REVITALIZATION OF PRINCIPLE FOR IRANIAN-ISLAMIC URBANIZATION - A TOURISMA PPROACH  
(CASE STUDY: HISTORICAL TEXTURE OF YAZD)  
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Abstract

The destruction of Iranian-Islamic cities’ identity and the authenticity is unavoidable in this modern era and need a lot of efforts. Using principles of Iranian-Islamic urbanization and a tourism approach, this descriptive and analytical research aimed at proposing some solutions to revitalize valuable historical tissues which are considered as the country’s identity and assets. The principles of Iranian-Islamic urbanization are known as an identity for cities in tourism approach and plays an important role in increasing the identity and Vitality of spaces; as the result, tourism also develop. The city of Yazd has a valuable historical texture to absorb tourists by reviving the valuable textures. Unfortunately, there is no care regarding maintenance of some textures in implementation plans and they has ruined and destroyed. Therefore, looking at the other countries’ valuable experience and by field observation and SWOT this problem was analyzed. Data analysis showed that in order to revivetourisms as well as using historical texture, there is a need to revitalize textures.

Keywords: Revitalize, Identity, Yazd, Tourism Development.

Introduction

The growing trend of urbanization accompanied by rapid physical growth, spread of abnormal urban settlements and poor urban constructions cause more damage to historical texture, anonymous city, and having a negative impact on residents. Therefore, rehabilitation and reconstruction of an urban historical texture as a historical, cultural and physical heritage is essential to survive cities. In fact, the identity of urban areas represents urban culture. Thus, it should be preserved. The identity of cities is useful in the development of human perfection, and it is also considered
as one of the necessities of sustainable development (Kiani, 2010: 24). Interference in the historical texture of cities dates back to the late nineteenth century especially after World War II. In west, the industrialization growth led to rapid urbanization and overcrowding in cities and gradually made it difficult to live. In fact, the ecological imbalance in cities resulted in the intervention of restoration Management and planning in historic textures (Zangiabadi and Moayedfar, 2013). Therefore, this research aimed at revitalization of historical textures in Yazd and increasing its quality and growth as a tourism center.

**Literature Review**

Explaining the concepts related to the historical textures is important since it can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the historical textures and their differences with other types of urban context. Urban context is the formation of discrete or compact urban spaces and elements that have been placed with a special order in the area of a city (Taherkhani and Motevaseli, 2005). Worn-out tissue means the inefficiency and reducing the effectiveness of tissue. It occurs in a context or its inner elements or it occurs as the result of age or lack of appropriate development and technical supervision in tissue formation. The consequence is environmental, physical, social, economic damage, etc.; therefore it loses its prestige among citizens.

Worn-out tissues have common characteristics with each other. But they differ due to different nature of damage they suffered. These differences categorized a worn-out tissue into three groups: a) texture with historical values; b) urban texture (without historical values); and c) marginal textures (informal settlements).

The most important criteria and indicators regarding valuation of historical textures are: antiquity; unity, historical and architectural originality; social and economic life; novelty and richness of architectural values and patterns; and historical values and collective memories.

In Iran, interference in urban areas began in 1304. The most important of these proceedings was providing map of development and modification of some passages before the Second World War. Within the framework of the Fourth Development Plan and under the goals of comprehensive plans, the issue of renovation of old neighborhoods attracted some attentions between 1968 and 1972. According to this program, the comprehensive planes of 20 cities were approved and were delivered to municipalities for implementation. The major criticisms regarding these planes and their approaches to historical contexts are: neglecting the social and cultural characteristics of old neighborhoods; Neglecting the elements and structure of present texture and maintaining their connection; and neglecting financial planning, and the possibility of upgrading and organizing old tissues. These planes introduced proper access to the
Texture and physical deficiencies as the major problems of these urban areas. What was doing related to flooring, providing some facilities and infrastructures, etc. the most important plans are those implemented in the cities of Semann, Shahrod, Garmsar, Ardekan, Taft, Meybod (Ablaghi, 2001). Among works around the world Beirut reconstruction project is noteworthy. The history of preparation of urban plans dated back to 1920 in Beirut when the first detailed planes were prepared. In 1922, a detailed plan for the historic district was prepared based on wide streets and broad textures for the city. In the 1980s, the regional plan for Beirut was prepared.

Fig. 1: right: Beirut before the war (source: Beirut Reborn, 90); Left: Aerial view of Beirut (source: Google earth).

After the war, the reconstruction plan of Beirut was prepared according to good experience of reconstruction in Europe. In this plan issues such as good views of the city, non-physical factors, Warmemories, connection with the past, national identity, etc. were offered and the technical and physical views especially in traffic were reduced. In recognition of "the principles of Islamic city" the first step is to understand the Islamic view regarding city and the familiarity with the experiences of Muslims in their cities. In addition, the identity of the main areas of the city such as neighborhoods or areas (e.g. regions, districts, streets, etc.) that collectively make up the city is a necessity.

Case study

Among cities of Iran, Yazd, the second historic city in the World with a rich architecture and unique features, has an international interest because of its valuable historical texture; according to Pirnia (1995) even its ruins is beautiful. Historical texture of Yazd consists of several inter connected elements such as Fahadan in north, Jameh Mosque, and Bazaar, Amir Chakhmaq Complex, Tahmasp King square, Khan Garden complex and Dolatabad Garden.

Fig. 2: The growth of the city of Yazd in different periods (Source: Comprehensive Plan).
The old texture of Yazd consists of 2806 hectares in which its historical texture has an area of 743 hectares. It consists of 7 neighborhoods: Behnam, SixWindward, Doaltabad, Fahadan, Gazargah, Gonbad sabz, Godal mosala and Sheikhdad. They contain 42 sub-neighborhoods. The historical texture of Yazd is about 800 hectares and can be considered as one of the moatsbroadens historical textures of Iran.

Table 1: examining Yazd historical city (source: Armanshahr Consulting Engineers Co.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Historical period</th>
<th>Physical changes</th>
<th>Economic changes</th>
<th>Cultural and social changes</th>
<th>Important elements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Timurid Empire</td>
<td>-Building Amir Chakhmaq complex -The formation of business oriented centers in north-south corridors</td>
<td>-Famine and drought -Development of commercial spaces outside the wall of the Ilkhanate -The formation of business oriented in east-west corridors as an important commercial center</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-Amir Chakhmaq complex -Ali agha Bazaar -Khaje shamsoldin Bazzar -Kohne mosque -Seyyed Roknoldin Shrine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Safavid dynasty</td>
<td>-The destruction of a number of places in Yazd -Building new constructions -The expansion of city towards west and southwest</td>
<td>-Development of commercial activities particularly silk and textile trade with European, Hindi, Chinese and other Asian countries traders</td>
<td>-The existence of a lot of theological schools and stopping building them</td>
<td>-Kuhan Shahi square complex -Safavid square -Tahmasb square -Zoroastrianism Tower of Silence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Qajar, Afsharids, and Zandiyeh dynasty</td>
<td>-Organizing neighborhoods’ centers -Divided city into two parts of old and new</td>
<td>-Business development and the revival of trade and prosperity of capitalism -Joining Iran to the global markets</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-Khaje Khezr complex -Khan Bazaar and School -Qeysarie bazaar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Findings and Discussion

There are different approaches to analyze data, among them is SWOT. In fact, SWOT is recognizing some systemic factors that should have the best compatibility with strategy. Its logic is to maximize the strengths and opportunities and minimize the weaknesses and threats.

Strengths: the presence of a source, skill and advantage in a set or a field.

Weaknesses: Limitations or inefficiency in the use of resources, skills and abilities that are considered as a serious obstacles to the successful performance of a set or a planned environment.
Opportunities: opportunities are favorable conditions in an environment. For example, identification of unknown parts of an environment or changing in terms of competition or regulation. They may represent the key trends in the environment or the source of possible opportunities for it.

Threats: A threat is an adverse and important situation in the environment which are major barriers to the current situation or environment.

According to what was stated, identifying and understanding the key strengths and weaknesses can help to choose the best strategy to solve problems. Furthermore, recognizing the privileged competence and weaknesses in relation to the factors determining the success of a series, provides a useful framework for strategic choice (Adib, 2011: 159).

Table 2: SWOT of Yazd (source: authors)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Big buildings and dwellings; the existence of important landmark such as mosque, cistern, etc.; regular skyline and visual cohesion in most parts of historical tissues</td>
<td>Less green space; the existence of worn-out buildings which cause environmental pollution and disease in most parts of the region; Most routes are not appropriate for driving.</td>
<td>The possibility of using local materials such as brick and thatch; The existence of different land uses; The possibility of creating a logical connection between the Cultural Heritage and Tourism Organization and the municipality</td>
<td>High probability of earthquake in Iran and this region; Large number of immigrants to this region (poverty leads to the influx of relatively poorer and less educated people in these cheap residential areas)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The historical textures in the cities of Islamic Republic of Iran had economic, social and cultural values from pasts. But today, it suffers social insecurity as the results of difficulties caused by neglecting them. They lost their important role in providing an appropriate space for people to live and introduced as a tumor. Using appropriate regulations and implementations they can play an important role as the heart of the city in returning the originality to the cities.
This process can take place if we look into the past and adopt today’s needs with suitable solutions people used in the past and revitalizing the principle for Iranian-Islamic urbanization which lost their identities today. At the end some solutions will be proposed according to the national and foreign experiences in revitalization of cities and based on the strength and weakness of historical context of Yazd and the potential factors present in it to make it a dynamic context with high economic and cultural values.

*Morphological dimension:*

- Maintaining the overall structure of the context is essential in providing plans.
- Introverted patterns is recommended for new constructions.
- Due to the climatic considerations it is recommended to design adjacent building masses compressed together.

*Visual dimension:*

- The construction should be in a way that the landmarks are preserved.
- It is essential to maintain the skyline of uniquel and marks(Wind catcher and ceilings).
- It is recommended to separate walking and driving routes in historical texture and to make it calm for driver to drive in these parts.
- It is better to use a color for urban furniture which is in combination with the color of traditional materials and not to use garish colors.
- To design some space for sitting in the main route of historical texture.

*Performance dimension:*

- It is recommended to use tourism, handicrafts, etc. on the fringes of urban areas in the historical context.
- It is recommended to use dynamic land uses in the center day and night.

*Perceptual dimension:*

- Using elements and symbols in the entrance of neighborhoods.
- Using identity-related elements, such as wind catcher, domed roofs and traditional and indigenous materials in new constructions.
- Enhancing the visual clarity of landmarks in the city and neighborhoods scale.

**Conclusions**

This article aimed at investigating the historical texture of Yazd and examining its problems through SWOT. The results obtained related to the revitalization of the texture. They consist of:
● Physical and functional rehabilitation of important and historical elements;
● creating some land uses absorbed tourists (e.g. museum);
● redefining the functional structure of the historical texture of Yazd;
● creating a pedestrian path for tourists;
● establishing some leisure activities such as café, restaurant, etc;
● strengthening social activities through the factors sets in historical context.

References


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