interior structure is used to serve the principle of the hijāb.

The door can be locked by a fixed chain which, when rattled, serves as a bell. It gives into a porch with, at its back, a screen wall pierced by a small window or jālī, protecting the courtyard’s privacy. Entry beyond this wall was until recently restricted to women visitors, close family members or intimate friends. Therefore, to avoid any awkward situations arising within the home, upon entering a room a respectful and a considerate

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92. See the following images and the CD-ROM: ‘The Roshān and the Hijāb’.

93. Sāṭir is from sitr, which means to hide and cover. Women tend to clap instead of calling or making noise when they enter spaces seeking permission.

94. Cooper and Dawson, 94.
man should make some kind of noise (a cough or even a formal announcement of his intention to enter) to alert the women inside of his presence and imminent entrance. Within the house, women respond appropriately and disappear from corridors and majlis, or they might grab a cloth to cover themselves, or share a veil with another woman. Here is the reaction of a non-Muslim woman who shared a household in a Muslim society and felt the notion of the hijab.

Only under exceptional circumstances do unrelated men enter the homes ... and their arrival always puts the household into disarray ... Screens and curtains are erected ... if guests or workmen hang around ... [Once] some 'guests' walked in with little warning and the woman I was talking to burrowed under a blanket and left me exposed and confused about my own feelings of embarrassment.95

The need for the hijab, as a means of excluding men and women in Islamic societies, is a phenomenon that is applied according to the circumstances of each region. This is one of the strengths of Islamic architecture, where flexibility in crafts and materials considers the climate, and leaves room for creativity and identity when designing buildings; similar to the variety of ways in which women conceal themselves across the Islamic world. The unity of the application of the Islamic law is reflected within the Islamic house. The practice of the hijab inside the house is discussed in detail in the Qur'an and the Sunnah, including the obligation of asking for permission before entering. The Qur'an governs every aspect in Muslims’ daily life, and defines Islamic etiquette inside the house. Obeying the rules of the hijab as a garment reflects the concealment of women’s physiques when they go out of the house. Similarly, architectural hijab, such as screens and harim quarters, demonstrate concealment within the house. This architectural garment gives women their own freedom and privacy, as they cannot remain veiled outside and inside. The house is a women’s haven, as they are the main occupants.

These forms of the hijab are reflected in women’s garments as well as concealment treatments in architecture. The hijab

95. The anthropologist Patricia Jeffery’s reaction, whilst sharing a purdah household with a group of women who had an unexpected male visitor. Llewellyn-Jones, 310.
principle and the cladding of objects are for a single purpose: privacy. In architecture, applying the *hijāb* as a context of cladding and enclosure for the privacy of inhabitation contains the heart of the meaning of ‘home’, as El-Guindi puts it:

> Arab privacy does not connote “personal,” the “secret” or the “individuated space.” It concerns two core spheres — women and the family. For both, privacy is sacred and carefully guarded. For women it is both a right and an exclusive privilege, and is reflected in dress, space, architecture and proxemic behaviour.\(^{96}\)

This notion of privacy is a wider Islamic concern rather than a solely Arabic one; the geographical spread of the application of the *hijāb* ranges beyond the Arab world. The presence of women plays an important role in the design of Islamic houses. This results in plans where privacy can be enhanced and gender identity preserved, where each sex can be at ease in each one’s world. Gender identity is still a significant feature in some regions of the Islamic world. The use of space illustrates how religion and ideology have given gender-based meanings to architecture and society in Muslim communities\(^ {97}\).

In Muslim ideology, public space and points in time are frequently interwoven and are usually gender-specific so that for a limited time period women can inhabit a public world free of men and men can walk in streets clear of women ... nevertheless the underlying model is so deep-rooted in Muslim thought that the sexes are able to operate in a public sphere while remaining essentially in a private sex-specific space.\(^ {98}\)

Considerable importance is attached to time and space in scheduling activities within the house as a means of enabling greater freedom and privacy for both genders. Securing and applying the notion of the *hijāb* is important to the effective functioning of the Islamic house. Juhani Pallasmaa supports this concept of the meaning of privacy and home:

> Home is where we hide our secrets and express our private selves. Home is our safe place of resting and dreaming. More precisely, the role of the home as a delineator or mediator between the realms of public and private, the transparency

\(^ {96}\) El-Guindi, 82.

\(^ {97}\) See Schoenauer, 37, and the application of Islamic rules in Nigeria in Crouch and Johnson, 148.

\(^ {98}\) Llewellyn-Jones, 297.
of the home, as it were, varies greatly. There are cultures in which the home is the women’s domain. There are ways of life in which the home is a public showcase and the public gaze penetrates the secrecy of the home.

Pallasmaa thinks that ‘home’ is a mediator between the public and private; he also mentions the two contrasting ideas of privacy of ‘home as women’s domain’ and ‘public showcase’. This unique concern of *ḥurma* within the Islamic house, which means more than privacy, is as old as Islam, which began in the seventh century. The base of the *ḥijab* is to preserve the *ḥurma* of the house and not to expose it to the public gaze; it is a spatial enclosure for the sake of the family as the fundamental nucleus of a community. Privacy is one facet of this *ḥurma*, which includes inhabitants’ respect of each other’s needs and prevents intrusions, but not for the sake of individuals. On the contrary, Llewellyn-Jones claims that ‘privacy’ as a noun does not exist in Latin, and did not come into common use until the sixteenth century, but the concept of the term remained ambiguous until

the 1890s.  

The sense of privacy within the Islamic house is important, and it is noticeable even from the façade. Homes in most Islamic cities have blank walls facing the street, or have lattice windows and screens from which the inhabitants can look out into the street without being seen. For travellers, these walls and screens appear as definitive boundaries between the public and the private sphere, and reinforce the notion that this boundary marks off the domain of women.

Women are permitted to see the men in question, provided they are not seen themselves. This particular definition of privacy has produced the quintessentially Middle Eastern device of the *musharabiyya*. Popularly regarded as a symbol of segregation and exclusion of women from public life, the *musharabiyya* permits women at the same time to see but not to be seen.

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100. See Llewellyn-Jones, 297–298, and Lidia Sciama, “The problem of privacy in Mediterranean anthropology”, in Shirley Ardener, ed. *Women and Space* (London: Croom Helm, 1981), 93–95. It is stated on page 93 that “Privacy, which came powerfully into literary, and, later, into common use in the sixteenth century. This clearly has no parallel in Latin itself or in other neo–Latin languages”.

101. Graham-Brown, 75 and 77. See also Ragette, 75.

102. Mahfouz and Serageldin, 86.
In conclusion, the *roshān* and the *hijāb* garment can be seen as garments draped on the body to conceal it. Women are associated with the *hijāb*, just as the *roshān* is associated with women; the *hurma* of sacredness is the common factor. The presence of women behind both elements is clearly evident. This sense of presence is associated with the sense of layers in time and space within the zones of the house, where time is a crucial element to control the movements of the inhabitants. This is similar to the case of the application of the *hijāb* based on women’s age, as layers of time that indicate stages of womanhood. In other words, when a girl’s path to maturity occurs, this stage is marked by the number of layers of clothing she wears, and by the addition of an extra veil that advertises the arrival of her physical development. These layers of garments are the main domains to be compared to the layers of the *rawāshīn*.

5. **The *Roshān* and the *Hijāb* Garment:**

5.1. **The *Hijāb* as a Garment:**

The *hijāb* as an outer garment or cloak in Arabic *Libās* (لِبَاس) that means ‘to dress’ reflects the analogy between the terms used for ‘dress’, the sacred sanctuary, the Kā’ba and Arab women’s traditional dress. Again the concept of *hurma* is clearly evident in the case of the women of the house and the Kā’ba (Bayit Allah) as a house of Allah:

The link between dress ... and sanctity of space is reflected in the Islamic rituals of “dressing” the Ka’ba, the center of the holy site of pilgrimage ... The correspondence between the sanctuary of the Ka’ba and the home (as sanctuary) is exemplified in the measures for protection and attitudes of protectiveness in both spheres.

The Arabic word (لْتِبَاس) *iltibās*, or *eltebās* as pronounced in Farsi, is used in certain mystical glosses, literally signifying

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103. Llewellyn-Jones, 386—387.

104. El-Guindi, 95.

105. El-Guindi, 95—96.
‘revetment’. It is derived from the Arabic root *l-b-s*, ‘to clothe’, but it takes on the further meaning of ‘ambiguity’\(^{106}\). *Libāş* as a term is used metaphorically in the Qur’ān to reflect intimacy and the relationship between a man and his wife: “*Permitting to you, on the night of fasts, is the approach to your wives. They are your garments and ye are their garments* ...”\(^{107}\). That is, a man and his wife are each other’s garments, for mutual support, mutual comfort and mutual protection, fitting into each other as a garment fits the body. A garment is also for show and concealment in this kind of private relation.

*Libāş*, in its general respect, symbolises the sense of touch interwoven with intimacy, concealment and protection. This *hijab* outer garment is described in the Qur’ān for all Muslim women, including those of the prophet households and all others, it is called a *jilbāb* (pl. *Jalābīb*). The *jilbāb* is defined as a long gown covering the whole body or a cloak covering the neck and the bosom. The reason was not to restrict the liberty of women but to protect them from harm and molestation\(^{108}\). The restrictions, as previously argued, are not to exclude women from functional interaction, as women can, whenever needed, actively cooperate in the outer sphere. The practical feature is in terms of visibility, where women are in control of sight from within: the garment prevents intrusions. Islam focuses greatly on *hayā’* (bashfulness) as fundamental; the Ḥadith states that “Each religion has a morality and the morality of Islam is *hayā’*”\(^{109}\). Islam also emphasises this issue as a part of the nature of women: wearing the *hijab* can preserve and protect this characteristic.

This outer garment, the *jilbāb*, represents modesty and reflects the practice of non-ornamentation\(^{110}\), including the wearing of perfumes. The action of women deliberately applying perfumes

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\(^{107}\) Qur’ān: Al-Baqarah, 187. (‘Ali, 75). The matter is discussed in relation to the *ṣiyām* (fasting), as this act is prohibited during fasting as well as eating and drinking.

\(^{108}\) See ‘Ali, 1077, and Maududi, 137—139.

\(^{109}\) See more in, University of Essex Islamic Society, ‘The Virtues of Hijab’.

\(^{110}\) See Dhamiya, 47, in saying: The Sunni Bohra women are also banned from wearing tinkling ornaments following Islamic rules.
when outside is considered sinful; the link between smell and evocative memories is evident111. The hijab is not merely a covering dress but, more importantly, it governs behaviour, manners, speech and appearance in public. Dress is only one facet of the total being, there are also other requirements: the garment of the hijab ought to be loose enough so as not to outline the shape of the woman’s body and thick enough so as not to show the colour of the skin it covers (see Figure 16, Figure 17 and Figure 18). The garment should not be ornamented or attractive in any way, that is, not shiny or flashy so as to attract attention to the dress and the woman112. Clothing requirements are not meant to be a restriction but rather a way in which society will function in a proper Islamic manner.

Generally the outer garment, regardless shape or name, is draped over the woman’s body to cover it and not to outline her figure nor to reveal the figure’s beauty. Each time a woman applies the hijab she creates an aureole within the surrounding space. The garment is made from a plain fabric with a simple cut that envelops her body like a curtain or a screen to mark her territory. Scarce declares that the nature and design of the main fabric of these garments were sensibly appreciated and allowed to speak for themselves in a simple cut and a neat finish113. This simplicity makes it affordable and easily tailored and, as such, acts as a uniform for all classes. More importantly, the hijab sends signals to respect individuality as a private space within a public sphere. As El-Guindi has observed:

In many ways, veiling resembles a mashrabiyya; but whereas mashrabiyya is stationary, veiling is mobile, carrying women’s privacy to public spaces. A woman carries “her” privacy and sanctity with her, much the same way as when a Muslim worships in any space, converting it to sacred and private.114

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111. This issue is stressed by Islam for the powerful impact of the smell as a sense and memory’s evocation in relation to the attraction between sexes. See Section Five.
113. Scarce, Women’s Costume, 51.
114. El-Guindi, 95. See Figure 25.
Figure 16: A Moroccan woman in a hijab, 1918–34. (Benjamin, 233)

Figure 17: An Afghan woman in Herat, 1967. (Michaud and Michaud, 62)

Figure 18: A woman from Iran disembarking on the Shatt' al-Arab for Nejf, 1937. (Graham-Brown, 91)
Individuality is highlighted for the obedience of Allah’s orders; it is exactly the same when a Muslim practises the salāt whenever it is called. The Muslim draws a line as a boundary to convert the public space into a private place to pray. One can withdraw from the material world, wherever they are, to place oneself in a spiritual milieu and perform the salāt, which contributes to this aura. This process shows the flexibility of the applications of Islamic rules regardless of personal situation. In this respect, a woman can perform in the same manner; applying the hijāb enables her to withdraw herself from an outer sphere into a private spot where she feels spiritual protection. In fact, she shields herself physically and morally; the latter being the most important issue of modesty, bashfulness, and self-control.

The hijāb is not just a symbol of faith; it can reflect identity. The outer garment or the cloak that covers a woman from head to toe can be significantly linked to wearer identity (see Figure 19, Figure 20 and Figure 21). These images demonstrate the various forms of hijāb in Cairo, Al-Baṣra and Kashmir, where the concept of application unifies these Islamic cities. The hijāb can communicate in silence; it can tell where the wearer is from, it can express the woman’s skill as a textile maker, it can reveal the fashion and the craft trends of its time and many more aspects.

The variety in forms and types of hijāb garments, the richness of its terminology and the cultural identities from the East to the West of the Islamic world are difficult to study fully. The hijāb garment consists of more than one piece; it could be two or even more. These layers envelop or are draped upon women’s figures. Significantly, women wrap the garment differently. If the same outer garment has given to a group of women, each woman would wear it in a way that represents her personality. Watching a group of women anywhere in the Islamic world proves this sense of individuality; as a result women can recognise each other easily. Even if they are completely veiled from head to toe, women can still be recognised by various signs such as stature,
Figure 19: Veiled women in Cairo, H. Béchrd. Late nineteenth century. (Graham-Brown, 87)

Figure 20: Veiled women waiting at the station, between Baghdad and Al-Baṣra, 1932. (Graham-Brown, 82)

Figure 21: Veiled women in Kashmir. (Zikmund and Hanzelka, 32–33)
gait and individual mannerisms\textsuperscript{115} (Figure 22 and Figure 23\textsuperscript{116}).
Observing veiled women in public proves that personality is, to a greater or lesser extent, clearly identifiable. By examining the images, it can be seen that veiled women in a group look similar but not identical: they epitomise unity and individuality at the same time.

5.2. The \textit{Roshān} and the \textit{Ḥijāb} Garment — A Visual Analysis:

The analogy of both the \textit{roshan} and the \textit{ḥijāb} garment can be identified in many aspects; not just, as suggested in some studies, in relation to the concept of transparency or to the notion of its concept as a \textit{ḥijāb} and the use of a grid. Llewellyn-Jones notes:

\begin{quote}
The house/veil analogy is pertinent to Muslim belief too, where the traditional Islamic lattice-screened window known as the mashrabiyya prevents people from seeing in and, because of the grid, gives only a restricted view of the world from inside the
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{115} Llewellyn-Jones, 334—335. See more in the CD-ROM: "The Roshān and the Ḥijāb — The Concept of the Ḥijāb".

\textsuperscript{116} For Figure 23, see Malek Alloula, \textit{The Colonial Harem}, Myrna Godzich and Wlad Godzich, trans. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 8.
house and can easily be likened to the burqa-veil which has a grid over the face.\textsuperscript{117}

This study focuses on more than these two aspects; however, the basis of this examination relies on the \textit{hijāb} as the main virtue of both elements. The analogy of both garments, in architecture and the equivalent in textile, could be extended to their construction, techniques and regional circumstances. The main concern is to draw a brief background and a wider view to the \textit{hijāb} as a garment concept across the Islamic world. That is, to provide a comparative visual analysis of the \textit{roshan} as an architectural element and the woman’s outer garment \textit{hijāb}, especially of the part that symbolises the eye as a function in both garments.

As far as construction is concerned, the \textit{roshan} has three parts, the upper, the middle and the lower part. The middle part is mainly for apertures, which could be heavily screened if the \textit{roshan} is used in family sections. Extra screens (\textit{shīsh}) are added to secure inhabitants and to indicate the presence of women. It also represents how private these screened sections actually are. The \textit{roshan} can be seen as the organ of the house, which can be seen as fulfilling the five senses. The \textit{roshan} could represent the eyes, ears and nose of the house; put simply, the \textit{roshan} could be the face of the house. The face cover (\textit{burqū}) is a cover which drapes on the face: it touches the forehead and the entire face for concealment. The middle part of this piece is the part that covers the eyes, which could be formed differently: it could be a slit or a grid window. A closer analysis of these two parts, in both elements, reveal similarities in many aspects across the Islamic world (e.g. Figure 24 and Figure 25)\textsuperscript{118}.

The upper part of the outer garment takes many forms and shapes among women in Muslim societies, ranging from a fine lattice piece of fabric with a small aperture (slit) surrounding the eyes to a complete cover with a transparent fabric. This

\textsuperscript{117} Llewellyn-Jones, 305, he also said that the Qur’ān equates the veil of a woman with an interior dividing curtain (\textit{hijāb}) that separates women from strange men.

\textsuperscript{118} See the CD-ROM: ‘The \textit{Roshān} and the \textit{Hijāb} — The \textit{Roshān} and the \textit{Hijāb} Garment’.
Figure 24: The *burqā* faces the *roshān*. (Michaud & Michaud, 62), and the *roshān* from Jedda, (Archnet library images: 15179, see: http://archnet.org/library/images/one-image.tcl?image_id=15179)

A - The upper part. As a forehead, or a head with a crown.
B - The middle part. The crucial part that has the control.
C - The lower part. As a chin with a backward slope.

Figure 25: The *mashrabiyya* and the veil. (El-Guindi, 102)
endeavour to conceal makes it hard for passers-by to see behind the veil, whereas a woman looking from the inside is able to see clearly outside the veil. Applying the hijāb as an Islamic garment, a woman can just throw a piece of cloth, through which she can see, on her face to cover it or she can be more inventive in designing a device to see more clearly. It might be difficult for those who have never practiced this Islamic rule before to imagine the clarity of sight from inside. Having a piece of fabric in front of the eyes, almost touching the face, makes it easy to look through. The fabric touches the forehead and the nose, leaving a gap in-between for the eyes, so that the eyes can move freely.

This piece of the facial cover is made from different materials according to different Islamic regions’ circumstances and environments. However, this face cover is known in Islam through its Arabic term: burqu̲ or niqāb, regardless of the shape and material. The niqāb is a face cover, with a slit for the eyes to observe from, and is used with an outer garment as part of it. This piece is similar to the burqu̲, but the slit is smaller in the former. In fact, what is common in Islamic tradition is ‘niqāb’. It is written in the Hadith that during Ḳhāṣr̲m women should not wear a niqāb and gloves. These pieces are from the outer garment of the hijāb, which were known during the Prophet’s time and are still practised today in some Islamic regions. The burqu̲ is associated more with Bedouins and tribes, in which the slit is a bit wider than the niqāb (Figure 26 and Figure 27). Consequently, the Afghani face cover, the burqu̲, symbolises the concept of the niqāb more than the burqu̲.

Other face covers have a slit for the eye area over which another layer may be pulled. If an extra layer is used, transparent fabrics are generally preferred. Alternatively, this slit could be left open and the larger piece of the outer garment can be pulled forward from the forehead in order to shade this part. Pulling this part a bit further to the front makes it difficult for the observer to get a direct and a clear sight of the eyes. However, for women it is easy

119. The Hadith gives strong evidence that covering the face, and the niqāb were practised among women during the Prophet’s time.
to see beneath this screen, as they can control the sight from within, while this extended part breaks the angle of vision from outside. This treatment is similar to the extra screen added to the roshān or the louvres used to control the angle of vision. The aim is to break the direct view from outside and to make it easy to see clearly from inside.

The visibility mechanism behind the roshān could be tested in the same way. The inhabitant inside the house can observe the street by standing by the roshān, which has an extra lattice screen (shīsh). Being closer to the shīsh, from inside, allows the observer to see outside views clearly, but it is difficult to identify who or what is behind the shīsh (see Figure 28 and Figure 29). This distance and the treatment of this part increases the angle of vision from inside, where the shīsh holds the middle part of the roshān and creates a zone to control this mechanism. Considering the play of light and shadow on both sides, it plays a significant role in enhancing the view and creates a spectacular effect on the observer from both sides. The shīsh is attached to the roshān and works as a barrier to
secure privacy and to prevent vision intrusion into the interior. It also has local names across the Islamic world similar to the face cover in women's garments.

It is essential to have the windows open during the daytime in such a hot climate, but it is also essential not to jeopardise the privacy of the inhabitants. Consequently, extra screens are added to the middle part of the roshān to keep this part open all day. In areas where extra screens are added, women's garments have layers in the same sense as the roshān construction. For instance, in the Hijāz region where the shīsh fades away (Figure 31 and Figure 32), women's eye covers reveal another trend in the wearing of the face cover (Figure 30). The middle part works as the eye and the nose of this cladding fabric; however, screens provide privacy and catch the breeze perfectly. These screens do not just fulfil the demands of the hijāb concept wholly, but they give other benefits such as observation and cross-ventilation. The slit or the grids of the window of the face cover also serve as observation and ventilation for the wearer. Women observe scenes through the slit or the grid.
The exposure of the eye

Figure 30: A face cover without the eye lattice. http://www.barthphoto.com/veil.JPG

The removal of the shish

Figure 31: The roshān with a broken shish, in Makkah. (The Hajj Research Centre: slide collection)

Figure 32: An extra screen in the middle part of the roshān, Makkah. (The Hajj Research Centre: slide collection)
window of the *burqū*. This opening catches air and allows the flow of breath; this is a similar mechanism to the middle part of the *roshān*.

The *hijāb*, as a garment, enables identification of the region where the wearer is from. Regional origins can also be read in the *roshān* and its variation in material, ornamentation, accessories and even the extra lattice screens. Therefore, it is most useful to compare the *roshān* to its equivalent *hijāb* garment in the same region and to compare the technique and materials according to the region’s circumstances. For instance, the extra screens, *shīsh* and alike, are almost invisible in the Indian subcontinent, where the fine work of the lattice screens in any material prevents the intrusive gaze and secures interiors. Due to the fine holes of the screen treatment there is no need for an extra layer for more concealment. Piercing, as a technique, is used to fulfil the *hijāb* concept; again, a local traditional technique is adapted to apply Islamic rules within the society. Piercing is a common craft in Indian architecture and it is also repeated in the use of textiles. In fact, transferring textile designs into the techniques of architectural ornamentation was a regular feature of Mughal architecture, as it is fairly universal in the Islamic world. The inlaid marble floor of ʻītimad al-Daula’s tomb in Agra is an exact copy of Mughal carpets, and certain sculpted stone grilles decorating the windows of Lahore Fort resemble embroidered veils\(^{120}\) (as in Figure 28). The *hijāb* garment in this area has a similar construction whereby the face cover consists of one piece with a lattice part window for the eyes. The fine holes of the *roshān* of the Indian subcontinent and beyond are similar to the *chador*\(^{121}\) (see Figure 17 and Figure 24).

The *chador* or *chadar*, as it is called in Afghanistan and neighbouring countries, is a complete veil from head to toe. However, the face cover is called a *burqū*, as previously stated. These outer garments and the upper part in particular reflect an identical mechanism and function (see the comparison

\(^{120}\) Clévenot and Degeorge, 207.

\(^{121}\) ‘*Chador* or *Chadari*, see Hallet and Samizay, 19.
between textiles and architecture in Figure 36 and Figure 38).
The *chador* and the *burqū* are not exclusively worn by Afghani women\(^{122}\). They are also known to be worn in Persia. In actual fact, the *chador* as a name and a costume seem Persian rather than Afghani. The *burqū* could have migrated to regions beyond Persia due to cultural impact of the Mughal. Perhaps the Mughal transferred Persian architecture and culture, including the style of the *hijāb* garment to veil their women, according to the Islamic law. Scarce claims that the nineteenth-century costumes of Persia closely resembled those worn in the neighbouring country of Afghanistan. Herat and the Balkh districts of western Afghanistan had long been subject to Persian political and cultural influence\(^{123}\). Another similarity between the outer garment and the *roshān* is reflected in its transfer across the Islamic world. Evidence is illustrated in a description of the Persian-influenced

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\(^{122}\) This kind of outer garment is currently adopted by a group of women from Malaysia as the proper Islamic *hijāb*. They called themselves ḥāfizāt al-ensemble al-Qur’ān (those who recite and remember the Qur’ān by heart). They were in the Al-Masjid Al-Harām in Makkah in Ramadan 1426/October 2005.

\(^{123}\) Scarce, *Women’s Costume*, 178. See also Susan Wright in (Ardener, 149) describing gathering Iranian women wearing a *chādor* when they go out of the house.

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costume of the ladies of Kabul and various tribes of Afghanistan in the 1840s (Figure 33):

> When out of doors, or taking horse exercise, these ladies don an immense white sheet, reaching from the top of the skull-cap to the back of the head, conceals the face, across which is an opening of net-work to admit light and air. This dress is called a [*‘Boorkha’*]\(^ {124}\).

> *[‘Boorkha’* means *burqū*], as this traveller describes it; in another description of this face cover it is stated that, “The outdoor costume of the Persian women is quite another thing; enveloped in a huge blue sheet, with a yard of linen as a veil, perforated for two inches square with minute holes”\(^ {125}\). This description of the veiled Persian woman depicted in 1937 (Figure 18) looks similar to the veiled woman who was photographed in a street of Herat in Afghanistan in 1967 (Figure 17). More importantly, the face cover piece from the outdoor costume dating from the

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\(^{124}\) The image of this figure is depicted in text and illustrated in an engraving by Lieutenant James Rattray, the civic and military official of the British East India Company, who served with the second Grenadiers of the Bengal Army. See Scarce, *Women’s Costume*, 178.

\(^{125}\) Scarce, *Women’s Costume*, 177.
late nineteenth century (in Figure 34) demonstrates the description above perfectly. It is made of white cotton with fine embroidery in cream silk with an eye-lattice and borders worked in reticella\textsuperscript{126} cut and drawn thread-work and needle-weaving\textsuperscript{127}. The description is remarkable in the way terms, such as perforated, square and minute holes, are similar in using 'eye-lattice' to describe this window and the relationship with embroidery, threads and weaving. Comparing text and images through travellers’ descriptions is extraordinary in the way it links architecture as a fabric with hijāb outer garments from across the Islamic world. A close examination of this part shows a great similarity of ornamentation between the roshān aperture part and this window in women’s garments (see Figure 35 to Figure 39). Therefore, is it not possible to say that Islamic architectural ornamentation, since it takes pleasure in adorning buildings with draperies of stucco or cloaks of ceramic, embodies the aesthetics of the veil?\textsuperscript{128}

\textsuperscript{126} A technique of lace making, see The Columbia Encyclopedia. 2004.

\textsuperscript{127} Scarce, Women’s Costume, 178. This piece is in the collection of the National Museum of Scotland and is known as 'ru-band'.

\textsuperscript{128} Clevenot and Degeorge, 208.
Figure 35: Detail of the eye-lattice from Persia. Based on the image from (Scarce, Women’s Costume, 179)

Figure 36: Detail of the eye-lattice from Afghanistan. (El-Guindi, 102)

Figure 37: Detail of a screen from a tomb in Delhi, India. Piercing on marble. http://archnet.org/library/images/one-image.tcl?location_id=1415&image_id=5650

Figure 38: The jharokha, piercing on sandstone. http://www.art-and-archaeology.com/india/jodhpur/jodfort4.html

Figure 39: Screened window, piercing on wood. (Dhamija, 105)
This type of latticework (grid) in women’s garments (Figure 33 and Figure 34) is highlighted in a number of studies relating to costumes in the region, which proves that this treatment was well known in Persia from early times; as Scarce states:

The outdoor costume which concealed these strikingly painted and dressed beauties naturally continued more sober traditions. The all-enveloping cloak — chadar — continued to be worn. When pulled tightly round the head a fold could also be pulled across the mouth to conceal the lower part of the face. The chadar was also worn over a separate face veil. There is, however, literary and pictorial evidence for the use of another form of concealment — the black horsehair face mask or picheh. It was noted in Tabriz by Ruy Gonzales de Clavijo, Castillian ambassador to Timur 1403-1406: ‘These women go about, covered all over with a white sheet, with a net made of black horse hair before their eyes … its use is again remarked on in 1471 by Caterino Zeno, Venetian ambassador to Uzun Hassan Khan … they cover their faces with net woven of horsehair, so thick that they can easily see others, but cannot be seen by them.’

A series of Persian miniatures indicate that the plain white chadar worn with the face veil was the most usual fashion from the 1540s onwards. However, John Fryer, a surgeon who was in Persia from 1672 to 1681, confirmed that “The Plebean Women walk without Doors, either on Foot, or else ride on Horse-back covered with White sheets, with holes in their Eyes and Nose; content to enjoy Day at a little Hole rather than prostitute their Face to the public View”\(^{130}\). Many other descriptions of this piece, which covers the face with a sort of network before the eyes, were common in Persia during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The above descriptions reflect the material of the burquí that is made of horsehair, which would have been a readily available material in this region. It is also proved that the burquí has been experienced in Persia and beyond since the 1400s, if not earlier.

The Afghan outer garment has remained intact until recently\(^{131}\); and other Islamic regions have developed further forms of this device. However, a closer analysis of the image of veiled women in Tehran in 1860s—1890s (Figure 40) shows a different type of

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129. Scarce, Women’s Costume, 144.
130. Scarce, Women’s Costume, 152 and 162.
131. This type of face cover still remains among Afghani women. This could be due to the continuing influence of Afghan’s tribes and rural communities.
face cover when compared to the previously worn *burqāʾ*. This may suggest that big cities like Tehran could have adapted to the changes much more quickly than remote villages and rural areas. These urban cities may have influenced neighbouring regions due to trade and other reasons. For instance, Persia and Turkey are famous centres of textile manufacture, they have been exporting textiles since medieval times to the Byzantines and Muslim neighbours of Iraq and Egypt. Each region has its own crafts and ornamentation that classifies its products. Nevertheless, the Persian and the Ottoman Turkish cultures have parallel traditions, in that costumes were built up with carefully chosen and assembled layers of tailored and fitted garments.

The *hiyāb* garment in Turkey and the surrounding regions under Ottoman influence is based on a face veil that is known locally as a ‘Yashmāk’. The *yashmāk* is made of two pieces of fine muslin that are folded across or left as a single thickness. It has a specific way of wrapping and wearing to cover the nose and the mouth in particular. Scarce argues that the ‘yaşmak’ consists of two white veils, one draped and secured over the head, the other covering the face from nose to chin and fastened at the back of the head. This face cover accompanies a wide black coat to envelope the woman’s figure when outdoors. The *yashmāk* was used very widely until the 1970s.

In Cairo, Hijāz and other parts where the Ottoman Empire flourished, the *yashmāk* was also applied to some extent; for instance, it was used among women in the Hijāz region in Arabia until the early twentieth century. This could be evidence of the use of the full cover of the *hiyāb* in some Islamic major cities until recently. Egypt was a textile centre, which met the demands of the neighbouring Arab regions. Looking back to the time when the use of the *roshan* was at its peak in the Mamlūk era, although textiles rarely survive this length of time, there are a few surviving


134. *Yashmāk* is a Turkish term meaning a face veil, but some references spell it differently. See more in Croutier, 78, and Llewellyn-Jones, 37.
garments, including a veil. Some other pictorial evidence of women wearing burqā' and an outer garment similar to the chadar are also found in some Mamlūk palaces and manuscripts\(^{136}\) (see Figure 41). Further evidence of the similarities between architecture and textile craft is shown in the hijāb garment. This may highlight the impact of these big Islamic cities on their neighbours' cultures, including architecture and industry, especially in the easy transfer of crafts and skills. That is, the transfer of skills between textile crafts (outer garments) and the cladding of buildings (roshān) across the Islamic world seems obvious.

The burqā' of the Cairene women in comparison to other regions is slightly different due to availability of materials, knowledge of crafts and other factors within the community. Building techniques are not excluded from this transfer movement; for instance, Arabic terms of building construction are transferred and used in Afghanistan. Women of the Hijāż in the late nineteenth wore a garment similar to

\(^{136}\) Scarce, Women's Costume, 122—125 and footnote 21, on the three face veils of the fourteenth–fifteenth century.
the one adopted in Syria, with a black and white outer garment, that is much more like the Ottoman women's garments\textsuperscript{137}. In Cairo, where the turned wood is the main technique used in lattice screens, this technique is also reflected in the \textit{hijāb} garment. In some cases, the women have adorned the face covers with beads. Comparing the woodturning craft of the \textit{roshān} reveals the similarity to the join in the face cover of the women's outer garments (see Figure 42 and Figure 43). Therefore, the similarity between the craft in buildings and in textiles, especially in the ornamentation, is clearly evident.

In Yemen the outer garment was known as the \textit{sitara} and \textit{sharshaf}, where the upper part covering the face has large red and white circles. Again the analogy with the lattice screen of houses is evident, and could even be described as 'striking'\textsuperscript{138} (see Figure 25). This visual analysis enables consideration of other factors, such as layers of shade and shadow, visibility

\textsuperscript{137} It is changed later on to be completely in black, where the face cover's fabric is a very fine grid of threads in a circular or a typical mesh.

\textsuperscript{138} See more in EI-Guindi, 99 and 102.
and crafts in the practice of the *hijâb*. The layers of the *hijâb* as a garment and the way the women wrap themselves are significantly rich across the Islamic world.

In conclusion, both cladding treatments: the *roshân* and the *hijâb* garment, are similar in many ways. First is in the main principle of the *hijâb* as an Islamic rule to be fulfilled. The Qur’an is the fundamental source of Islamic doctrine that shapes Muslims rituals and beliefs. Second, both elements could be classified as veil devices where strict visibility and sight control are necessary to maintain privacy. Finally, they both reflect cultural identity, where crafts, materials and skills express a region’s identity. Particular social and geographical contexts reflect the richness and diversity of its regional forms, enabling creative interpretations of the Islamic rules that are embedded within the fabric of its culture and architecture.


140. Moshira El-Rafey, “Housing and Women’s Needs: Emerging Trends in the Middle East” *Architecture and Behaviour* 8, 2 (August 1992): 181–196. This study shows that modern architecture solutions fail to fulfil a Muslim family’s requirements, especially for women and their privacy.

Overall, *hijâb* as an Islamic necessity shapes the appearance of buildings and the urban architectural fabric. It satisfies not just the need for concealment, but also fulfils the need for privacy, protects from the harsh climate and softens the impact of direct sun, as well as enriching the aesthetic of the appearance of both exteriors and interiors. Fulfilling the basic requirements will not conflict with other issues, such as environmental concerns and aesthetic aspects. Screens, including *rawâshîn* and such like, as architectural elements in traditional houses, are another form of the *hijâb* that fulfil women’s needs and accomplish Islamic necessity.
Section 5

The *Roshān* and the Sensuous Experience

The sense of hearing (*listening*), smell (*perfume*) and the tactile sensation (*caress*), like vision and the kinaesthetic sense, are not only simple physiological functions, but also skills that can be learnt. The ear, the nose and the skin are no more ‘innocent’ than our eyes. Our intellectual faculties, our capacity to learn and to memorize turns them into sensing devices linked to our own experience, our culture and our time. The smells, noises and tunes of the nineteenth century are not experienced in the same way in the twentieth.

1. The Experience of Being Within the Roshâb:

The Qur'ân devises Islamic manners and integrates ordinary Muslims’ daily lives on various subjects. In particular, the Qur’ân draws attention to the issue of the senses in many metaphorical ways. The āyah, ‘They are your garments and ye are their garments’ reflects the richness of metaphorical, linguistic and visual illustrations. This Qur’anic example highlights the intimacy of the relationship within marriage. It metaphorically relates to the sense of ‘touch’ in symbolising the garment as something with which to dress and envelop the body, for protection and other purposes. The Ḥadith also represents similar visual examples and uses metaphorical expressions. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

   The example of a good righteous companion and an evil one

   is that of a person carrying musk and another blowing a pair of bellows. The one who is carrying musk will either give you some perfume as a present, or you will buy some from him, or you will get a good smell from him; but the one who is blowing a pair of bellows will either burn your clothes or you will get a bad smell from him.  

The Ḥadith demonstrates friendship as an olfactory scene, where the impact of fragrances is evident and powerful. As language lends metaphor to expressions, odours lend character to objects and places, making them distinctive and easier to identify and remember. Both the senses of touch and smell are highly important to the concept of the ḥijâb. If controlling the gaze forms the concept of the ḥijâb as applied in dress and architecture in Islam, touch and smell complete it. That is, women are strongly prohibited from using perfumes when outside and from shaking men’s hands (non-mâhram). On the contrary, the obligation to shake hands among Muslims is an essential aspect, as it is a clear acknowledgment of the haptic experience. In fact, this action of greeting each other is emphasised in the

1. The Qur’an is considered by Muslims to be a miracle. It begins with the word ‘قُرْن?’ which means ‘Read!’ . This imperative reiterates the significance of language to the Arab community, who are famous for their poetry. See ‘Ali, 5—12, and Guindi, 66—67.


3. See Az-Zubadi, 927.
community, whether or not you know the person. Greeting and
shaking hands is recognised to raise a sense of brotherhood
and communication within the community. Islam values these
senses and places great significance on their impact on human
emotions and the subconscious. Paul Rodaway claims that
Arab interpersonal relationships clearly illustrate the important
reciprocity of touch and the directness of tactile interaction with
its associations with truth and commitment. He also gives an
example of the Arab city and the reinforcement of the haptic
experience compared to Western urban spaces⁴.

The effect of smell on humans is scientifically proven; smell is
the most subtle and powerful sense in terms of its potential
for emotional impact. Humans can recognise 10,000 different
odours, each of which has distinct characteristics and
associations for each individual. Smells can also induce fear,
desire or joy, defining one's experience of space in often-
unconscious ways⁵. Perhaps this is the reason for the current
popularity of aromatherapy and its claims to benefit human
physiology and psychology⁶. The sense of touch is perhaps
the second most important after the sense of smell. This is
because the skin is the largest organ of the body and weighs
approximately six to ten pounds. Furthermore, studies have
shown that touch plays a crucial role in child development⁷.
Touch is everywhere, when standing or walking one is in
permanent tactual contact with the ground — smooth or rough,
hard or soft, flat or sloping⁸.

The gaze, smell and the touch are not the only senses that have
a great impact on human beings, and on the inhabitants of the
roshān in particular. All of the senses work together to document

⁴. Rodaway, 57—59.
⁵. Battle McCarthy, “Multi-Source Synthesis: An Architecture of Smell”, Games of
67—77.
⁸. Pierre von Meiss, Elements of Architecture: From Form to Place, 2nd ed. (London: Van
Nostrand Reinhold, 1990), 15.
Information from the surrounding milieu within the home, including the roshān as an enclosed space being lived in. Other senses are not innocent when it comes to playing a part in the conceptualisation of the entire environment. Yi-Fu Tuan states:

Taste, smell, skin sensitivity, and hearing cannot individually (nor perhaps even together) make us aware of a spacious external world inhabited by objects. In combination with the “spatializing” faculties of sight and touch, however, these essentially nondistancing senses greatly enrich our apprehension of the world’s spatial and geometrical character.9

Human space reflects the quality of the human senses and mentality. The mind frequently extrapolates beyond sensory evidence. This issue emphasises the potential interaction of the senses to conceptualise spaces, where the scene of being within the roshān implies the same feeling of this interaction of the senses. People are able to identify the senses of interior and exterior, open and closed, darkness and light, private and public, even without architectural form. A man-made space, such as the roshān, can refine human feelings and perceptions. Constructed form heightens the awareness and accentuates, as it were, the difference in emotional temperature between ‘inside’ and ‘outside’10.

Inhabitants’ experiences are studied here, to explore the poetry of being within the roshān and to focus on stories told by native occupants. Tuan has claimed that native citizens know their country in a way that cannot be duplicated by a naturalised citizen or someone who has grown up elsewhere. Experiences which span time, and which differ depending on the stage in life, are not commensurable, considering the human life cycle in relation to the passage of time and the experience of place. Experiences in childhood build up layers of information more sensuously than the information gathered during adulthood11. Native stories reflect the ways of inhabitants and various cultural aspects of ordinary daily life. This approach may read as

9. Tuan, 12.
10. See Tuan, 102, 107.
11. Tuan, 185.
‘personal’, but it explains traditional patterns of inhabitation, and thus reveals historic and cultural values.

Intimate experiences are difficult but not impossible to express. They may be personal and deeply felt, but they are not necessarily solipsistic or eccentric. Hearth, shelter, home or home base are intimate places to human beings everywhere. Their poignancy and significance are the themes of poetry and of much expository prose. Each culture has its own symbols of intimacy, widely recognized by its people.12

For the purpose of this study, indigenous stories are used to document the era of these traditional houses and the associated experiences. Makkan stories are the most likely to cover the experience of being within the roshān, due to the rapid disappearance of these houses. Being Al-Ḥaram’s neighbour means this refuge is always there ready to secure and contain one’s self whenever needed.13 Although most of Makkan traditional houses no longer exist, Jeddah as one of the Hijāzī regions has an old quarter called ‘old Jeddah’. In this quarter one can, to some extent, still smell the old days and experience being within narrow alleys of old districts. Therefore, some of these experiences and stories demonstrate inhabitation in some existing traditional houses in ‘old Jeddah’.

1.1. The Roshān and Inhabitation:

To tackle the issue of the senses in relation the roshān within the house and in a wider architectural picture, it is better to explore how the roshān can be interpreted as a concept among other theories in the field of architecture and inhabitation. Rybczynski argues that, “‘Inhabiting’ does not only mean living within. It means occupying a particular site with our presence, and not only with our activities and physical possessions but also with our aspirations and dreams. We live in a house and in the process we make it alive”.14 Gaston Bachelard claims, “Every corner in a house, every angle in the room, every inch of secluded space in

12. Tuan, 147.
13. See the CD-ROM: ‘Makkah the Holy Capital of Islam’.
which we like to hide, or withdraw into ourselves, is a symbol of solitude for the imagination; that is to say, it is the germ of a room, or of a house. In this respect, the roshān can be read as a corner in which to hide, and a place to socialise within. The roshān in the house is more like a niche to live in, or a corner with which to communicate with the surroundings, both the inner and the outer.

The concept of the roshān may encapsulate the idea adopted by Adolf Loos in the Moller house, when he designed a projecting alcove with a raised sitting area to reflect and represent a similar philosophy. Loos’s argument is based on the notion that the window is only a source of light, not a frame for a view. He states to Le Corbusier: “A cultivated man does not look out of the window; his window is a ground glass; it is there only to let light in, not to let gaze pass through.”17 The eye is turned toward the interior; however, the raised sitting area provides the occupant with a vantage point overlooking the interior, as the window is located in a projected window. Comfort in this space is related to intimacy and control. Nonetheless, the roshān concept is more than the case of the Moller house window, because the roshān can achieve more benefits than just a window and its seating area in a niche, and it has all the history and culture of Islam embodied within this concept.

Alexander argues that the street window, on the second floor and beyond, provides a unique kind of connection between the life inside the building and the street. The roshān facilitates both positions, on the ground and the upper floors. The occupant in both positions can detect anyone crossing the threshold of the house, while screened behind the roshān, and monitor any movement in the interior while screened by the backlight coming from the roshān. The roshān could be classified as the giant eye of the house, which reflects Pierre von Miess’s claim:

17. Colomina, 238—239.
The window — sign of human life, winks to the passerby, eye of the building allowing one to gaze at the outside world without being seen, welcomer of the daylight and the sun’s ray highlighting surfaces and objects, source of fresh air and sometimes place of exchange of words and smells ... 19

The roshān treatment, as a projection box, enables inhabitants to observe freely from different angles. More commonly, in small districts the ‘umda20 can control the situation from his roshān. It is also a refuge for elderly men, who cannot go out for a variety of reasons; the roshān makes it possible for an elderly person to follow what is happening in the locality or make contact with people he knows without leaving the house. Many more activities can be controlled from the roshān, for the occupants: men, women and even children, both daily and on special occasions. The shutters, plain or with louvers, have been designed in such a way that they do not lose their beauty whether they are open or closed to perform their various functions. Because these shutters slide vertically within channels (metal rings and loops) that are specially carved out in them, instead of opening inwards or outwards, the general appearance of the roshān is not spoiled, and the view of the room remains elegant at all times. This treatment gives a panoramic impact on scenes in the room. The shutters or the louvres of the roshān throw golden threads onto the walls and the surfaces of the room.

Dia Aziz Dia is a Saudi artist21 who has experienced living in one of these traditional houses in Jeddah; in (Figure 1) he depicts a similar scene. The scene illustrates the impact of the light through the louvres, where the privilege of the daytime light encourages women to schedule home activities accordingly. It also reflects women’s experiences of the changes of sun movements and the impact of the sun on time and space. The painting demonstrates a woman relying on the daylight to perform ironing as a domestic activity inside the house.

20. A man, who is in charge of the district’s safety and many other aspects, more like a mayor of the town serving a small area. This job still exists in the Hijāz region of Saudi Arabia.
Scientific evidence suggests that the *roshan* is the most important element in the provision and control of natural light in traditional houses. For instance, Al-Shareef claims, in his research findings, that the louvres of the *roshan* and the adjustment of the slat angle play a role in the illumination level of the ceiling and the floor level as a work area and in the distribution of the illumination over this work plane. Inside the room, the spaces change with the movement of the sun and places change with the movement of people. In the case of the *rawashin*, recesses, alcoves and similar architectural openings operate in the space; such elements make temporary and spatial isolation possible, while still belonging to a wider picture. A room lit by daylight from the *roshan* is not the same when it is lit artificially at night; similarly, candlelight is different from the light of a gas lamp. The notion of the *roshan*, as being a stage or a nook in the room dramatises the scene from within day and night.

The side lighting of the *roshan* may accentuate the luminous contrast within the area and give quite a different perception of the same geometric space. The inhabitation of the *roshan* and daily domestic functions that took place within it were scheduled according to the sunrise and sunset. Von Meiss stresses that in architectural design, the ‘light–space’ makes it possible to

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23. See the constructed three-dimensional model in the CD-ROM: ‘From the Doorstep to the *Roshān*.'
present scenes as in the theatre, the circus, the museum, a shop window at night or in the open air. It also enables the person who is in the illuminated area ‘to isolate her/himself and concentrate better’, just as when, with individual work—or reading—lamps, one is in a large office or at home and the rest of the space gradually vanishes.

If the window is not merely a lighting device, it may become a precious place between the inside and the outside, as Von Meiss claims previously that the window is a place for the exchange of words and smells. In the same respect, the roshān as a stage is a great tool of communication with the outside world. As the presence of this projecting window is evident from outside, from inside the continuity of the interior and its treatment makes it difficult to feel that the roshān is suspended outside the body of the house. The smooth and clever treatment that melds spaces together leaves no room for the feeling of a divide or a total separation between the interior and the exterior. Perhaps the roshān could be seen as the centre place of the house, a place in which memories of the world outside the house are ‘domesticated’, protected and re-experienced. Layers of experiences, the ritual of living and time leave their impression on this stage to give access to previous experiences and to document history.

These centerplaces in the house are the regions where the memories of the self can be ritualized and new memories belonging to the family can be accumulated and re-experienced away from the distractions which must occur along the outer boundaries of the house.

The occupant moves his/her body to get control of the surroundings; in each move one is able to observe a different view from the outside, as well as from the inside. Le Corbusier claims that the window is a camera lens or a gigantic screen.

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24. Von Meiss, 122, 121 and 136. Von Meiss defines ‘Light-space’ as an imaginary space which is created when a portion of space is well lit while the rest is left in semi or total darkness. This situation can be experienced in the roshān.


27. Colomina, 238—250.
In fact, the notion of the roshān goes beyond that, including more of the senses than simply sight, as it will be revealed in the following analysis.

1.2. The Roshān Milieu:

To assume, as foreign visitors sometimes do, that the closed balconies were for the exclusive use of the “harem,” is an oversimplification. The rawāshīn often served as extensions of the family living room and might be used to entertain close friends. Moreover, the window seats were usually fitted with comfortable pillows and often even doubled as beds because the typical old town house had no rooms used solely for sleeping, and the semi-enclosed balcony was often the coolest spot in the house. Thus the ornate, latticed rawāshīn served at least three functions, providing privacy while also enhancing the appearance of the house and especially its ventilation.28

This is the scene within the roshān and its furniture, which serves domestic activities as depicted in 1971 by Harry Alter29 who understands the culture but is not a native. For indigenous inhabitants the roshān in the room is more important than just a flat window that wraps the façade of the house. The material used in making these rawāshīn aids the creation of this particular kind of beauty. The durability of wood and its adaptability to decoration plays a decisive part in the characteristic appearance of the roshān. The use of wood over large surfaces creates unity and harmony within the room despite wide variations in measurements, details and decorations. In fact, the aesthetic value of the appearance of the roshān has a unifying character that gives a particular beauty to the interiors (see Figure 2). The dialogue of the senses between inhabitants and their surroundings is a comprehensive picture that reflects the roshān milieu as a whole including its various textures and its furnishings.

Observed from inside the room, the floor of the roshān could be at the same level of the floor of the room or higher, as in some kinds of treatment (Figure 3). This treatment could be a built-in dakka, made from the same material of the floor of the room,

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29. Harry Alter was born in the Middle East and attended school in India and Lebanon. He was Aramco magazine’s representative in Riyadh — Saudi Arabia, in the 1970s.
or could be a wooden karawita\(^\text{30}\) (كراويت) with different heights. The floor of the roshān and the room is covered with a padded layer that is put on the \(\text{tubtāb}\)\(^\text{31}\) (طبطب). The floor of the room is washed with cement, then a layer of special material made of palm tree leaves, called locally (\(K\text{hasaff}\))\(^\text{32}\), or sometimes a sheet of plastic (\(h\text{asir}\))\(^\text{33}\) is laid as padding. Rugs, or Persian rugs if affordable, are placed on top of this layer. As rugs are not available in large sizes, a room may have several rugs in a matching colour and design\(^\text{34}\). One of these rooms in Makkah is described as follows: "[w]e entered the room and found nothing to attract our immediate attention. It was a room like any other, containing a simple Shirazi rug, some cushions and mattresses,

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\(^{30}\) This piece of furniture is also known as ‘karaweit’ in Sawākin in Sudan (Greenlaw, 19). Interestingly, there is a similar piece of furniture in the Bohra settlement in Gujarat in India namely ‘Bethak’ which is a large wooden platform with storage underneath and a soft cushion on the top (Doshi, 35).

\(^{31}\) It is a special cement layer as a final treatment for the floor.

\(^{32}\) Mats are made locally of palm-fibres, or imported straw.

\(^{33}\) It is a general term to describe a padding layer, whether it is made of local materials or plastic fibres.

\(^{34}\) Akbar, “Home and Furniture”, 80.
and little else. In Sawākin, Sudan, the situation is similar; rooms are covered with mats, where one could sit, lie or walk as one pleased, simply ‘the room is like a large couch’. Such a platform, used domestically in the Oriental house, is highlighted by Rudofsky, who called it a ‘living platform’. He adds, “[t]he dimensions of this platform varied in time and place but the idea behind it was the same. It created an island of perfect cleanliness such as the West had never known or cared to know.”

The seating area of the roshān becomes larger if it is adjacent to a dakka (Figure 4 and Figure 5). A wooden platform raised from the floor is sometimes built to substitute the dakka, whenever higher seating is desirable. This platform could be used as a stage within the roshān, or it could be simply a karawīta to surround the room with a continuous seating area. Therefore, the seating style of the roshān could be a lower or a higher one depending on the floor

treatment. The lower and the higher seating are based on a simple mattress style, stuffed with cotton or Tirff, and called locally tawałah, pl. tawawil. This piece of furniture is commonly used for sitting and sleeping, it is approximately 70 x 180 cm, which is large enough for a person to sleep comfortably, and it is small and flexible enough to be carried and stored whenever necessary. These are granules taken from desert shrubs. The granules have a smell that repels insects. The odour cannot be smelled by human beings unless very close to the granules. See Maghrabi, Malāmīh al-ḥayāt, 14.

The karawīta, pl. karāwīt, is the most common furniture to sit on; it is around 50–90 cm in height, 80 cm in width and no more than 2 m in length. It is a local piece of furniture which can be used indoors and outdoors; it is common to see the karawīta by the main entrance of the house instead of the dakka. The karawīta is made with a wooden frame and is covered with a thick cloth called sajanī (sing. sijniya) then the tawawil are placed on the top. To complete the seating, masānid (sing. misnad) back supported–cushions are arranged and attached to the wall so the sitter can lean on them (Figure 7). These masānid are covered with a lace cloth, in white or off–white, which groups them into one piece and highlights the colour composition. The masānid are big, rectangular, heavy and stuffed with tirff. The side cushions or bolsters (makhadāt, sing. makhadda), which are distributed between the sitting people, are different in shape and size. They are usually arranged one on top of the other, are made of cotton, have a special satin cover and are wrapped with a white lace material in the middle which ends with an embroidery festoon. The two coloured sides of the cushions can be seen shining on both sides.

The tawawil as well as the masānid are stuffed with the same material and covered with Damask, usually in red. When the karāwīt are put out, they are positioned around the room or the

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38. These are granules taken from desert shrubs. The granules have a smell that repels insects. The odour cannot be smelled by human beings unless very close to the granules. See Maghrabi, Malāmīh al-ḥayāt, 14.
42. Dumus or damus is a fabric to upholstery seats that may come from Damascus.
majlis to create continuous peripheral seating with the rawāshīn. The karāwīt are upholstered with the same material of the rawāshīn seating to make a large homogeneous sitting area. This could reflect Alexander's argument of window places and its adjacent seat as places of luxuries, which can no longer be built, and which can no longer be affordable in most modern architecture. In fact these kinds of windows, which create 'places' next to them, are necessary.

There are similarities between Islamic houses across the world: the furniture and its layout in Makkah and the Hijāz region, for instance, are similar to neighbouring countries. Examples of this lower seating can be found in Turkey and Morocco, with even the same Damask material and almost the same patterns and colours. Sawākin traditional houses show similar seating units and furniture for the roshān (Figure 8 and Figure 9). Orientalist

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43. See more on traditional furniture in: Akbar, "Home and Furniture", 90—111, and Maghrabi, Malāmīn Al-hayāh, 13, 14.
44. Alexander, et al., 834.
45. Akbar, "Home and Furniture", 111.
depictions highlight the same treatment from the built-in dakka and the higher karawit in Cairo (see Figure 10 and Figure 11). Similarities are likely to be due to similar cultural values and family structures, which have a significant influence on furniture and space. Inhabitants develop solutions according to their utilitarian needs and for convenience.47

The bigger and the deeper roshān, with a more platform-like, dakka or karawit, is preferable. These big rawāshīn are used to extend rooms and seating areas to allow them to be furnished and prepared for the reception of family and close friends. The actual furnished space would accommodate four to six people. These areas may be used for sleeping, because it is the coolest place in the house.48 Moreover, this arrangement, combined with the thick walls of the house (60—80 cm), generates a sufficient platform, which is larger than a modern king-size bed. This place is given to the most honoured guest for sitting and sleeping. The

47. Akbar, “Home and Furniture”, 111.
48. See Khan, Manāzil Jedda, 115, and sizes in; Al-Abdaly, 77, and Al-Shareef, 103, who gives different dimensions of the depth as 110—190 cm.
furniture arrangement reflects the notion of a bed alcove, where ventilation and privacy are achieved to provide an effective and comfortable place for sleeping.

At night, because of the thickness of the walls in traditional houses and the attempts of the morning sun to penetrate being prevented by the rawāshīn, the temperature remains comfortable. Although the rawāshīn are large, the openings in them are appropriate to their size as if the projection of the roshān fishes for air in the sea outside, but remains in firm control. The walls absorb the air trapped in this area during the day to cool the interior space and as the temperature of the walls falls, the area becomes cooler. It is as if the walls and the wood breathe during the night with a gentle breeze to cool the space.

The rawāshīn would be kept open at night for the occupant to sleep in a cool room. The size of the roshān relates to the size of the room; big majlis (reception area) or family rooms, have

\[49\] See Alexander, et al., 870.
proportionally large roșhan of 300 cm in height and width, with a depth of 120—140 cm\(^5\). More importantly, the size of the roșhan is related to the dimensions of the human body, as it is wide enough to lie down on comfortably. This furnished alcove can accommodate two to three people sitting around a coffee tray or a shisha (water pipe) in comfort\(^5\). This is another factor which could be seen as a great benefit to be facilitated within the roșhan: having another domestic island within the room. The roșhan becomes a stage that accommodates many functions easily in a way that satisfies family needs perfectly, as described in Jeddah:

The focus of social life in the house, the rawasheen were large enough for a small group of people to take their ease in cool comfort behind the privacy of the screens. On some of the finer houses the bay windows are linked horizontally by decorated canopies and catwalks; some vertically linked examples from a single huge roshan two or three stories in height. The elegant carving and decorations were not confined to the teakwood panels and grills ...\(^5\)

The considerable depth of the rawăshîn with the shîsh treatment provides shade and makes narrow alleyways. It also enables women to have a group discussion during the day while sitting in the airy rawăshîn (Figure 12). However, the flow of air in the interiors is governed by the apertures and the shîsh in such a way that these parts act as layers of filters for both the air and the dust. The shîsh sometimes have holes in them to hold shirāb (water jars) and women can look through these holes to get a glimpse of the walkways beneath. There is no doubt that everybody loves window seats, bay windows and big windows with low sills and comfortable chairs drawn up to them\(^5\). The lower part of the roșhan is panelled to a height of about 50 cm, where one can sit on the roșhan floor and lean over this part to see into the street. This part is called jalsa in the Hijāż region and in Sawākin alike, because this part is actually designed for the seating area (see Figure 13 and Figure 14).

In these traditional houses the daily activities took place in the

\(^{50}\) Al-Abdaly, 77.

\(^{51}\) Greenlaw, 21.

\(^{52}\) John Christie, “A City Within A City”; Christie served 17 years as a British Diplomat in Jeddah and other cities in the Arab world.

\(^{53}\) Alexander, et al., 834.
jalsa of the roshān, and it is worth noting that in the few houses which still exist, this way of living continues. The families who have had the opportunity to live in one of these houses develop an emotional attachment — the children growing up with the sense of living in a ‘nook’, with the taste of wood, its smell and its warmth. The roshān remains deeply embedded in these children’s memories for the reason that all children love to be in tiny cave-like spaces. For them, the roshān is a different realm in this ‘adult space’, a world that they always dream of, as a place to hide in, a place to live in as an adult, or, simply a stage to be an actor on. This wooden atmosphere fulfils the idea of having small alcoves in the family room, to be in the room and feel secluded at the same time, as Alexander’s claim:

In short, the family room must be surrounded by small alcoves. The alcoves should be large enough for one or two people at a time: about six feet wide, and between three and six feet deep. To make it clear that they are separate from the main room, so they do not clutter it up, and so that people in them are secluded, they should be narrower than the family room walls, and have lower ceilings than the main room.54

Apart from sitting, socialising and sleeping within the *roshān*, the *roshān* could be a haven or a boudoir for women. In the daytime, when men go to work, the house and mainly the *roshān* accommodates other daily activities for the women of the house to chat and socialise. The woman or women of the house can sit at ease to browse goods and discuss matters before buying from the mobile salesmen or women. Transferring an indoor scene into an outdoor one, such as women experiencing selling and/or buying within the *roshān*, was common in Islamic cities until recently, although it does still occur in some old districts. Strong memories are associated with this experience, for instance, in Turkey where the saleswoman is called a bundle woman:

“Bundle women often appeared at our doorstep, and I cannot forget my excitement and wonder as I watched their wares slip out of the bundles.”

The women of the house can enjoy this experience in an airy and well-lit place, that is, the *roshān* alcove and its stage. Another scene can also be imagined: a salesman (*farra’qna*) who is stopped by a call from one of the *rawāshīn* in Makkah and the Hijāz region (Figure 15). A woman stretches out her hand, sometimes her arm, to grab the fabric through the *roshān* shutters to observe and test it indoors. A discussion among the women of the house may take place in the *jalsā* of the *roshān*. Once the decision is finalised the hand stretches out again to return the fabric or to pay for the goods. This scene of securing women behind the screen ought to be respected by the *farra’qna* as the women in the house ought to be as quiet as possible.

It is clear that most of the family activities, in these traditional houses, including the leisure time, were spent within the *roshān*, chatting, sipping coffee, smoking a *shisha*, eating, sleeping or even observing frequent festivals from the *jalsā*. It seems that building the *rawāshīn* and extensions is to increase the floor area of the upper storeys and to make the building more beautiful.

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55. These salesmen or women have different local names across the Arab world. Lane also depicted this experience in Cairo, which used the word Deilāleh (for female) where ladies from the higher order bought goods in this way and never went to shops. See Lane, *An Account of the Manners*, 203. In Saudi, and the Hijāz region, it is called *Farra’qna*. This person brings kinds of ornaments and articles of female apparel.
The outward extension of the roshān results in the expansion of the size of the room, therefore affecting the general form of the interior space. This extra area has a liberating effect inside for it makes it possible to accommodate many domestic activities.

2. The Roshān and the Gaze:

The window and, in particular the act of looking out of the window of the home to the yard or to the garden is a poetic and essential experience of home. The home is particularly strongly felt when you look out from its enclosed privacy. If this is the case with the occupier 'looking out' from an ordinary window, the feeling from within the roshān will be substantial, due to the sensuous experience of the wooden enclosure. The occupant can come into contact with variety of feelings while sitting inside the roshān. Seeing the image of the roshān from outside and imagining the atmosphere from inside reflects Bachelard's claim that the corner is a haven for refuge. The corner is a sort of half box, part wall, part door; it serves as an illustration for the dialectics of inside and outside. The roshān sometimes stretches to cover the whole façade of the house and extends considerably over the main entrance. From inside, the

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57. Pallasmaa, Encounters, 122—123.

58. Bachelard, 137.
**roshān** is located in the main section and the front main side of the room or the **majlis**, which is locally called **sadr Al-majlis**. From this position, the alcove of the **roshān** and its sitting area, the occupant can control the situation of the inner and the outer spheres. Due to the strong observation position, the gaze of the inhabitant can travel through the whole length of the room from within the **roshān**. Moreover, because of the projection of the **roshān** there is a wide angle of vision to the alleys or streets below. In fact, the visibility is much better than out of an ordinary window as the vision can be up to 180 degrees. A greater degree of vision can be achieved if the **roshān** is located on the corner of the building as this increases the range of vision by as much as 270 degrees.

The **roshān** could be overlooking interior spaces such as courtyards or inner **majlis**, or it could be overlooking exteriors such as streets or alleys. Each position offers a different experience, although occupants are still in control of the gaze when sitting there. People, or the subject of observation beneath the **roshān**, are facing a different experience. The experience of being watched and observed by mysterious eyes from above, is depicted by Jean-Paul Sartre:

> I can feel myself under the gaze of someone whose eyes I do not even see, not even discern. All that is necessary is for something to signify to me that there may be others there. The window if it gets a bit dark and if I have reasons for thinking that there is someone behind it, it straightway a gaze. From the moment this gaze exists, I am already something other, in that I feel myself becoming an object for the gaze of others. But in this position, which is a reciprocal one, others also know that I am an object who knows himself to be seen.

Here is the experience of a man being observed by women in one of these traditional houses; it is the story of an Egyptian groom on his trip to Damascus in search of a bride. The bride’s home was a large two-story Arab style property with **mashrabiyya**

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59. It is the wall one is facing when entering the **majlis**.


61. See Colomina, 250.

62. This is a kind of arranged marriage where the groom is recommended, by the family or close friends, to see the bride in a specific house to satisfy his requests. The bride also has the chance to have her opinion starting from viewing him first, then the family will arrange for another meeting between them if the bride says yes.
screens — as described by the groom — on the second floor overlooking the majlis below. He was asked to sit in the majlis in the centre of the house in the ground floor where he entered; he then described his feelings as followed:

I sat and waited. It seemed like a very long time. But somehow I had the feeling I was not alone even though I saw no one else around. [In fact, he heard female voices and murmurs coming from upstairs behind the mashrabiyya.] I felt self-conscious, nervous, embarrassed and awkward, with my legs tightly closed together, sweating as I listened to my heartbeat in between the murmurs and giggles from the women above.63

The roshān is not just a stage to observe and communicate with the surrounding sphere through various activities; it seems like a control room, where the gaze wanders from the different angles of the roshān. Being within this enclosure makes the occupants feel secure and at ease to observe and experience these scenes live. In fact, this feeling raises the notion of home, privacy and protection, especially when the occupants control the comings and the goings of their own territory, their own house.

It is the point of departure of the gaze which tends to lead rather from interior to exterior. It is because of this view to ‘elsewhere’ that one feels at home. The space of the window is a potential privileged place in the room. Its transparency, the direct light and sun which enter it, invite and encourage particular activities: to sit near the window and follow the comings and the goings outside without being seen, see the postman arrive, observe nature and the weather, read or do tasks requiring accuracy, grow some plants … 64

Despite the fact that the occupant has the privilege of observing the scene from the roshān, staring at someone’s window from alleys is considered an inappropriate act in Islamic cities. The existence of the shīsh is a sign of the presence of women and family occupants, who might be looking down; this state ought to be respected by passers-by. Therefore from ‘up there’ women are able to observe the alleys or streets below, and to control the children playing by the main entrance of the house or within the district itself. For instance, sitting in a roshān, with the shīsh covering the openings, looking down, the occupant will have the

63. El-Guindi, 94. This experience was similar to Thackeray’s depiction of being a subject of a woman’s gaze peeping from the roshān while he was in the courtyard of Lewis’s house in Cairo in 1844.

64. Von Meiss, 152, see also Pallasmaa’s previous observation.
feeling of being veiled and can observe at ease. It is easy to watch scenes below without disruption, whereas for the passers-by it is hard to notice who is behind the screen. The extra screen and the distance between the observers from inside and those from the outside combine to help occupants to be hidden while viewing the street (Figure 12). The louvres’ mechanism helps one who wants to look outside freely without being seen; because the field of vision through the louvres when the screens are closed is about 90 degrees. This can be achieved by moving the louvres up or down, which gives great flexibility to the field of vision. The louvres at the same time break the line of vision and prevent whoever is inside from being seen.

Makkah has a unique planning fabric where houses surround Al-Ḥaram like a belt. Houses are orientated as far as possible towards the qibla, where everyone is seeking a view of Al-Masjid Al-Ḥarām; there is more honour when overlooking the ṣāḥn (the main court surrounding Al-Ka’ba). Therefore viewing the ṣāḥn, or even just a minaret, for Makkan inhabitants, is a pleasure to observe from the roshān, in which these spiritual scenes are repeated continuously throughout the day. These houses could be on a mountain or further away, yet the architectural fabric of the levels of these houses adjacent to Al-Ḥaram area has an impact on the spiritual feelings of the inhabitants. This is the special quality of being within a roshān in one of the Makkan traditional houses, where experience is rich and different from anywhere else in the Islamic world. Even in Madinah, where the architectural fabric is almost the same, it is not possible to view this scene round the clock, due to the restricted openings time of the masjid. The last ṣalā, that is Isha, finishes around nine or ten o’clock at night; no activities take place after that. Al-Masjid Al-Nabawī closes its doors at night and opens the next day before dawn. By contrast, Al-Masjid Al-Ḥarām in Makkah is always open and never closes its doors, day or night.

65. This feeling cannot be valued and expressed as some inhabitants are emotionally affected when they have been asked to leave their houses due to the enlargement of the area. Some of them prefer to die before they leave, and they did, as they had such a connection with the space spiritually. (The experience of some cases I was told about through interviews with people used to live close to Al-Ḥaram in 1997).
From the images (Figure 16 and Figure 17) the textual fabric shows that the *rawāshīn*, in different sizes and types, are facing the *qibla*. It also shows that the facades of houses have been extended to gain a greater view of Al-Ḥaram. Eldon Rutter⁶⁶, who was on a pilgrimage, watched this scene while sitting within the *roshān* of one of the Makkan houses, and stated in 1925 that:

> [t]he room, which measured some twenty feet by fifteen, was furnished with carpets, and at either side of it there stood a thickly cushioned divan. Two large and low armchairs stood near an open window, through which the Haram could be seen in the valley below.⁶⁷

Lands in this area of Makkah are beyond price due to its spiritual setting and its privilege of being beside Al-Ḥaram. Therefore, houses built on this area could be small but tend to stretch high to grasp a view and catch a chance of a glimpse of Al-Ḥaram (see Figure 18 and Figure 19). Accordingly, being within the *roshān* viewing this scene is beyond words for the occupants who are

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⁶⁷ Rutter, 239.
Figure 18: A view of the ṣāhn from a distance. (Shah, 43)

Figure 19: Different views overlooking Al-Ḥaram Al-Makī. Muhammad Sadek, 1881. (Hage, 19)

Figure 20: A view of Al-Ḥaram, Abdul Ghaffar, 1885. (Hage, 44)
able to observe and watch people gathering for \( \text{ṣalāt} \). More importantly, they are able to observe the performing of the \( \text{Tawāf} \) — the circumambulation of the \( \text{Kaba} \) — seven complete circuits, with non-stop action twenty-four hours a day. The occupant can open the window anytime, day or night, and this spiritual scene is there: tangible, interactive and live. The continuous action of these various groups of people encircling Al-Kaba has an impact on those who watch the scene (even children) and have been brought up living with this image that captures the senses deeply (Figure 20).^{68}

Festivals and ceremonies that take place in the arena below the \( \text{roshān} \), such as the \( \text{Mahmal} \), can also be observed from ‘up there’ (Figure 21). The Swiss traveller Jean Louis Burckhardt observed the \( \text{Mahmal} \) in Makkah as one of the crowd beneath the \( \text{roshān} \). Reaching Makkah in 1816, he stood to watch the display under ‘latticed and jalousied balconies’ that cast a complexity of shadows on the tall white walls.\(^{69}\) Observing caravans of Hajj or goods being transferred from Jeddah to Makkah and similar activities are other experiences that can be watched from the \( \text{roshān} \) (Figure 22 and Figure 23).\(^{70}\) The \( \text{roshān} \) does not just cast shadows outside, it also dramatises the scene from inside with the effect of the light through the lattice fabric. In fact, deep shadows and darkness are essential because they dim the sharpness of vision and make depth and distance ambiguous, and invite unconscious peripheral vision and tactile fantasy. The shadow also gives shape and life to the object in light, as shown in most of the scenes for these lattices from within.\(^{71}\)

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68. See the CD-ROM: ‘Makkah the Holy Capital of Islam’.


71. Pallasmaa, The Eyes of the Skin, 47.

72. See the CD-ROM: ‘From the Doorstep to the Roshān’.
Figure 21: The *Mahmal* in Makkah, unknown Egyptian photographer, 1908. (Hage, 51)

Figure 22: From the *roshān*, observing a caravan leaving Jeddah. (Hage, 92)

Figure 23: A taxi in Jeddah, John Philby 1935. (Hage, 107)
3. The *Roshān* and the *Adhān*:

The *adhān* is the announcement, with a specific wording, indicating that the time to pray is due. It also has the purpose of calling the people to pray in a congregation. The *adhān* is a distinguishing and obligatory feature of Islamic society and its associated religious practices. This call is announced five times a day: at dawn (*Fajir*), at midday (*Zuhur*), in the late afternoon (*Asr*), just after sunset (*Maghrib*) and during the evening (*Ishā*). Originally, it came from a low rooftop a few steps from the simple dwelling of the Prophet’s house, in Madinah. Then it began to fall from the highest point of the *masjid*, the *mināra* (minaret). The existence of speakers and technology has, in more recent years, replaced this tradition. The *adhān* and the *muʿadh-dhin’s* voice identify spaces; for each region there is a different style of calling the *ṣalāt* (prayer). The call itself, in words, is the same, however, there is a rich variation of voices and there is always room for human creativity. For instance, the *adhān* of Al-Masjid Al-Ḥarām in Makkah is different from Al-Haram Al-Nabawi in Madinah; each *adhān* brings memories of this spiritual journey in time and space. This highlights the idea that sound has emotional and social consequences beyond the auditory function, as sound can penetrate to the very core of the sentient and not only surrounds. This primitive power, which bypasses the cerebral and directly addresses the heart, elicits an emotional response.

*Adhān* is the most crucial factor in a Muslim’s daily life: no sooner has the midwife finished her task the *adhān* is whispered into the baby’s right ear and the commencement of the *ṣalāt* in the

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75. A call-maker who pronounced the *adhān* loudly calling people to come and perform the *ṣalāt* (prayer), it could be found spelled as ‘mua’zzin or muezzin’.
76. Experience the *adhān* in the CD-ROM: ‘Makkah the Holy Capital of Islam’.
The Islamic city planning is centred on the *masjid* as a base around which the architectural fabric vibrates, and the *adhan* gives a great sense of time. Being within the *roshan* is like being on a stage on which to record time changes according to the social life scenes below, whether the *roshan* is overlooking a main street or a small alley. For the inhabitants overlooking such a scene (as in Figure 18 and Figure 19), it is a rich auditory experience where different scenes deliver different experiences, as Rutter described it in Makkah in 1925:

> He threw up two of the shutters of the unglazed windows; and as we sat on the cushions looking out on the flat star lit roofs of neighbouring houses and the black crests of the hills beyond, there suddenly rose on the air a long-drawn quavering cry—piercing the silence which hung over the sleeping city. The cry was immediately repeated by a number of other voices, which rose and fell and rose again, till the dark blue gloom of the night seemed to be all a-ring with the swelling sounds: *Allah Akbar! Allah Akbar! Allah Akbar! Allah Akbar! ...* [sic] It was the call to prayer, ringing out in a magnificent volume of sound from the Haram's seven spires in the silence of earliest dawn.79

Tuan claims that people who can see are less sensitive to auditory cues because they are not so dependent on them. All human beings learn, however, to relate sound to distance in the act of speaking. The tone of voice is altered from soft to loud, from intimate to public, in accordance with the perceived physical and social distances between the selves and others.80 Sound can evoke spatial impressions; a *roshan* overlooking Al-Masjid Al-Haram is different to one in the far distance, such as houses in the mountains (Figure 20). In the first case where the *roshan* is overlooking Al-Haram, the *adhan* works as a time indicator and is heard five times a day accompanied by a particular daily scene. Whereas the second case supports a different experience when the scene has no sound. The inhabitants can see Al-Haram but cannot hear the *adhan* clearly. The absence of the sound evokes other senses to work rapidly to bridge the gap. Here the distance

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78. The first word the Muslim hears is *‘Allah Akbar’* whispered by the father or sometime the eldest of the house, (i.e. grandfather). When near death, those at his bedside should remind and encourage him to utter the confession of faith *‘Ashadū an la Ilaḥa illa Allāḥ’*. It is not a tradition; it is an obligation to recite it in Arabic regardless of nationality and differences in language. (Robinson, *Atlas of the Islamic World*, 188—189).

79. Rutter, 106.

80. Tuan, 15.
of being near to, or far from, Al-Masjid Al-Ḥarām is essential to this auditory experience. Tuan notes:

> The organization of human space is uniquely dependent on sight. Other senses expand and enrich visual space. Thus sound enlarges one’s spatial awareness to include areas behind the head that cannot be seen. More important, sound dramatizes spatial experience. Soundless space feels calm and lifeless despite the visible flow of activity in it.81

The *adhān* at night, and when it penetrates the darkness of the early hours of the morning on a cold night, is more captivating than at any other time. This call can pierce strongly anytime without notification to break the silence of dark nights and to pull people from materiality into a spiritual sphere. Another auditory experience, that cannot be found anywhere in the Islamic world but Makkah, was hearing Zamzam82 carriers chanting ‘*Barr‘id yā Ḥājj*’, which means ‘drink to cool yourself, pilgrim’. Burckhardt depicted a similar scene in 1816, which reflected the tune that deeply appealed to him, as he could never hear it without experiencing a thrill of emotion83. In fact, viewing Zamzam carriers moving among pilgrims and visitors, carrying water jar with brass vessels (like small bowls) was a pleasure in itself. These men carried jars and brass vessels in a specific manner and wore a special Makkah costume. This tradition disappeared around the 1970s and was replaced by a new system of distributing Zamzam84.

The sound of the crowd’s footsteps rushing to Al-Haram for the *salāt* dramatises the spatial experience of being within the *roshan*. The arena beneath the occupant is also experiencing another dramatic change around the clock. Auditory scenes from inside are rich and vary according to the time of the day. Occupants of the *roshan* are sitting in a tree-like house, where doves and birds’ songs are clearly heard. The dawn is the best time to be within

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81. Tuan, 16.
82. The Holy water from the well beneath the Ka‘ba area started with Ismā‘īl, the son of Ibrahim (peace be upon them).
83. Sim, 314. These carriers chanted whenever wealthy pilgrims purchased Zamzam for distribution among the poor.
84. Serving the holy well ‘Zamzam’ is one of the unique jobs in Makkah. This was found and monitored by Quraysh, before Islam and it still exists.
the *roshān* to experience the wake-up calls from Al-Haram pigeons, when massive groups of them are seeking home in the area surrounding the *masjid*. Listening to them in this warm place, from within the *roshān*, is relaxing. It also helps to start the day in a clear and calm mood. In fact, the sign of the pigeons fluttering outside the *roshān* is a sign to wake-up and indicates that it is time to pray. This scene is also depicted during festivals inside Al-Haram as Burckhardt states:

> [d]uring the festival especially, when thousands of lamps were lit, the place was transformed. Always a focal point of the city, it then became a gay amphitheatre sparkling with lights, ringing with human voices, with the loud cooing too of innumerable pigeons and the beating of their wings as they wheeled in sudden startled flight above the Ka‘aba.85

A rooster crowing is another sound likely to be heard from the *roshān*, especially if the houses are adjacent to the mountains. This experience is exceptionally felt if inhabitants sleep within the *roshān*. During the daytime the sound of donkeys could sometimes be heard, when goods carriers transferred or delivered goods from place to place. Water carriers also used donkeys to drag a carriage to supply water to the houses; others carried buckets on their shoulders, especially for short distances (Figure 24). However, those living beside a main water source (Bāzān) experienced a different sound and had views of these people waiting in turn to fill their buckets (Figure 25). Donkeys were used to serve remote areas and mountains, even when cars were in use.

After the *ṣalāt* is finished the sound of footsteps returning from Al-Haram are heard, the footsteps are ‘peaceful’ and fall differently to the footsteps of the people rushing to catch the *ṣalāt*. People are then free to go to work while the sun rises and the salesmen open their shops *‘dākākīn’*. The area surrounding Al-Haram is still working in this way where the salesmen chant ‘*Asbahna wa asbah al-mulk le Ilah*’ or ‘*yā fatāh yā ‘Alim yā Razāq yā Karīm*’86. During the old days, what one may hear from up

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85. Sim, 306.

86. That is in the name of Allah, who is Al-Razāq (who gives sustenance) and Al-Karīm (the most munificent).
there was a squeak of wooden doors or the repeated jumps of the man or his apprentice trying to remove and fold the curtain, the big piece of fabric that covers the shop\textsuperscript{87}, and then start to arrange their goods. However, this area surrounding Al-Haram remains open until late or even until the next day, especially during the Hajj time and other occasions.

The rawāšīn overlooking the sūq are richer in experience than overlooking small districts. The pace of movement is rapid; the crowd is large beneath the shade of the rawāšīn or in a closed roofed sūq (compare Figure 26 and Figure 27). Such a scene could be imagined as T. E. Lawrence described in Jeddah in 1916: “Houses-fronts were fretted, pierced and pargetted till they looked as though cut out of cardboard for a romantic stage-setting. Every storey jutted, every window leaned one way or other; often the very walls sloped”\textsuperscript{88} (see Figure 28).

\textsuperscript{87} Until recently the small shops in Makkah that surrounded Al-Haram were covered with a big, heavy piece of fabric that stretched from one side to the other. Putting it up during the daytime indicating that the shop was closed, especially during the salat time, where time is crucial to do one’s ablution and to catch the salat on time.

\textsuperscript{88} Lawrence, 72.
Figure 26: The rawāshīn overlooking the street, Jeddah. (Hage, 126)

Figure 27: The rawāshīn overlooking the market place at Madinah, 1885. (Hage, 49)

Figure 28: The rawāshīn in a narrow alley in Jeddah. (Lawrence, page facing 72)
Neighbourhoods away from Al-Haram area, or districts with small communities, have their own significant architectural fabric which enhance enclosures and form close relations among neighbours. This architectural fabric and the projecting rawāshīn interweave with the community into one big family, where neighbours rely on each other. In fact, members of this community are so close and supportive of each other that they feel it is their responsibility to help their neighbours in any way they can. Islam stresses this obligatory issue among the community; however, today it could be seen as an intrusion.

In a small town people “watch out” for one another. “Watch out” has both the desirable sense of caring and the undesirable one of idle — and perhaps malicious — curiosity. Houses have eyes. Where they are built close together the neighbours’ noises and the neighbours’ concern constantly intrude. Where they are isolated privacy is better preserved — but not guaranteed; such is human ingenuity.90

For this close architectural fabric and the consequences of neighbourhood relationship, inhabitants face various diverse experiences of being within the roshān on a daily basis. Here is a story of a neighbour of a lady who lived in Turkey, which highlights the experience of being within a roshān of the ḥarīm. The narrative expresses the auditory panorama as a focus to attract occupants of the house toward the roshān. The roshān plays a role in being a stage to observe outside scenes and feed curiosity, as Croutier narrates:

In our house in Istanbul, two very old spinsters lived on the first floor. They were sisters … their youth had been spent behind harem lattices, which they still imposed upon themselves in order to perpetuate existence in a murky shadow world. They had jalousie shades put up to bar themselves from the vision of those who passed by and to watch the world parade before them without being seen. Whenever I walked down the stairs to go out the front door we shared, I could hear their footsteps padding to the windows, where they would situate themselves at a vantage behind the shutters from which to observe me. They seemed to experience vicarious pleasure in ogling the innocence of youth. They also seemed to be seeking any sign of scandal they could turn to gossip.91

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89. Due to the modern fabric of architecture including big houses, this sense of responsibility is fading dramatically. Increasing isolation within neighbourhoods occurs not as a result of heightened privacy but as a symptom of decreasing socialisation within communities. The Hadith stresses that caring of neighbours is an obligation. The occupant of the house is in charge and is to be concerned for his neighbour even the seventh house to his, and not just the adjacent one.

90. Tuan, 60—61.

91. Croutier, 162—163.
The staging inside the roshān draws attention to the scene with a complimentary auditory background. If inhabitants are the real actors within the roshān as a stage, then what happens if they are absent or silent? In such a surrounding ambient sounds play a role in adding another dimension to the scene, as these sounds are still enveloping the stage. Imagining the roshān as a stage with no sound at all is incomprehensible, where the stage delivers a different message as if the curtain is drawn. Pallasmaa puts this scene as: “When the soundtrack is removed from the film, for instance, the scene loses its plasticity and sense of continuity and life, indeed, had to compensate for the lack of sound by the demonstrative manner of overacting”92. In fact, sound is a dynamic world of activities rather than artefacts, sensations rather than reflections and is temporal in nature. Sound contributes to the process whereby environments become places; an environment without sound is lifeless and unreal, without flow or rhythm and is frightening. Sounds plays a crucial role in the anticipation, experience and remembering of place93.

In the late afternoon (Asr) and at weekends, children scatter for entertainment and to play traditional games in alleys. When these scenes are watched through the roshān, the auditory experience is hard to ignore. The arena beneath the roshān is active, rich and pleasurable to watch, especially for children. One can hear the children's laughter, cries and shouts at this time of the day as they are cycling, fighting or simply playing (Figure 29 and Figure 30). In such scenes children can watch their peers on the street and communicate with them. Nothing can be as difficult as preventing a child joining his peers playing in these old districts. The roshān may partially solve this problem, where the child can experience seeing, hearing and interacting with the children from ‘up there’ (Figure 31). However, the children ought to be aware of the distance between houses and respect the inhabitants. If the children do not show adequate respect, any adult can take charge and ask them to behave. This action is acceptable as a

92. Pallasmaa, The Eyes of the Skin, 49.

93. Malnar and Vodvarka, 140.
Figure 29: Bicycle Game, 2002. Dia Aziz Dia. Collection of the Artist. (AI-Mansouria Foundation, 169)

Figure 30: Kubūsh (Knucklebones) Game, 1984. Dia Aziz Dia. Collection of the Embassy of Japan, Riyadh. (AI-Mansouria Foundation, 107)

Figure 31: Al-Berber Game, 2001. Dia Aziz Dia. (The collection of HRH Prince Mohammed bin Nawaf bin Abdulaziz). (AI-Mansouria Foundation, 177)
neighbour’s children are seen as one’s own, and children have a high respect for adults. Surrounding materials also played a role in the sound transition between the inside and outside. Sand in the alleys or streets gave a different sound to paved lanes. Sand would also affect the senses of smell, taste and touch. At the end of the day children would return exhausted and tired from playing in these sandy alleyways, where they could not go to sleep before a shower.

Assorted sounds calling to sell and to advertise traditional sweets and candies or homemade ice cream, coming from travelling salesmen, is common after the ‘Asr time. They mainly call the children, who try to reach the roshān or rush to descend the stairs to ask the salesman to wait. The noise from inside and outside the house is felt by the roshān’s occupants, while the eldest person of the house warns the children to take care and not to rush. The scene is a dramatic depiction of action and sound. In fact, the movement of the children within the roshān is another issue, especially if the roshān is furnished with the karāwīt. Their footsteps tap the wooden karāwīt sharply and strongly as they rush to catch the salesman.

Hearing a variety of sounds while seated within the roshān is a pleasurable auditory experience. Because the roshān and its ceiling are made of wood, the surrounding ambience resonates sound strongly, such as the sounds of moving bodies, visitors’ steps on the staircase and the room itself. Sounds, even when vaguely located, could convey a strong sense of size and distance\textsuperscript{94}. Sound created by footsteps tapping sharply on a staircase creates an impression of a person arriving or leaving, entering the room, or just passing by. The routine footsteps of the men of the house going to Al-Haram to pray at dawn, children’s footsteps rushing to the Kuttāb\textsuperscript{95}, to learn the Qur’ān, also added to the auditory experience. The power of sound, whether felt from inside or outside evokes distance and

\textsuperscript{94} See Tuan, 15, and Pallasmaa, Encounters, 96.
\textsuperscript{95} These Kuttāb are to learn Qur’ān, some are based in Al-Haram, the adjacent masjid or in houses. This could be in the morning or the ‘Asr (late afternoon). These are different from a proper Madrasa, where other religious subjects are taught. See more in Bogary, 36—39, on the study circles of Al-Haram.
awareness of spatial perception, especially for women behind the roshān. Ambient sounds from the outside world can invoke another sphere with its mystery to the roshān’s milieu.

The roshān seems to be in contact with the outside world more than the inside, that is, hearing sounds from outside was more dynamic than the sounds from inside the house which could appear distant. Perhaps this was due to the heavy furnishing of the roshān itself and its location in the room alongside the construction of these houses thick walls. Or it might be due to the projection to the outside world. However, the chance of hearing noises and sounds from the staircase or adjacent rooms is more likely if a door was open. The staircase floor was left uncovered and is treated with a layer of cement ‘tubtab’; the noise of footsteps on this material generates a sense of friction. The sound of footsteps on the rugs inside the room and of fabric rustling when people moved could also be heard while sitting inside the roshān.

4. The Roshān and the Bakhūr (‘ūd):

The ‘ūd is a kind of aromatic oil that is similar to sandalwood, which is known as ‘aloe wood’ and sometimes as ‘eagle wood’. It is burnt as a fumigant for bodies, clothes and holy places, and is available as oil and as wooden chips. Bakhūr, in Arabic, is the act of burning incense and the fragrant smoke created by the burning chips of aloe wood/agar wood or pieces of mixed fragrance. When it burns slowly it produces a more concentrated smell. These chips are burned in bakhūr burners (mibkharah) to perfume the surroundings and clothing. It is a tradition in the Arabian Peninsula to pass the mibkharah around to the guests. Evidence also suggests that bakhūr relaxes people, particularly after a meal.

Using Bukhur is a powerful science or art of cultivating positive states of mind. Bukhur is not just a way of masking unpleasant

96. The ‘ud or aloe wood is the aromatic wood of an East Indian tree, Aquilaria agallocha. Academic Press Dictionary of Science and Technology, 1992, s.v. “aloe wood”.
In Makkah, scents, spices and their aroma have held a strong place in society, even before the birth of Islam. The trade of scents and spices played a great role in the two main trade journeys monitored by Quraysh from Makkah\(^\text{99}\). The impact of these aromas did not just link society with its economic lifestyle; it also linked Makkah as a site for religious worship. Burckhardt described perfuming pans of musk and aloe wood placed below the threshold of the Kā ba door each night when he was there in 1814\(^\text{100}\). Scents, spices, aromatic herbs and oils are part of worship and temples in any religion, and their use is as old as ancient civilisations. Frankincense was burned in honour of the gods, at funerals and in private homes. It was also used as a medicine, a spice and as an ingredient in perfumes\(^\text{101}\). The use of fragrance to lift the spirits and transform the everyday, as a concept, was woven into the fabric of the building itself, to ensure an aromatic atmosphere. Early Indian temples were constructed entirely from sandalwood, whereas the Babylonians added perfume to the mortar of their temples\(^\text{102}\). As sanctity is associated with scents and aroma, it would not be surprising if indigenous builders of Makkah traditional houses applied a similar concept. Most importantly, it was the use of wood within the interiors in association with other materials and their natural aromas. The teakwood that was used in the roshān has its specific features and scent that aromatise interiors. Teak is also used in Makkah, it is dried in the sun before use for about three months to get rid of all moisture so that it would not swell or warp or split after being assembled\(^\text{103}\).

\(^{98}\) Borhany, "Medicinal & Environmental uses of Bukhur".

\(^{99}\) See the ilāf (Makkan trade’s journeys) in Sahab, 240—249.

\(^{100}\) Sim, 301—302.

\(^{101}\) Borhany, "Medicinal & Environmental uses of Bukhur".

\(^{102}\) McCarthy, V.

\(^{103}\) Hariri, "Al-roshān", 189.
In the Arabian Peninsula, scents are used for aromatic and curing purposes. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Treat with the Indian incense, for it has healing for seven diseases: it is to be sniffed by one having throat trouble, and to be put into one side of the mouth of one suffering from pleurisy ...”

He also stressed the role of incense as a part of hygiene and cleanliness in performing Islamic rituals in prayers, especially at the Friday prayer. Allah’s Messenger (ﷺ) said, “The taking of a bath on Friday is compulsory for every Muslim who has attained the age of puberty and (also) the cleaning of his teeth with siwāk, and the using of perfume, if available.”

The power and the link of scent and smell upon human behaviour and feeling is common sense in Islam. On the contrary, women are not allowed to wear perfume when they are outside as part of the ḫiḥāb. This condition of the ḫiḥāb is strongly stressed in Islam for the natural attitude of Arab women in using scent and perfume, as it is proven that smell can evoke strong emotional reactions. Perhaps women are the crucial factor in the use of scent. Cooper had experienced and observed a similar situation in Cairo in the 1910s: “The Eastern woman loves perfumes and prefers them much stronger than we of the Western world think agreeable ... Incense and sweet smelling woods are often burned in little braziers and add to the congeries of odours.”

In fact, Arab women get into the habit of wearing ῥūd, so they burn incense after taking a shower to perfume their hair and bodies. Such a habit is still observed as recorded by the Social Issues Research Centre:

The most complex aesthetics of scent are to be found in Arab countries, where women use a wide range of scents to perfume different parts of their bodies ... Perfumes are only used, however, in private situations, when a woman is in the company of other women, or of her husband and close family. To wear perfume in public or in the company of men is to be ‘like an adulteress’.

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104. Referring to the Indian Qust and sea Qust (kind of incense) the hadīth is narrated by Umm Qais bint Miḥsan (Raida Allahu’Anha). See Az-Zubadi, 939.

105. A piece of a root of a tree called Arāk, which is used as a toothbrush.

106. Az-Zubadi, 263.


108. Cooper, 48—49. A story of women visiting each other in Egypt.

Musk and ambergris are also used as perfumes; whereas the *lubān*\(^\text{110}\), with its different types, is burned on specific occasions. This tendency to perfume bodies and clothes extends to perfume spaces as well. The reason for this strict obligation in Islam is because of the chemistry of the scents upon feelings, especially among genders\(^\text{111}\). The correlation between smell and the brain is vital and scientific evidence supports this link. Upward shifts in brainwave activity have been measured after exposure to jasmine or peppermint oil, indicating a stimulating effect, while oils such as lavender or sandalwood produce a downward shift, indicating a sedative effect. Despite these general observations, individuals respond differently to the same odours, with sensitivity varying with time, age and mood\(^\text{112}\).

Smell can evoke complete memories: the setting, the people who were present, what they were doing, the conversations or other sounds and the emotional tone of the scene\(^\text{113}\). By impacting directly on the limbic system, smell makes permanent impressions on memory, especially under stressful conditions\(^\text{114}\). More importantly, smell is rooted in one’s memory, yet it identifies places and moments for a lifetime, including the smell of wood, dust, damp, incense and even cooking. Odours, and only odours, can be powerfully evocative due to the direct dialogue with the primitive and the ancient core inside memories. Pallasmaa claims that the most persistent memory of any space is often its smell. Every dwelling has its individual smell of home. The nose makes the eyes remember where a particular smell came from and makes us unwittingly re-enter the space of a completely forgotten image, and as the nostrils awaken a

\(^{110}\) *Lubān/Loban* is a gum resin from a tree, or more precisely an oleo-gum-resin, exuded by various species of the genus *Boswellia* Roxb. The genus is native to Arabia, Socotra, East Africa and India. It is an excellent repellent of insects and mosquitoes.

\(^{111}\) It is scientifically proven that “Women or men entering a waiting-room have been observed to repeatedly choose to sit in the chair that has been sprayed with the pheromone of the opposite sex, even when all others remain unoccupied”. See McCarthy, V.

\(^{112}\) McCarthy, III.


forgotten image we are enticed to enter a vivid dream\textsuperscript{115}.

Von Meiss claims that the smell of his grandmother’s house has been rooted in his memory and the simple fact of encountering it again in a completely different context twenty years later is sufficient to conjure up images of the old house with amazing perception\textsuperscript{116}. For instance, some Makkan houses, even the Hijāzi, are scented with the smell of shisha. This strong odour reminds one of neighbours or relatives who smoke shisha, if the person is not a smoker. Maq'ad and men’s majlis are more likely to stick with this strong smell. Facing similar situations may evoke the image of these houses and their inhabitants, where the smell remains in the seating of the roshan. It is the smell of dust and other odours, the wood and remaining perfume, a complex mixture to experience and describe. Rodaway states:

\begin{quote}
Habituation is classically illustrated when one visits another person’s home for the first time or in the visitor’s impressions of foreign land. The evocative smells which disturb or excite the visitor, may not be ordinarily noticed or valued by the resident or local. Only perhaps when travelling away from home or some years later when encountering once familiar smell again does the olfactory experience become again richly experienced.\textsuperscript{117}
\end{quote}

This is similar to the rich atmosphere of being in old districts, experiencing the scent of the old town, narrow alleys or streets, the smell of fresh fruits and vegetables, especially those who sell fresh mint on the earth in the lanes. The smell of bread, baked by the corner of the district, provides the strong odour of spices mixed with fabric. The smell of wet sand blended with all these odours, as salesmen sprinkle water to reduce the amount of sand getting into their goods, which were presented in these kinds of open markets. The working hours of the dakākin (shops) demonstrated a great sense of time and an olfactory experience. This aromatic sphere could also be inhaled by the inhabitants living above this arena, although it was mildly experienced while walking between these dakākin. However, the smell of the wood and the fabric of the roshan’s furniture are blended together to

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{115} Pallasmaa, The Eyes of the Skin, 54.
\textsuperscript{116} Von Meiss, 15.
\textsuperscript{117} Rodaway, 69—70.
\end{flushright}
provide a unique experience. The sun and the warmed wood of the body of the roshān intensify different aromas. Early morning scents are different from those experienced in the late afternoon or at dusk. Each smell has its sphere and its own story all of which impact differently on individuals.

Odor is capable of suggesting mass and volume. Some odors like musk or tuberosa, are “heavy,” whereas others are “delicate,” “thin,” or “light”... We depend on the eye to locate sources of danger and appeal, but with the support of a prior visual world the human nose too can discern direction and estimate relative distance through the strength of an odor.\textsuperscript{118}

The crowds, vendors and their goods, in old districts and markets, add to the dramatic atmosphere of smell and taste from ‘up there’ in the roshān. The crowd added another dimension to the scene. Dust plays a role not just in the smell of the sphere, but also in the taste as it scatters everywhere. Donkeys might also be present in the same arena to help to carry and to move goods. This is another factor that enriched this experience. The warm fragrance of the sun and moist sand with a summer breeze was an experience more likely to be experienced by those who occupied the roshān at these times when alleys were not paved. However, this experience would be deeply rooted within the inhabitants, from children to elderly people, as the sitting area blended with the senses to give a panoramic scene.

Smell in geographical experience is complex, including both immediate encounter with the environment and a kind of virtual encounter with places in the imagination when odour memories are excited by current place experience. Olfaction seems to offer a time-space geography, both at level of current durations of odours in space and in the lingering of odours in memories.\textsuperscript{119}

5. **The Roshān and the Caress:**

Language is steeped in the metaphors of touch. Emotions are called feelings, and people care most deeply when something ‘touches them’. Every other sense has an organ, but touch is everywhere as the skin is the key organ and it covers the whole body. The skin is a kind of spacesuit in which one manoeuvres

\textsuperscript{118} Tuan, 13.

\textsuperscript{119} Rodaway, 67.
through an atmosphere of harsh gases, cosmic rays, radiation from the sun and obstacles of all sorts. Michel Serres argues that: “The skin sees ... it shivers, speaks, breathes, listens, sees, loves and is loved, receives, refusess, retreats, bristles in horror, is covered in cracks, blotches, wounds of the soul ...” Touch is a sensory or haptic system; this system includes the entire body rather than merely the instruments of touch, such as the hands. To sense haptically is to experience objects in the environment by actually touching them. Von Meiss notes:

The movement of the body, if it is not itself one of our five senses, provides us, nevertheless, with a measure for things and space. Passing through, visiting, dancing, gesture all allow us to appreciate the splendour and exploration of that which is hidden: to move closer, move away, go round, go up, go down, go into, escape, are all actions which invite us to organize for ourselves what we want to see, hear, feel, smell and touch in a given environment.

Skin harbours the sense of touch; however, the feeling does not take place in the uppermost layer of the skin, but in the second layer. In some cultures the uppermost surface of the skin is a canvas to decorate with paint, tattoos and jewellery. As a way of expression, people tend to do the same to their houses when they clad the façades. The rawāshīn envelop the

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120. Ackerman, 70 and 67—77.
121. Von Meiss, 19.
122. Bloomer and Moore, 34.
123. Von Meiss, 15.
124. Tuan, 14.
125. Ackerman, 68.
body of the house as a massive wooden layer or skin, which is
decorated like a canvas. Ornamentation and craft skills of the
rawāshīn demonstrate the status of the inhabitants. This artistic
canvas reflects from inside, not just with its texture but also as a
transparent fabric that envelops interiors and touches occupants.

Within the roshān, one can touch coarse, fine, soft and even hard
textures, stretch the hand to explore the surface of the lace of
the masānid or rub the satin of the makhādat. Metaphorically,
tactile and oral invitations are everywhere within the roshān,
due to the richness of materials and their textures. This may
reflect Pallasmaa’s claim “[t]here is a hunger of the eyes, and
doubtless there has been some permeation of the visual sense,
as of touch, by the once all-embracing oral impulse”. There is a
subtle transference between tactile and taste experience. To
some extent every real place can be remembered, partly because
it is unique, but partly because it has affected our bodies and

generated enough associations to hold it in our own personal
world.

For children who used to play within the roshān and have
experienced living among these varieties of textures, it is hard
for them to forget this haptic experience. One could have hit or
kicked the roshān at places and touched a variety of surfaces
and textures. Perhaps the ultimate dream of the child, while
crawling on the floor, is to stand and touch the roshān, or to
step on the dakka and be close to the openings of the roshān.
Then in the first experience the child will start to grasp things
higher than him/her: things on the seating of the roshān. The
experience of this tactile sensation is registered and documented
through children’s skins, where marks, scars or bruises remain
in their memories. Touch is the sense of protection, intimacy
and affection. Perhaps it is similar to the first emotional comfort,
touching and being touched by the mother, and therefore

126. As Pallasma puts a strong link between the tactile and taste when he says “wood
surfaces also present themselves to the appreciation of the tongue”. Pallasma, The Eyes
of the Skin, 59.


128. See the CD-ROM: ‘From the Doorstep to the Roshān’ to imagine the child’s
experience.
remains the ultimate memory of selflessness which stays forever\textsuperscript{129}.

This navigation and exploration of the world of the roshān starts from an early stage, and continues as the child is ready and able to enter the real life of experiencing the roshān. Haptic experience is not limited to the experience of childhood; however, children are more sensitive and precise in this sense than adults, and they can absorb their surroundings more easily and naturally\textsuperscript{130}. The awareness of space complements the sense of touch, as Hegel\textsuperscript{131} claims that touch can give the sensation of spatial depth. Because touch senses weight, resistance and the three-dimensional shape of material bodies, it makes people aware that things extend away from them in all directions\textsuperscript{132}.

Senses of time affect senses of place. To the extent that a small child’s time is not that of an older person, neither is his experience of place. An adult cannot know a place as a child knows it, and this is not only because their respective sensory and mental capacities differ but also because their feelings for time have little in common.\textsuperscript{133}

Children are in a position to feel this sense of place within the roshān the most; the experience grows with them and remains in their memories waiting for a trigger to recall nostalgia and to step into the past. Pallasmaa also argues that the details of the roofs or hearths of the familiar buildings of childhood have escaped from memory, but the recognition of the pleasure of the skin when hearing the beating of rain under a sheltering roof or arriving at the warmth of the hearth with limbs stiffened by cold continue to exist\textsuperscript{134}. Although this was an experience in catching the moment of seeking warmth, the situation with the roshān is in seeking coolness rather than warmth; simply looking for a cool place in which to take refuge from the heat.

\textsuperscript{129} Ackerman, 79.
\textsuperscript{130} Bloomer and Moore, 44.
\textsuperscript{131} See Pallasmaa, The Eyes of the Skin, 47.
\textsuperscript{133} Tuan, 186.
\textsuperscript{134} Pallasmaa, Encounters, 92.
In *Doha ya Doha* by Dia Aziz Dia, the artist tries to capture a scene from his memory as a child being within a window alcove in an intimate moment (Figure 32). The painting illustrates moments of sheer joy between the father and his children; one is being played with where the others are waiting for their turn. The things in the room: the humble bag and the discarded *ghutra* (the traditional head cover for men) suggest that it is the afternoon, when the father comes from work. The touch as a sense can be felt everywhere: in the furniture, the sun touches surfaces and bodies, the touch of holding hands or the touch of cloth and fabric on the floor, more importantly the touch of the body on the floor covered with a layer of filtered light. This scene also reflects memory and what is left from the intimate moments can be expressed as a poetic vision. The narrative of the innocent picture of playfulness dominates the scene with the *roshan* as the focal point. The movement of the body within the *roshan* is a significant factor in documenting memories and mapping nostalgic scenes in the inhabitants' minds. This intimate contact with the *roshan* may shape the rest of the children's lives.

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135. *Doha ya Doha* is a traditional game to entertain children by lifting them up as shown in Figure 32. Children wait for their turn to play with the father, mother or the eldest in the house.
6. **The Roshān and Memory:**

The old lady in the house next door, instead of being modestly enclosed in lattice work sat at her open window. So did I for that matter. As we both projected half-way across the alley we could watch each other at our embroidery, exchange smiles and a few remarks and feel quite intimate, though we never crossed each other’s doorstep.136

This was Freya Stark’s description from her experience living in the old quarter of Baghdad in 1929. She described living among the rawāshīn of the old houses and the enveloping of these wooden cladding: “I was indeed surrounded by great kindness”. She indicates not just the link of such an experience and the memory of this architectural element, but also touches on nostalgia and intimacy in relation to the scene. This triangle of memory, nostalgia and intimacy has already been highlighted previously in observing the senses. However, in this epilogue these three issues conclude the experiences of the mind and the soul of the inhabitant, as in Stark’s experience. Emotions and sentiments are parallel to memory, nostalgia and intimacy as a whole. The complexity of this mysterious interwoven net is hard to separate. The nostalgia of the primitive gesture of inhabitation is nostalgia for the womb or the nest. This is not a merely spatial sentiment; it is also — and above all — a warm sentiment137.

As history has depth, and time bestows value, these layers of time and history are documented in the roshān and experienced tangibly in its interiors. Then, what could best reflect this warmth and womb feeling but the roshān? These interwoven sentiments are perhaps more likely to develop in people who have lived surrounded by artefacts that they know to have taken a long time to make138. This could reflect the feeling of being within the roshān, where inhabitants are aware of the complexity of producing this architectural element. The feeling of buildings and the sense of dwelling within them are as fundamental to the

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136. See Warren and Fethi, 170.


138. Tuan, 191.
architectural experience as the information they give. In fact, many years in one place may leave few traces that one can or that one would wish to recall; an intense experience of short duration can alter our lives. This is a fact to consider in relation to the life cycle of a human, which accumulates layers of experience. In addition, natural materials, in this case the wood of the roshān, express age and history as well as a story of its origins and the account of human use. All matter exists in the continuum of time; the patina of wear adds the enriching experience of time to the materials of construction. This can be observed from both the inside and outside of the roshān, where the skin of the roshān expresses durability and defends against natural corrosion.

Time and the consumption of space within the roshān create another layer of the roshān history and documentation. This picture may cumulate in a memorial scene within the inhabitants’ minds, especially those of children. Perhaps, in the case of Dia’s depiction of the roshān, one can experience the nostalgia coming from the memory of the painter’s intimate scenes as an indigenous inhabitant of the roshān. The grey colour symbolises the past and the old days, whereas the vacuum of the painting reflects neglect of such scenes. Bright, strong colours reveal the innocence and joy of childhood. In most of the scenes the sunshine indicates time by which to record activities. There is always a message to deliver and a story to tell in relation to the roshān. In some scenes the roshān stands alone to express the experience of one of the senses, such as sound or sight, in others it documents an inner habitation or an outside activity in the arena beneath it. Overall, an abstract theme and the use of the empty space of the canvas dominate most of his depictions. This may also be a sign of escaping memories, where details of familiar buildings of childhood escape from memory, but the recognition of the pleasure of the skin and the senses are alive. Pallasmaa says: “I cannot recall the shape of the front door of my grandfather’s house, but I can still sense the warmth and the odor of the air flowing against my face as I open the door in my

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139. Bloomer and Moore, 36.
140. See Tuan, 185.
dreams. The body remembers even when other sensory imprints cannot be retrieved”\textsuperscript{142}.

This may be a distinct quality of human beings, the sense of recalling past images, made up of layers of lived experiences and historical events. Examples and case studies of real stories of the roshan habitation throughout this thesis reflect the same phenomenon. Understanding the sensuous powers of recall could explain the potent memories, nostalgia and intimacy of the Orientalists’ depictions of the East and the compulsive acquisition of memorable artefacts. What made some Orientalists wear Arabic costume even when they got back home? In particular, in the case studies, what made Lane live in an Arabic and Islamic way until he died? What made Lewis repeatedly recall the same scene of the roshan and its milieu? Finally, what compelled Lord Leighton to live within a roshan and recreate his earlier experiences when at home?

\textsuperscript{142} Pallasmaa, Encounters, 117.

To some extent, living sensuous experiences may feed this triangle, where memories are accumulated unconsciously. That is, in one-way or another, one cannot neglect the fact that as a human being experiences are absorbed, triggered and recorded sentimentally. In each of the cases, there is an element of self-consciousness which appears, occasionally, to mirror one’s soul and mind. Poised below the surface of consciousness lies ready to reawaken wealth of memories and associations waiting for the sensual trigger to bring them to life.
Section 6

Synthesis and Conclusion
Synthesis:

Le Corbusier argues that the purpose of a window is to give light, not to ventilate. To ventilate, he says, we use machines; it is mechanics, it is physics. On the other hand, Loos claims that a window is for light and not to gaze through\(^1\). The first argument declares that the window should not serve for ventilation, excludes the function of breathing; the second excludes the functions of sight and the gaze. These can be read as modernist polemics on the concept of the window, as an opening to serve interiors. By contrast, the *roshān* in the traditional house, as a type of opening treatment, reflects a domestic stage where daily life takes place. This inner stage projects from the wall to give benefits that cannot be achieved by an ordinary flat window. Rudofsky has claimed that in the Near, Middle and Far-East, window treatments spawned a variety of solutions that lift wall openings out of the commonplace. Openings are restored to a kind of light filter where screens are made out of many materials, and are perfectly adequate in keeping the inhabitant in touch with the outer world. He then praises the invention of projecting windows in saying:

> A special claim to architectural distinction can be made for the window that steps out of the wall, so to speak, into the third dimension. It ranges in extent from the size of a soap box to an alcove and is a boon to people with a penchant for neatly circumscribed cubical spaces, besides availing them an ample field of vision.\(^2\)

Although Rudofsky emphasises that windows are indispensable for admitting light and air, he raises the dilemma of the concept of windows in architecture. He argues that windows have been a difficulty for architects since very early times. He also stresses Frank Lloyd Wright’s interpretation as Wright states that “Often I used to gloat over the beautiful buildings I could build ... if only it were unnecessary to cut windows into them”\(^3\). Such a concept would have an impact on anyone who shares Wright’s view and

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\(^1\) Colomina, 326.


philosophy in modern architecture, which could be reflected in building design. What appears in modern architecture as a window wall or a glass façade covering the building is one facet of such a treatment for windows. In fact, even this solution of a window wall has its inability to fulfil the function of the window in its general sense. In this respect, Pallasmaa claims:

The development of the window from a metaphysical device of focusing and mediating our perception into an entire wall of glass, a wall which evokes the total absence of the wall — as well as the disappearance of the window altogether — certainly also raises critical concerns. The entire house has now often turned into a window; we are invited to live in a window.⁴

If it is to be the case that inhabitants may live in a window, then privacy and the interaction between indoor and outdoor spheres may be compromised. In the case of the roshān's concept and construction, the sense of transparency is already achieved through its lattice mechanism. This invitation to live within a window has been experienced for many years in the Islamic world, namely in the screen of these projected windows that clad the entire façade. Such transparent treatment can be seen in modern architecture in the glass wall, but may not fulfil other functions beyond being a mere window, as the roshān fits a culture and its values. This could be the case of the current Makkan architectural fabric, where buildings with glass façades replace traditional houses and their rawāshīn. That is, the transparency exists, but the fulfilment of cultural values is impaired. Viewing the glass architecture in the surrounding Al-Ḥaram area provokes strange feelings. The glass treatment reflects Pallasmaa’s description as ghostlike⁵.

Von Meiss, previously, claimed that the window is the point of departure of the gaze from interior to exterior, contrasting with Le Corbusier and Loos’s concepts. Von Meiss also adds that the window is not merely a lighting device, but it may become a precious place between the inside and the outside⁶. From the same standpoint, the roshān is more like a tool of communication

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⁴ Pallasmaa, Encounters, 206.
⁵ See Pallasmaa, The Eyes of the Skin, 31.
⁶ Von Meiss, 152.
between two spheres: the interior and the exterior. It is not just a window overlooking the inner or the outer sphere; it combines them and brings them onto one platform. On this platform, the occupier could be an actor and a spectator at the same time.

As an actor on the stage of the roshan, the occupier may sit to socialise or to contemplate. This staging can be observed by the others in the room, or partially interacted with by those who are beneath the roshan. One may be in control of the surrounding sphere within the room as a spectator on the stage from within the roshan. Because of the location of the roshan in the room, the inhabitant can be in a position to observe the entire room. The roshan enclosure and its furniture work as a focal point in the interior, in which it helps to give the impression of being in a control room. The ability to communicate and interact with the people within the room and in alleys or streets creates an arena from which one can watch and observe. This dual function that reflects communication is wholly fulfilled by the roshan.

It seems that traditional architecture has provided successful solutions for the treatment of openings according to the inhabitants' environmental and cultural requirements in the case of the rawāshīn. This is because the notion of the roshan, as a projected window, serves purposes beyond view and lighting.

Within the roshan, in this dark womb, light and shadow play games and stage scenes before the inhabitants. The roshan is more than a window: it is the eye, the nose, the ear and the skin of the house. The five senses are exchanged metaphorically between the roshan as an organ of the house and the occupier as a user with alert senses. The roshan interacts with its inhabitants, it protects the house and the inhabitants alike; the roshan can see, breathe, hear, touch and be touched. The roshan obscures the gaze from without and controls it from within, the roshan breathes as a wooden material and as an olfactory filter that prevents or allows air to get through. It also controls sounds through the opening and closing of the louvres and shish filters. Touch is the most important factor in the concept of the roshan. The roshan as an organ touches the wall of the house and wraps
it to protect it. It also touches the interior and envelops its layout from the outside, but it still merges harmoniously with the rest of the interior.

The disappearance of such an element with all these benefits, which serves social, cultural and familial needs, will be a great loss to local heritage. Replacing the rawāshīn with modern architectural façades will diminish the sense of communication between interior and exterior. The notion of looking at and into the surrounding arena from the roshan, and interacting tangibly, will also decline. There will be no actual communication; inhabitants behind ordinary windows are connected with the interior more than the exterior. Pallasmaa suggests: “[t]he window has lost its significance as a mediator between two worlds, between enclosed and open, interiority and exteriority, private and public, shadow and light. Having lost its ontological meaning, the window has turned into a mere absence of the wall”.

Senses are impaired and the importance of interacting with the outer sphere is reduced with the introduction of glass windows. Consequently, neighbours are distant and feelings become cold, enclosed and almost totally centred on the interior. The sense of exploration and expression tends to be virtual; there is no real connection within the city, and therefore no real stories to be observed through the roshān. The touch, the most tangible sense, is the first sense at risk in the decline in the habitation of such a traditional architectural fabric.

The loss of the roshān and its communication function encapsulates the rapid changes occurring in the entire community, which is also losing the ability to experience such traditional heritage. The abandoning of the roshān, as a theatrical stage, means that the heart of house and its focal point is vulnerable. Accordingly, functions within the house are replaced; the pattern of living within this stage is redrawn. Inhabitants are now actors in a different theatre and no longer the sensual spectators of their surroundings. Families struggle to cope with the rapid pace of change, and this can include daily

activities performed within the *roshan* in the modern era. This kind of window treatment as a liminal space between interior and exterior is not just a tradition, it is rather a solution for domestic inhabitation. Sadly, such a scene may not be seen so often or experienced any more in the majority of Islamic cities.

It seems that, in the case of Makkah, it is not just the need to enlarge Al-Haram area that is propelling the demolition of much of this heritage. The changing patterns of daily life and the lack of value attributed to cultural heritage may also be contributory factors. Since encroaching modernity and shifts in global communication technology enter the domestic sphere, the traditional role of the *roshan* could become obsolete and therefore at risk. Sidney Perkowitz argues that modern architecture tends to enter the virtual world, and deals with digital people. If this is the case, then the preservation of the *rawāshīn* and its cultural context seems vital.

Von Meiss complains about the ignorance of the role of the inhabitants' senses within the twentieth-century house, saying that the smells, noises and tunes of the nineteenth century are not experienced in the same way in the twentieth. However, one cannot deny that these traditional cultures can still produce architecture that may, to some extent, affect the body and the senses. The flatness of new technology may push this notion of architecture and the senses to the margins. In the Islamic world, the immigration of modern concepts may diminish the care of haptic sensuous experiences in architecture, as in traditional architecture. Inhabitants and their comforts and convenience come first, an issue which has already been acknowledged by architectural scholars. For instance, von Meiss examines the *rawāshīn* of Jeddah in relation to the protective role of the traditional place within its cultural context; and he notes:

Social practises ... govern the extent of protection according to the cultural characteristics of the inhabitants and the purpose of the buildings. Windows, doors and entry devices are not the same in Islamic countries as in the West. Sometimes these

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devices change by the importation of images from elsewhere or by building practices which have their own justifications. The ‘international window’, which is replacing the lattice-work screens characteristic of Jeddah before customs changed, is an uncomfortable example of this.\textsuperscript{10}

It is evident that even von Meiss, as a ‘non-native’ architect, regrets the loss of architectural heritage under the pressure of modernisation and globalisation. This regret, however, is not a conservative call to copy the past without acknowledging the changes in time, comfort and even notions of domesticity. The main concern is to consider the local heritage and the context of tradition before completely discarding the past. Culture values remain the main factors behind the concept of the architecture: Islamic architecture cannot be understood without the frame of Islamic doctrine. In fact, this is where the identity of Islamic architecture lies.

One cannot recapture the comfort of the past by copying its décor. The way that rooms looked made sense because they were a setting for a particular type of behavior, which in turn was conditioned by the way that people thought about comfort. Reproducing the former without the latter would be like putting on a play and only building the stage set, but by forgetting the actors and the script it would be a hollow and unsatisfying experience we can appreciate the interiors of the past, but if we try to copy them we will find that too much has changed.\textsuperscript{11}

Rybczynski claims that social behaviour, which is a function of habits and customs, is more durable than fashion in decoration. Changes in behaviour and cultural patterns occur at a slower pace than changes of fashionable decor. Because cultural ideas last so long, they are more resistant to change, and consequently tend to constrain both behaviour and décor. Rybczynski also asserts that the power of culture to constrain behavior is evident when foreign customs are borrowed from abroad, although the rituals and the usage may vary.\textsuperscript{12}

On one hand, this may reflect inhabitants’ attitudes in some parts of the Islamic world, where they encounter complete

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\textsuperscript{10} Von Meiss, 149.
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\textsuperscript{11} Rybczynski, Home: A Short History, 219.
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\textsuperscript{12} Rybczynski, Home: A Short History, 217—218.
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modern designs in their homes and struggle to meet cultural requirements. For instance, in Cairo, a study of housing and women’s needs in the Middle East researched women’s experiences toward their dwelling\textsuperscript{13}. The aim of the study was to compare housing satisfaction of living in ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ apartments with respect to their value orientation. The research found that the need for privacy, which is primarily affected by religious beliefs and inherited cultural norms, was the main concern of the Middle Eastern women. The inhabitants — women — indicated that visual privacy is critical within the context of their cultural value system. They tended to make physical changes in the dwellings, in both the traditional and the modern, to increase privacy. However, in modern dwellings, the women complained that they kept their windows shut, added layers of curtains or they changed places to avoid being observed by the neighbours. The main finding of this survey concerned the necessity for privacy when designing dwellings for Muslim cultures. The study also suggested that in the Middle East, rapid cultural changes have created a confusing environment, where modern design has not met social norms\textsuperscript{14}. Accordingly, the replacement of the roshān, and other similar Islamic architectural forms, may not fulfil the inhabitants’ needs. Therefore, awareness of global changes needs to be acknowledged and considered, because culture is more than just a geographical context.

The roshān, as a facet of traditional houses, provides a world full of experience and history. Lessons ought to be learned before the historical form is neglected in favour of modern architecture\textsuperscript{15}. This also includes valuing indigenous people’s proficiency that produced this architectural fabric, and acknowledging the legacy of the last generation of master builders. Traditional architecture, in general, is generated by the builder and the craftsmen together in a harmonious process where skills unite. This

\textsuperscript{13} The study was published in \textit{Architecture and Behaviour} in 1992. See El-Rafey, 181–196.

\textsuperscript{14} See the survey of the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia in 1989 in Earls, 387, and El-Rafey, 184.

\textsuperscript{15} See more on this issue regarding traditional architecture and Amos Rappost’s view in, Asquith and Vellinga, 181–184.
cooperative effort by the local builders’ team successfully meets the family’s needs inside the house. Pallasmaa has claimed that the architecture of traditional cultures is essentially connected with the tacit wisdom of the body, instead of being visually and conceptually dominated. The construction of this architecture is guided by the body, and born of the muscular and haptic senses more than of the eye; as he puts it, “[we] can even identify the transition of indigenous construction from the haptic realm into the control of vision as a loss of plasticity and intimacy, and of the sense of total fusion characteristic in the setting of indigenous cultures”¹⁶. The roshān as an architectural form has grown organically from the cultural requirements of the Islamic inhabitants it serves.

Comparing the architectural concept of the roshān and the debate of the benefits of the window in modern architecture can reveal that the family’s requirements for privacy and sense of home is fulfilled by the roshān in Islamic architecture. The heritage of the past consists of layers of history and civilisation interwoven within the cultural context; put simply, one cannot just look at one layer without acknowledging the others. For the same reason, the roshān cannot be understood, nor articulated fully, away from its cultural context. The roshān within its Islamic frame of values and rules cannot be separated. This is essentially the story behind the roshān, where Islamic values lie behind its concept.

The architect Jean Nouvel noted this issue when designing the façade of the Arab World Institute in Paris; he said: “The Arab project gave us a chance to work with the values of Islamic architecture, which proved to fit strongly with my idea of trying to build with cultural materials instead of simply with bricks and mortar or steel and rectangular perspectives”¹⁷. The project was not to mimic the Islamic lattice screens without an understanding of the Islamic principle behind them, where a full knowledge of


the concept is crucial in understanding the mechanism of such screens. Nouvel claims: “I use technology for aesthetic ends”, and he sees the completed façade as a western reflection on the intricate wooden screens of [mashrabiya] windows to represent precision. Accordingly, modern technology and traditional architecture can collaborate for the benefit of the inhabitants, and not with a complete disregard for cultural heritage.

Conclusion:

The endeavour of this thesis is not a call to return to the past; it is rather an open door to learn from the past and apply what is suitable, or what could be adopted, according to the new pace of life. The need now is to comprehend the concept of the roshān in order to apply it or adapt it to a modern version. This is an attempt to rescue the notion of the roshān, if not the roshān itself. From an architectural point of view, the roshān proves its quality and could be applied in modern architecture. Besides, it has been shown that an absolute application of modern architecture, which contradicts Islamic values, may not fulfil Muslims’ inhabitation requirements. Islamic rules dominate the essence of Islamic architecture and also give it a clear identity as a common factor to unite Muslims across the globe.

‘Behind the Roshān’ does not just establish a clear understanding of the roshān in Islamic architecture; it is a heritage
documentation of the roshān as a reference for the future. This study is also a narrative experience, to be read in words and images as a new way of documenting history. It is a story of layers of experiences through culture, heritage and domestic habitation. Experience precipitates in-depth analysis and visualisation provides the means of articulating the subject. The core of experience was informed by my own background and understanding of the aspects of the study as a woman from the same culture. Such a position is key that provides a clear understanding of domestic habitation from within.

Gender experience brings an additional dimension to this study and contributes to knowledge and architectural theory. This narrative of space interacts with the experience of different genders through architecture and investigates its social and cultural aspects. The study highlights a native woman’s perspective on the Orientalist stereotypical image of the women in the East (Middle East). Specifically, it is concerned with the understanding of spatial relations and women’s experience. This attempt reflects women’s orientations and commitment to the field of research in general, and Islamic idiosyncratic architectural in particular. On the whole, this study forms a repository of architectural knowledge in the professional and academic fields. The outcome of both the research and the CD-ROM provides a rich source of education on various levels.

The final format of this thesis promotes a collaborative working between text and images, using an interactive CD-ROM as the focus for visual debate. It is interdisciplinary and uses the role of technology in creative practice-based research. The collaboration between multimedia and documentation, in its various disciplines, invoke the strategies of this study as a foundation for developing methods of enquiry in any field. However, the use of a visual method is still pertinent to many studies related to art, design and architecture. This project presents the most relevant aspects related to the roshān in a multiple cross-disciplinary debate, in the form of a written component where images tell the story and in the accompanying CD-ROM, which reveals their
dynamic aspects. This composite provides more than the mere digital format. Both elements, the bound written component and the CD-ROM, are used to take the reader beyond the notion of still images and classical documentation.

The interactive CD-ROM is a tool used to show another interpretation of the visualisation of being 'Behind the Roshān'. On every level the blend of text and image unveils the quality of the rawāshīn with their historical layers. This interactivity of images blurs the boundary between academic research and digital multimedia. It also develops alternative navigational systems and interface. The variety in the final layout format allows a different way of reading about the heritage and cultural information: surfing on a visual level, reading the image stories with the help of the captions, diving into the deeper textual explanations and experiencing the constructed three-dimensional model. 'Behind the Roshān' provides a new scope, and a unique method in merging technology and historical documentation to attract the interest of coming generations.

At the end of this journey, let treasures of each șandūq (wooden chest) emerge to divulge the findings of each section. Each segment of this dissertation proposes that there is a valuable concept behind the roshān, a story of heritage and identity. The rapid disappearance of this element of a cultural heritage is in need of action in restoration and retrieval. Therefore, this research shapes the documentation and re-evaluation of the roshān’s threatened heritage. More importantly, it gives an inhabitation picture with a deeper understanding of Islamic culture through a critical reflection of how the roshān is visualised and experienced from various perspectives.

The roshān is a Persian term used to describe a wooden projected window with its characteristic features in Makkah and other major Islamic cities. It is not an exclusive feature of the architecture of the Red Sea region. The roshān is distributed across a bigger area which can be seen from the East to the West of the Islamic world, particularly along the route of the Ḥajj, as this spiritual journey influences Muslims across the globe. It was a significant
feature in most of the major cities when Islam stretched from India to Andalusia. The roshān flourished during the Mamlūk Era and then became well known during the Ottoman period. Although the roshān is referred to by different local terms today, the term roshān is proven to be the oldest description. The study explores and recovers the old term ‘roshān’ and locates its historical setting among the other terms that have replaced it. It also clarifies the misconception behind this projected window especially with mashrabiyya, and identifies the circumstances of this replacement.

The roshān has fulfilled various desirable aims and purposes from ancient times. The construction components of the roshān, regardless of its current names, show that there are slight differences due to the appropriate adaptation to the environment and climate of each region. Each part of the roshān’s construction has a function and a purpose to achieve, including the trimmings and additions that enrich its beauty. The roshān is a window that looks out on the outside world and is a screen veiling the light of the strongly blazing sun. It is a basic part of the building’s air conditioning and part of the furnishing of the home. In some cases it is even an extension to some of the rooms above the street.

The impact of Islamic civilisation on Andalusia and other regions where Islam has taken place has an influential role on their architecture in particular, and plays a role in cultural transformation. Evidences indicate that oriel windows in Western architecture could be another development of the rawāšīn, where Islamic architecture of Al-Andalus plays a part in introducing these architectural elements to neighbouring countries and to Spanish colonies as far as South America. Whereas, the time of the Mughals in India coincides with the existence of the Mamlūk era in Cairo, around the thirteenth century, where and when the roshān was flourishing in Islamic architecture. The trade route dominates these two civilisations, Egypt and the Indian subcontinent exchange experiences, skills and cultures that help to develop each region’s identity. However, jharokha, as an architectural element that is a screened, projected balcony started to be used by
the emperor of the Mughals, who introduced this element to the Indian subcontinent.

The roshān was a subject of cultural misrepresentation and misunderstanding in Orientalists' images. The Orientalists disseminated this misinformation by circulating their misrepresentation on their return home. Accordingly, the roshān in Orientalist eyes became an artefact or nostalgic memorabilia rather than a functional element in architecture, when transferred from its original milieu. The key feature that emerges from the analysis of these different mediums is that the mystery that lies behind the roshān is due to its image being separated from its authentic ritual and cultural patterns. The case studies present the experience of the roshān and its inhabitation through the variety of media used to depict them, and provide an understanding of the way of the roshān has been distributed and absorbed away from its original home. The Lanes, for instance, understood that veiled windows are necessary requirements in Islamic architecture, and not solely for environmental or climatic effect. The description of the function of the roshān concludes with an acknowledgment of its veiling function as its main purpose. The explanation proves that the hijāb is the principle that lies behind the roshān, and the term roshān is ancient.

The Orientalists' depictions brought images of a different culture and cartloads of Eastern crafts home with them, as well as an obsession with Islamic architecture that provided Western inspiration. They also give the view and the impression that they — the Orientalists — ‘discovered’ the ‘Others’ cultures that had, in fact, pre-existed for many hundreds of years. The roshān as well as the harīm remain the most fascinating and depicted elements from the Islamic world, images that always blended with fantasy. In short, the image of the ‘East’ remains as a scene from Arabian Nights to be viewed and enjoyed, but never a reality scene for existing culture. Islamic culture has been transferred and snatched from its frame with no understanding of its culture values.
The roshān is an absolute product of the hijāb application in Islamic architecture: a feature that exists for the sake of the privacy of the family. The roshān achieves the Islamic rule of the hijāb and other social norms in the Muslim communities. The concept of the hurma and the presence of harīm (women) play a crucial part in the hijāb and the roshān as a screening device. Therefore, the concealment of the architectural fabric of buildings, including screening, is more than a necessity in the Islamic house. The study also unveils the misconception among the Orientalists, between the hijāb as a garment and the roshān as a form that shares the same principle. The notion of protection and privacy can be achieved by applying both the roshān and the hijāb outer garment. Both of these elements have been subjects of misunderstanding and misuse, due in part to the Orientalists’ images that were being brought back to their home towns. The analogy between the garment as a form of textile and the roshān as a cladding fabric draws attention to skills and techniques in Islamic architecture as a common feature. The middle part of the face garment corresponds to the middle part of the roshān, where the mechanism of seeing is identical. Both parts are heavily screened and protected for the sake of the hijāb principle.

These forms of outer garment veiling are in parallel with the screening facades in traditional houses across the Islamic world. However, the face cover burqū that is being compared to the roshān, and its counterpart across the major Islamic cities, is not just an Afghani garment. The application of such a cover is in wider use throughout the Islamic world, despite its continuous usage in this region. Hijāb as a concept is practiced across the Islamic world both physically and metaphorically. Hijāb is not just an outer garment for concealment and privacy; it governs behaviour, manners, speech and appearance in public. The veiled woman captivates both the sight and the imagination, as does the roshān, as a veiling device concealing the house.

Insight into the psychology of the space reveals the neglected application of the senses in architecture and their significant role in traditional architecture in particular. Poetic and sensual
explorations also highlight the spatial and social relations within the *roshān*’s cultural context. Although Makkah is explored as a case study, most of the scenes mirror the pattern of similar interiors in the Hijaz and the Red Sea, to some extent. The study examines various dimensions of the *roshān*, including an original exploration of its sensory meaning. The *roshān* is used as a metaphor for the nature of the Islamic culture and architecture alike. The *roshān* is pictured as the spirit and the focal point of the house. Behind the *roshān* is not just a spot where narrative stories of the inhabitants are contained, it is a place where memories are trapped and nostalgia evoked. The evocative power of the *roshān* is connected to its ritual functions and everyday life patterns. What makes this place in the room unique is its sensuous status as a stage, where the occupants of the house are both, actors or spectators.

The *roshān* is the heart of the house where most domestic activities take place from inside, and where people gather beneath it from outside. The *rawāshīn*, with their alcoves, lattice grids and openings, act as a means of interaction between the inner and the outer sphere; for it is possible for the residents of the house to make contact with the outside world without there being the least invasion of their domestic privacy. The *rawāshīn* also maintain a desirable temperature inside through the flexibility in the flow of air, both outward and inward.

The study reveals that the *roshān* is the warm place in the room where one can tell stories; it is in itself a womb with its own stories. The *roshān* occupies the minds and souls of its real inhabitants as well as those who dreamed of inhabiting it — the Orientalists. The *roshān* is a potent symbol in poetry and in painted images alike. The *roshān* is a world full of sound, warmth and aroma for each person in the house. For a child, it is the first experience with this niche in the wall as a playground and a wooden box–like tiny home. For the woman of the house, it is a stage for home activities and a reception area for morning visitors and neighbours. For the elderly man of the house, it offers a communication with the outside world where he can
socialise and feel active. It is a gathering place for the family when the man of the house comes home seeking refuge from a tiring day outside the house. The roshān is not just a recess in the wall; it is the heart of the house which is full of senses and experiences. It provides privacy, solace, protection and acts as a liminal space between within and without.

Overall, ‘Behind the Roshān’ emphasises the significance of the roshān to architecture, linguistics, psychology, theology, art and history. The study puts together a variety of information from different disciplines and a wide range of sources that touch all of these dimensions in relation to the roshān as an architectural element. It also confirms that the roshān fulfils cultural norms and meets family needs within the Islamic house. The architectural adaptation of the roshān emerges in its various manifestations according to the needs of the region and its environment. However, the roshān is not merely an environmental feature; it is an absolute Islamic requirement for the sake of the household’s privacy.
Glossary

Subḥānahu wa Tā āla — ‘Allah the Glory and the Exalted’.

Ṣall-Allahu ‘Alayhi wa Sallam — ‘May peace and blessing of Allah be upon him’.

Rada‘ Allahu ‘Anhu — ‘May Allah be pleased with him’.

‘alīhī ʿalālām — ‘Peace be upon him’.

‘Abbasids
A dynasty in 750 to 1258, which had Baghdad as a capital and stretched to Syria and Egypt.

Adhān
The announcement stating that a particular Ṣalāt has begun, which is repeated five times a day.

Al-Shām
Geographically Syria, however, in Arabic it means the northern part of Arabia between the Mediterranean and the Euphrates River. This includes Lebanon, Palestine and Jordan as well as the modern state of Syria.

Āyā/Āya
pl. Āyāt. The Arabic meaning of āyāh is a miracle and a sign. Each verse or sentence in the Qur’ān is called an āyāh or a miracle.

b.
An abbreviation for ‘Bin’, which means ‘the son of’.

Bakhūr
The act of burning incense, and the smoke of fragrance created by the burning chips of aloe wood/agra wood or pieces of mixed fragrance.

Bayt
A house in Arabic.

Bey
A title for various Turkish and Egyptian dignitaries.

Burqu‘
The upper piece of the outer garment ḥijāb (veil). It is a face cover which drapes on the face, touching the forehead and the entire face for concealment.

Chadari/Chador
The ḥijāb outer garment, which means head-to-toe veil.

Corbel
A projection or one of a series of projections, each stepped
progressively further forward for height, anchored in a wall to support an overhanging member above.

Dahabiya
A large Nile sailing boat, usually with two or more internal cabins.
They can be rowed or pulled up river if there is no wind.

Dakka/Dak’kah
A built-in seating area, usually made of cement or stone. A low wall used for seating. The mastabah is a similar element in the Arab world, as a raised seat or platform of stone or brick built against the front of the dokan or the main door of the house.

Damask/Dumusk
Fabric to upholster seats, its local name (in the Hijaz) suggests that it may come from Damascus and is pronounced ‘dumusk’.

Darb
An alleyway.

Deewân/Diwân
Settee against the wall that is placed in the most ornate reception room in a house. Mostly written in a Turkish accent divan. In fact, it is a space and not a piece of furniture.

Dhirâ
An old measurement unit that is equivalent to the arm’s length.

Duk’ân/Dokan
pl. dakâkîn. A small shop.

Durqâ‘a
Central space of the qâ‘a.

Eid
An Arabic term to mean a festivity, a celebration, a recurring happiness and a feast. In Islam, there are two major ‘Eids, namely the feast of Ramadhan (‘Eid Al-Fitr) and the Feast of Sacrifice (‘Eid Al-Adhha). The first ‘Eid is celebrated by Muslims after fasting the month of Ramadhan. The second ‘Eid is the Feast of Sacrifice and is celebrated in memory of the prophet Ibrahim for trying to sacrifice his son Ismâ‘il (Ishmael).

Fatimid
The Fatimid Era, where Cairo was the capital, was first established in Al-Maghrib in 909 to 969. The era in Egypt and Syria was from 969 to 1171.

Fustât
Old Cairo.

Hadith
pl. Ahâdîth. The Prophet’s sayings and the traditions, these are the real explanations, interpretations and the living examples of the Prophet for teachings of the Qur’an. The sunnah and the hadith are usually referred to in a combined way in the Qur’an literature using the word hadith only.

Hajj/Hajj
The pilgrimage to Makkah which takes place during the last month of the lunar calendar of Zul-Hijjah. It is one of the five pillars of Islam. A Muslim is to perform Hajj at least once in his/her life, if means and
health allow. There are rules and regulations and specific dress codes to be followed.

Haram
The Ká ba enclosure; a term for a sacred place. Generally, a Haram is a sanctuary, a sacred territory where all things within the limit of the Haram are protected and considered inviolable. Makkah has been considered a Haram since the time of Abraham.

Haremlik
Women’s and family’s quarter (an Ottoman term) used in Cairo and Turkey.

Haramdân
pl. haramdânâat. An ornamented stone corbel.

Harîm/Harem/Hareem
Women’s and family’s quarters, also a general term for the female members of the household.

Hawsh/Hosh/Hosh
Exterior open court, but not in the centre of the house, usually at the back.

Hijâb
A screen or a veil as a general term. Mainly refers to women’s head cover or a scarf.

Hijra
Literally, ‘migration’. It is also used for the prophet migration journey from Makkah to Madinah, and the Islamic calendar year, which started from the Prophet’s migration journey.

Hurma
pl. Harîm. A woman; also means prohibited or forbidden.

Iftâr
Indicating the dusk time when Saum (fasting) is breaking.

Jali
An Indian term for a perforated ornamented screens and latticeworks.

Jalsa
pl. jalsât. The place where one can sit. In the roshân, it is the adjacent place to the roshân which is prepared to be for sitting, whether it is a dakka or a karawita. From outside the roshân, the part that holds the water jars and covered by the shish is also called jalsa. That is the jalsa for the jars or small plant pots.

Jarokha/Jharokha
A Mughal term for a projected covered balcony, often used for ceremonial appearance.

Jinâh
A wooden structure that projected from the wall of a house into the street and was supported by pillars.

Ká ba/Ká bah/Ká bah
The first house of worship built for mankind. It was originally built by Adam and, later on, reconstructed by Abraham and Ismá il, as written in the Qur’ân and according to Muslim traditions. The building is a box-like structure that is orientated 30 degrees off the north–south
axis, so that the corners face the cardinal points.

Кабули
pl. kawābil. An equivalent term to a corbel.

Кабуш
pl. kibāsh. A local term known in the construction of traditional Madinan houses synonymous with kābūli. It is the equivalent of a corbel as a kind of supportive unit for the massive rawāshīn.

Каравита/Каравитах
pl. karāwīt. A common piece of furniture which could be used indoors and outdoors. This piece is also called ‘karaweit’ in Sawākin in Sudan.

Кхаржа/Кхаржа
A terrace in the upper floors of the traditional houses.

Кхарджая
The term is rooted from Arabic which means to project or to jut out.

Кхимар
A piece of cloth with which a woman covers her head and neck area.

Курди
pl. karādī. A carved or a decorated bracket.

Кушк
pl. Akshak or kawāshik. A Turkish term used to describe the wooden projected windows in Syria.

Куттаб
pl. katāṭib. A type of madrasa that takes place in a masjid or a house, where the main subject is to teach Qurān and related religious subjects.

Мадраса
An Arabic Islamic theological college or school.

Махмал
A procession to celebrate the transferring of the cover ‘Kis‘wah’ of the Ka‘ba from Cairo to Makkah, which happened once a year in Shawwal, the tenth month in the Arabic calendar. Such an action does not exist today, because the kis‘wah has been manufactured in Makkah since the mid-nineteenth century.

Махрам/Маكرم
pl. Maḥārim, refers to the group of people who are unlawful for a woman to marry due to marital or blood relationships.

Майлис
Reception space, but usually refers to the male guests section.

Мандара/Мандарах
A male reception room — Cairo.

Магхани
A lattice screen which conceals people sitting behind them. Access to these people is from another room.

Магриб/Ал-Магриб
The west of the Islamic world including Morocco, Algiers, Tunisia and
Libya in North Africa.

*Makhadda/Makhaddah*  
pl. *makhadāt*. Side cushions or little bolsters that are distributed across the Arabic seating.

*Mamlūks*  
A dynasty (1250—1517) that emerged in Egypt and in Syria (1250—60). Within a short period of time, the Mamluks created the greatest Islamic empire of the later Middle Ages. The Mamluk capital, Cairo, became the economic, cultural and artistic center of the Islamic world.

*Maq′ad*  
A sitting room for men next to the entrances in Makkah. It is also a projected balcony overlooking a courtyard in Cairo.

*Maqṣūra/Maqsura*  
A screened area set aside in the *masjid* that encloses the area of the *mihrāb* and *minbar* in the early *masājid*.

*Mashrabiyyah*  
pl. *mashrabiyyat*. An Egyptian term referring to the *roshān*; a carved screen.

*Masjid*  
pl. *masājid*. Bayt Allah or a place of worship, where Muslims’ prayers ‘*Ṣalāh*’ are performed. It is found as a ‘mosque’ in English dictionaries.

*Mendil/Mandil*  
*Mandil* (Arabic) and *Mendil* (Turkish) is a handkerchief. It is a square piece of cloth to cover the head. It also means a piece of cloth for wrapping, a small one that is used to give special messages.

*Mibkharah*  
*Bakhūr* burners.

*Mīhrāb/Mihrab*  
A niche in a *masjid* indicating the direction to Makkah.

*Minara/Minaret*  
A tower from where the call for prayer is made.

*Minbar*  
A pulpit in a *masjid*.

*Mirador*  
A type of projected, screened window in Spain and its colonies.

*Mishkāt*  
An Arabic term (adjective) which means a niche, or a little shallow recess in the wall to place a light.

*Misnad*  
pl. *masānīd*. Cushions that support the back of the seated person.

*Mughal*  
*Mughal Dynasty*: also spelled ‘*Mogul*’, and in Arabic ‘*Mongol*’. A Muslim dynasty that ruled most of northern India (including the area of Pakistan) from the early sixteenth to the mid-eighteenth century.
Niqāp, Niqap
A face cover, with a slit for the eyes to observe from, is used with an outer garment to conceal a woman’s figure, as a hijāb.

Orientalist
A term used for someone who is knowledgeable about the Orient, its people, languages, history, customs, religion and literature.

Pasha
A title for military and civil officers, especially in Turkey and northern Africa.

Purdah/Purda
A term which means the seclusion of women within the house, especially among Muslims in the Indian subcontinent. ‘Hijāb’ is the equivalent term in Arabic.

Qā‘ah/Qā‘a
The word originally meant a flat surface, and was first used to designate the courtyard of the house. Latter, and today, it is applied to the reception hall, which, whether partially open or entirely covered, was fully incorporated into the structure.

Qallābāt/Qalālib
Louvre.

Qibla
The direction toward al-Kā’ba to indicate where to pray. It is a prime factor in the orientation of the masjid, and Muslim houses’ layout as well. For instance, a toilet (bidet) is never positioned facing the qible.

Quraysh
The most powerful and prominent tribe in all of Arabia, before the Prophet’s Era. The Quraysh were the keepers of the Kā’ba and therefore one of the wealthiest and most powerful tribes. The Prophet was from among the Quraysh.

Raffraf
pl. rafārif. The treatment of the most top part of the roshān, which works as a canopy and a protector to upper part of the roshān.

Ramadhan/Ramādān
The month of observing Šaum (fasting). It is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar (the calendar is based on the lunar phases). It was during this month that the Qu’ranic revelations began.

Roshān/Roshan
pl. rawāshīn/rawasheen. A projecting, screened, wooden window in Islamic traditional buildings.

Šaḥn
An interior open courtyard, usually in a masjid, like the main court surrounding al-Ka’ba.

Šahūr/Sohor
A meal taken at night before the fajr (dawn) prayer by a person observing Šaum (fasting).

Sajānī
sing. sjiniya. A thick cloth to cover the karawīta from all sides.
Şalât/Şalah
An obligation prayer, which is one of the five pillars of Islam. It is to be performed five times a day: Fajr (dawn), Zuhr (noon), 'Asr (afternoon), Magrib (sunset) and 'Ish'a (late night).

Selamlık
Men's and public space.

Şanâşîl
A Persian term, currently, used to describe the wooden, projected windows in Iraq.

Şarńba/Shirâb
Earthenware jars.

Şişiş
Extra lattice screens that are projected from the aperture of the roshân and the window alike.

ŞiŞşâ
Hijazi, a local term for water-pipe that is known as 'hookah' in India and 'Nargila' in Egypt.

Şeyk/Sh.
Apart from its conventional meaning this is a courtesy title. Sh., is the abbreviation of the word.

Şevâk
A piece of a root of a tree called Arâk, which is used as a toothbrush. The Arâk has a nice smell to clean the mouth and has other health benefits too.

Şubbâk
pl. Şabâbîk. An ordinary, flat, wooden window. The term is used in the Hijaz region and some of the Arab world cities.

Şurrâ'a
The upper part of the construction of the roshân.

Suf'fa/Sufah
An anteroom; upper floor space similar to the diwan.

Sunnah
The Prophet's deeds, whereas the Hadith is his sayings, both are usually referred to in a combined way in the Islamic traditional literature, using the word Hadith only.

Suq/Souk
Arab market.

Şürâh/Sûra
A chapter or a section of the Holy Qur'an; each section has a name with a purpose. The Qur'an contains 114 chapters.

Tawâf
The circumambulation of the Kâba for seven complete circuits.

Tawâlah
pl. tawâwil. A simple mattress style, stuffed with cotton or tirff, it is commonly used for sitting and sleeping.

Ta'qa/Tâqa
pl. tîq/tâqât. Openings for ventilation or windows.
Optional salāt (prayers) offered after the ‘Ishā’ prayers on the nights of Ramadān. These may be performed individually or in congregation.

A special cement layer as a final treatment for the floor.

The aromatic wood of an East Indian tree ‘aloe wood’, which can be burned or be used as oil.

An upper room.

A dynasty that was based in Damascus (the capital) in 661, covering al-Shām (Syria), al-Maghrib (the western part of North Africa), Iraq and Iran. It then stretched to Cordoba (Spain) and lasted from 756 to 1031.

A man who is in charge of the district’s safety and many other aspects. He is like a mayor of the town serving a small area. This job still exists in the Hijaz region of Saudi Arabia.

This is the lesser pilgrimage, which is optional, and can be performed at any time. It is a visit to Makkah in which one performs the tawāf around the Ka‘bah and the Sāy between Aṣ-Ṣafā and Al-Marwa, however, there is no specific time set to do this worship.

Islamic urban buildings that combine the functions of khan, warehouse and market.

An Indian term that means an area reserved for women.

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