

Urban Physical And Social Transformation In Heritage Districts : Case Study OF SHIRAZ- IRAN

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ABSTRACT

The heritage cores of Iranian cities encompass a large number of valuable buildings and fabrics. Revitalization of heritage buildings and districts in Shiraz city are as the most successive experiences of urban transformation in Iran, which have influenced the quality of space and life for the people who lived in this districts.

The process of physical transformation in Iranian cities started from the beginning of the twentieth century (1925- 1941) by a vast program of road construction through the old fabric of old cities. There was an attempt to fundamentally alter the shape the country's social and spatial formation by an obligatory program combining "nationalism", "secularism " and " modernization ".

During the second phase of transformation, between 1950 to 1960, the impact of modernization fuelled by economic factors. An immense growth of population and massive immigration contributed to the rapid and dramatic physical expansion of the cities. Urban sprawl intensified the problems of the heritage centre. The old cores became a small part of sprawling cities which dramatically transformed the social and spatial structures of the heritage environment

The third stage of transformation referred to the first two decades of the post revolutionary period (1979 - 1997). During the first decade after the revolution, the political and economic instability caused by the revolution and the war, which directly influenced the process of urban development in general and led to future decline of heritage centers, in particular.

During the second section reviewed a series of political, economic, administrative and fiscal reforms, which were accompanied by the evolution of conservation and regeneration policy and practices during the last decade. They produced a sense of connection and synergy between regeneration and conservation efforts. The projects for the revitalization of " Sang - e sia " is one of the heritage neighborhoods in the city centre of shiraz , is the prime example of this new trend which has been followed by other projects such as " Jolfa" in Isfahan.

This article briefly go on to argue the history of the urban transformation in national level , Iran, before Analyzing the outcomes of the physical and social transforming of the " sang -e sia " quarter which is located at the heart of heritage core of shiraz city, it provided a heritage background of this area, their social and spatial transformations and the objectives generated by these transformations. At the same time, it briefly reviewed the strengths, opportunities and potentials of the area. it was followed by a detailed investigation on the program, the policies employed by the local urban authorities and outcomes of the projects on the social and spatial structure of the area.

INTRODUCTION

Developing a balanced approach, dealing appropriately with the historic environment, has always been a challenging problem in many countries. There has been a tension between the old and the new and struggle over continuity and change. The historic city centres in Iran have also been the subject of such controversy. The historic cores, which form a very small part of the cities in recent times, have been undermined in the various waves of redevelopment. There has been an underlying emphasis on physical-led regeneration and delivery of flagship projects. This dominant approach, mainly employed by the central government, has failed to solve the problems of the areas; indeed, the interventions carried out within the framework of this approach have exacerbated the existing problems. During the last decade, however, efforts to revitalize Iranian historic cities have gained a new momentum. Several interrelated factors contributed to the changing role or structure of the state in urban regeneration process, which provided a basis for the development of a new approach to the regeneration of historic environment in Iran. Due to the lack of sufficient research on these approaches and the absence of comparing and assessing their results, this study aims to provide a deeper insight and develop a better understanding of these approaches to revitalize the historic urban centre. This is realized by identifying the employed approaches and addressing their deficiencies, exploring factors that shaped the approaches, examining and interpreting the features that characterize the approaches, and assessing their outcomes and impacts.

The emphasis of the study is on mechanisms and interrelationships that affect the process and product of urban transformation. Accordingly, this study has concentrated on the identification of the agencies involved, the role they play, and their strategies and interests within the economic, political and cultural contexts in which they operated. These roles, strategies and interests are related to the rules, resources and ideas that governed the process. The developed conceptual framework is applied in the study of one case, that representing an approach employed by the urban authorities during the last decade. This case is part of the historic core of Shiraz the sixth largest city in the country . The case of Shiraz represents an integrated, more sensitive, conservation-led approach adopted by the local authorities.

The findings of this study provide insights into the issues that policy-makers and practitioners should consider in designing regeneration policies and Physical and Social Transformation In Heritage Districts and efforts dealing with the problems of historic environments. This paper is summarized in three elements including:

1. Historic city centres, and the various waves of Transformations in IRAN
2. Social, political and economic changes and city centre transformations in SHIRAZ
3. Background of the study Sang-e Sia area
- 4.

Historic city centres, and the various waves of Transformations in IRAN

This is an investigation at a national scale. This section first identifies the main approaches to the historic environment in IRAN, the process and mechanism that shaped and affected these approaches and their outcomes in general at a national scale. It will be followed by a detailed study of the political, social and economic transformations of the SHIRAZ city, during the last decade which contributed to the evolution of conservation and regeneration policies, and the emergence of a new approach to the revitalization of historic environment in IRAN. . They produced a sense of connection and synergy between regeneration and conservation efforts. The projects for the revitalization of " Sang - e sia " is one of the heritage neighborhoods in the city centre of shiraz , is the prime example of this new trend which has been followed by other projects in IRAN.

The process of physical transformation in Iranian cities started from the beginning of the twentieth century (1925- 1941) by a vast program of road construction through the old fabric of old cities. There was an attempt to fundamentally alter the shape the country's social and spatial formation by an obligatory program combining "nationalism", "secularism " and " modernization " .

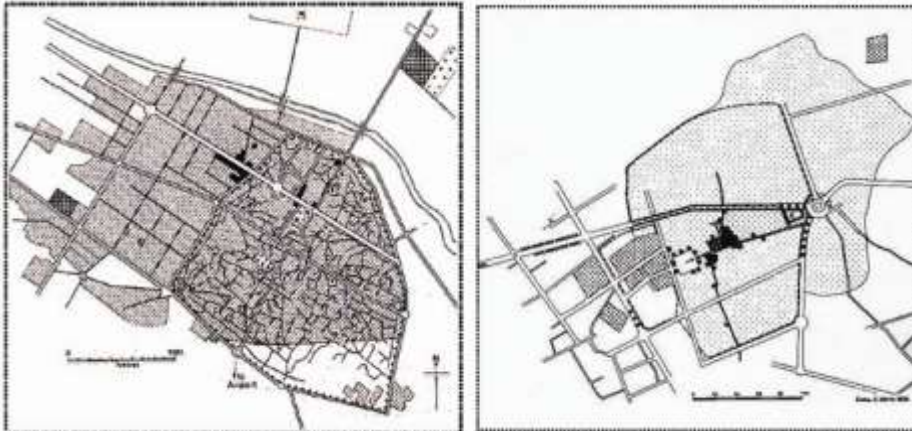


Figure 1 plan of shiraz (left) and kerman (right) after the superimposition of an orthogonal grid of streets upon the cities dense. Irregular patterns, and the expansion of the older cities. Sources: the cambrid history of IRAN (1968), p 438 and erdkunde (1968), p108.

During the second phase of transformation, between 1950 to 1960, the impact of modernization fuelled by economic factors. An immense growth of population and massive immigration contributed to the rapid and dramatic physical expansion of the cities. Urban sprawl intensified the problems of the heritage centre. The old cores became a small part of sprawling cities which dramatically transformed the social and spatial structures of the heritage environment.

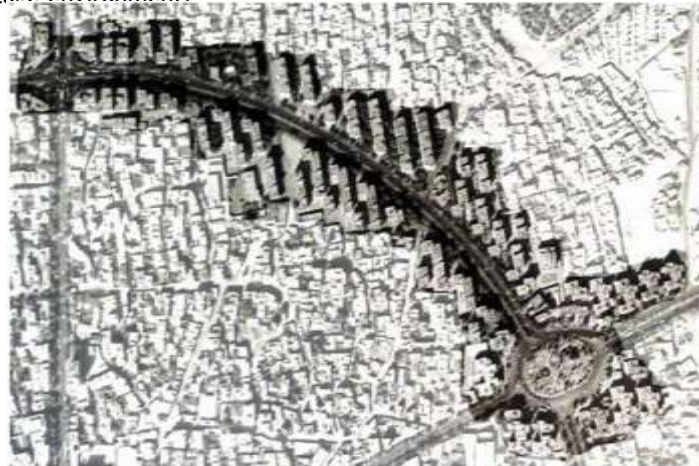


Figure 2 large scale redevelopment program in the historic core of HAMADAN initiated by the Mortgage bank (Bank Rahni) in 1973, source: National cartographic centre of iran, 1986.

The third stage of transformation referred to the first two decades of the post revolutionary period (1979 - 1997). During the first decade after the revolution, the political and economic instability caused by the revolution and the war, which directly influenced the process of urban development in general and led to future decline of heritage centers, in particular.



Figure 3 large scale reconstruction projects carried out by the municipalities, (left) Navab project in Tehran, (Middle) Bein - al Haramain in Shiraz, and (right) Kaboud Mosque in Tabriz.



Figure 4 Aerial views of the holy shrines in Shiraz and Mashhad after the large scale clearance of the 1990s, source: Ghazanpour, 2000.

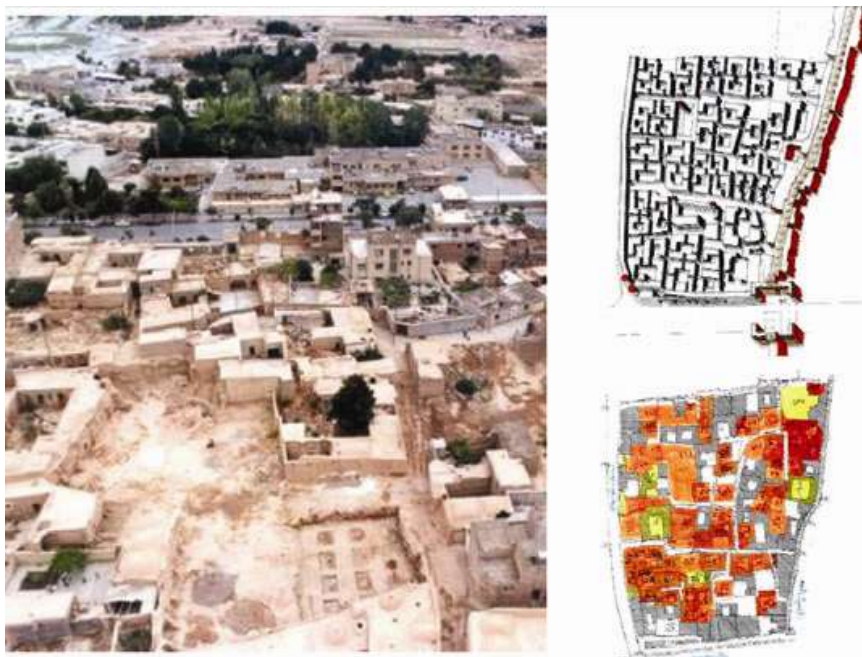


Figure 5 Urban redevelopment plan for 2.7 hectares of the residential area known Qaleh, one of the historic quarters of Kerman, (Above right) volumetric plan for the proposed redevelopment scheme, and the map showing the acquired properties between 1993 and 1995, (Above left) Aerial view of the historic quarter of Qaleh

Social, political and economic changes and city centre transformations in SHIRAZ

Shiraz, one of the seven principal cities of Iran, the sixth largest after Tehran, Mashhad, Isfahan, Tabriz and Karaj is the center of Fars province in southern Iran . Fars province has 16 counties, 60 sub-counties and 51 cities in which Shiraz is the largest city without serious local rivals. The city is located 895 km south of Tehran and 100 km north of the Persian Gulf. The following figure shows the last administrative division and location of Fars province in the south of Iran .

Shiraz has a long and eventful history common to many Iranian cities. Although the foundation of Shiraz was before the Islamic period, Shiraz experienced its greatest development after it had supplanted the ancient city of Estakhr¹, the nearby Sassanian² capital which was conquered by the Arab armies (Wiesehofer, 1999). As Estakhr fell into decline, Shiraz grew in importance under the Arabs and several local dynasties (Arberry, 1960). In fact it was an Islamic successor to the cities of Takht-e Jamshid and Pasargad during the Achaemenid Empire³ and the city of Estakhr during the Sassanian Empire (Lockhart, 1939; De Planhol, 1992).

Shiraz, like most other Iranian cities, has experienced a turbulent past as well as its temporary phases of glory as the capital or seat of important local rulers. Although Shiraz was spared destruction during the Mongol⁴ invasion, the town was devastated in turn by Timur⁵ (1387 and 1393), by great floods in 1630 and 1668, by the Afghan invaders in 1724, and by earthquakes which partially destroyed the city in 1789, 1814, 1824 and 1853 (Lockhart, 1939; Clarke, 1963; Wilber, 1975). Natural disasters, volatile social conditions, and political calamities brought disorder, destruction and great loss of life, while phases of peace and tranquility witnessed building construction and population growth.

From the 16th century during the Safavid period (1502-1722) security and prosperity returned to Iranian cities and was maintained for about two centuries. The political stability, the growth of production, the secure and convenient routes of transportation, as well as the flourishing internal and external trade, created a great opportunity for the regeneration and reconstruction of cities. Shiraz's fortunes in this period revived under Imam Quli Khan, Shah Abbas's Governor- general of Fars. "Imitating his sovereign at Isfahan, he did much to beautify Shiraz. In order to make a worthy approach to the city famous Chahar-Bagh at Isfahan " (Lockhart, 1939, p 32). He constructed a magnificent palace in the great square, and in 1615, he built a theological college called the Madreseh-yi-Khan. However, Shiraz started its decline with the Afghan raids in the early 18th century, several earthquakes, and an internal uprising. When Nader Shah⁶ was assassinated in 1747, most of Shiraz's historical buildings were destroyed (Lawless, 1980). In the middle of the eighteenth century, Shiraz again came back to life and splendor "under the benevolent attention of a regent-ruler, Karim Khan Zand" (Wilber, 1975, p 199; Boyle, 1978). During his nineteen years of rule from Shiraz, Karim Khan succeeded in restoring a surprising degree of material prosperity and peace to a land ravaged and disoriented by his predecessors (Perry, 1991). Twenty-seven constructions in Shiraz, of which sixteen remain today, are attributed to Karim Khan Zand, both complete buildings and buildings which he extended and restored including mosques, administrative and secular buildings, palaces, baths, commercial buildings such as bazaar, civil engineering projects such as drainage channels, moats, bridges, fortifications, water reservoirs and gardens (Scarce, 1991). Although the prosperity of Shiraz was seriously interrupted by the decline of Zand dynasty (1794) and Tehran took the place of Shiraz as the Capital from this period, Shiraz remained one of the most important provincial cities during the Qajar period .

For a long period, between the early Islamic era (about 9th century) and the beginning of modernization (late 19th century), Shiraz developed a special urban type and maintained its main characteristics, in spite of some serious interruptions and fluctuations, which were mentioned earlier. It gradually expanded around and initial urban nucleus and continued to display the traditional features of an Islamic city.

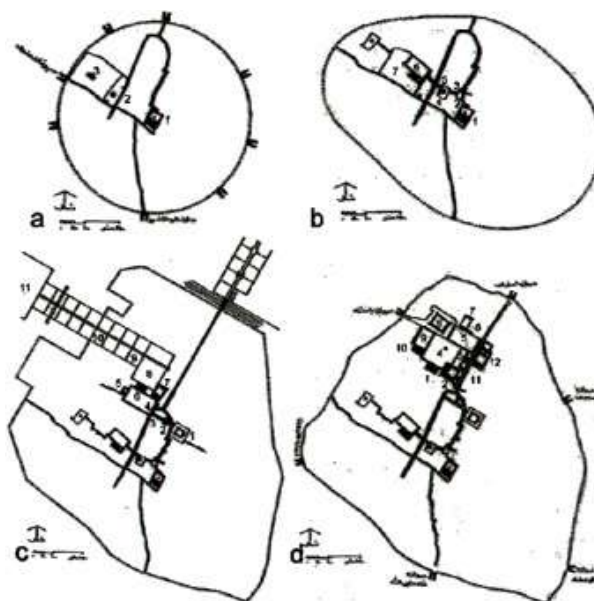


Figure 6 Evolution of Shiraz physical structure, source : Tavasoli and Bonyadi, 1992.

Shiraz has always been a walled city of considerable dimensions. In the tenth century, the first wall was constructed by Azud - ud Doula. At the time of zand dynasty (1750-94). There was an almost circular stone wall 25 feet high and 10 feet broad with 80 forts. Although this wall was removed by Agha Mohammad khan, the founder of the Qajar dynasty (1795- 1925). It was later replaced by a mud wall with six gates (Clark, 1963). As the above figures show , its external shape remained fairly constant over the ages, while its internal form probably changed greatly.

- a- Shiraz, Physical structure of the city in 10th century A.D. (1. Friday Mosque, 2. Royal Library, 3. Palace)
- b- Shiraz, Physical structure of the city in 12th century A.D. (1. Friday Mosque, 2. Shrine, 3. Local Bazaar, 4. Shah-e-Cheragh Shrine, 5. Local Bazaar, 6. New Mosque, 7. Atabakan garden and palace)
- c- Shiraz, Physical Structure of the city, Late 16th century A.D. (1. Theological seminary, 2. Quisariya, 3. Bazaar, 4. Square, 5. Hospital [Supposed location], 6. Palace, 7. Shah Mosque, 8. Governmental Garden, 9. Aristocratic gardens, 10. Access to the royal garden, 11. Royal garden, 12. Char bagh)
- d- Shiraz, Physical structure of the city, 18th Century A.D. (1. Royal residence, 2. Vakil Mosque, 3. Entrance space to the Vakil Mosque, 4. Nazar Garden, 5. Toopkhaneh Square, 6. Citadel, 7. Divan Khaneh, 8. Naqqareh-khaneh, 9. Mashq Square, 10. Stable and Prison, 11. Vakil Bazaar, 12. Caravansera)

In fact, it continued to grow, adhering to traditional kinds of social and spatial organization. Large scale constructions by Karim Khan Zand respected the old town and sought the maximum adaptability with the traditional structure (Lawless, 1980).

As Figure 6 shows, Shiraz was initially circular in shape, however the regular pattern of the city soon changed to an organic structure like the other Iranian cities, comprising the main elements of such cities. The form of the city stabilized from the 15th century and its shape from that time until the 20th century exhibited a fair representative of a typical traditional city before modernization (Karimi, 1998).

The metamorphosis of Shiraz into a modern city began with the attempts of Reza Khan (1925-1941), the founder of Pahlavi dynasty (1925-1979). The new political power, which ideologically rejected the superiority of the immediate past, targeted the traditional city which seemed to be an undesirable place; consequently, the new urban features became representative of the new era. Although some of the structures of the Zand period had already been partially obliterated by the time of the Qajar monarchs, most of them remained intact. However, the imposed modern structure inflicted serious damage on the old fabric and its elements.

After the first period of modernization the growth and development of Shiraz became radically different from its traditional pattern. A regular pattern of modern networks was superimposed on the historic core as the common pattern of expansion, and the organic shape of the traditional area has been trapped inside the enclosed and segmented historic core. In this period, the evolutionary process of urban development was replaced by radical modernization interventions.

Apart from the influences of many political and economic changes since World War II, the intensified forces of modernization and industrialization transformed the city in the late 1960s and the 1970s. The rapid expansion of urban areas followed the rapid population growth and changed the main characteristics of old Shiraz and decreased the significance of this area. Thereafter the old core turned to a very small part of the sprawling city which was suffering from decay and lack of maintenance. Social, political, and economic changes during the post-revolutionary period, particularly through the direct interventions of the state and a constant desire toward unbridled modernism despite the apparently traditional nature of the government.

According to the above discussion, four key periods are identified during which the historic core was under pressure from various waves of renewal and redevelopment including: Zand dynasty [1750-94], modernization under Reza Khan [1920-41], the period of city sprawl in the late 1960s- 1970s, and the first two decades after Islamic Revolution of 1979, post-revolutionary period (1979-1997). The following sections attempt to explore the major driving forces behind the city centre transformation during

This section provided a brief historical background of the city of Shiraz and examined the transformation of the city and in particular its historic core in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It was structured around the three major phases of change in the political, social and economic context of the city. The transformation of the historic core was considered within the context of the city to provide a deeper insight and better understanding of the structural forces affecting the historic core at this level. This investigation revealed that the urban transformation during the last decades was inspired by a strong desire to instigate change and reshape the traditional urban fabric through undertaking large-scale redevelopment projects. The road-widening scheme of the 1930s, the modern master plans of the 1970s and 1980s (in response to the urban sprawl during these periods), and the development and redevelopment plans of the 1980s and 1990s were among the major redevelopment-oriented town planning exercises, led by the government and in some cases the municipality (as the agent of the state) and the religious institutions and revolutionary foundations (newly re-established religious authorities after the revolution). The autocratic control of the decision-making, policy formulation, planning and design exercises by the central government and its agencies, and access to financial resources all dictated by the legal status, rules and regulations made the instrument of authority a determining factor in the implementation of such large-scale redevelopment oriented programs. All these schemes involved the modernization of the pre-existing urban structure of the historic center by means of cutting wide and straight avenues through its densely built-up quarters. There was a radical break with the past in pre and post-revolutionary period which was represented by these large-scale redevelopment projects. These large-scale redevelopment/modernization projects drastically changed the historic core's physical-spatial structure. However, the emphasis placed on modernization led to the spectacular decline of the historic core.

During the past decades, the historic city center has suffered from depopulation, extensive deterioration. Several legal impediments and official obstacles, a lack of investment, high crime rates, social fragmentation. Poverty and deprivation, a fragmented and overlapping institutional and legal framework and also insufficient institutional coordination and inefficient urban management. However, since 1997, several political and administrative reforms at national, provincial and local level changed this situation and provided a basis for the emergence of a new series of regeneration and conservation activities in this area. It was the result of the realization of the political and administrative reforms after 1997 in some cases like Shiraz, which provided a

practical basis for the development of a collaborative network of the local agencies. At the same time, the formation of institutional framework, development of planning and legislation and strengthening regulatory role of the central government in the regeneration and conservation of the historic environment contributed to the evolution of conservation and regeneration policies and approaches.

This investigation identified the key actors and institutions on a citywide level, which played a crucial role in the process of regeneration of the historic core during the last decade, including: the city council, the Fars Cultural Heritage and Tourism Organization, the co-ordinating councils, the Municipality and Municipality of the Historic District, the Fars Urban Development and Revitalization Company, and the local Endowment and Charity Affairs Organizations. The next chapter will examine the revitalization program for the historic quarter of Sang-e Sia as the prime example of this new trend.

Background of the study Sang-e Sia area

The study area is located at the heart of an urban block on the west side of the historic core which encompasses the old quarters of, Darb-e Masjed, Armenian⁷ Sar-e Bagh; as well as the main parts of Shah Square, Sar Dezak, and the Jewish quarters. The names of the neighborhoods are still used as general geographical locations, but the corporate structure of individual quarters no longer exists. The imposed avenues of the 1920s and 30s disintegrated the social and spatial networks of the old quarters and formed a series of large urban blocks containing truncated historic quarters.

The boundary of the urban block, which contains previously mentioned quarters, is defined by the Dastgheib Street and Lotfalikhan Zand Street to the north, Sibuyeh Boulevard to the south, Qaani Street to the west and Hazrati Street to the east.

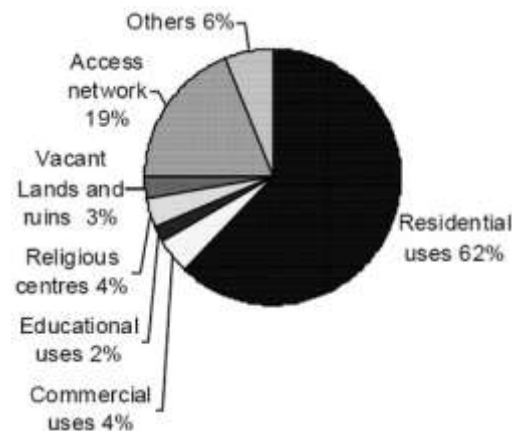


Figure 7 Existing land use allocation

This block covers approximately 70.4 hectares and contains over 2476 residential unit, With 15435 inhabitants (18.74 percent of the historic core area and 22 percent of the whole inhabitants in the city centre) (Pardaraz, 2003; Naqsh-e Jahan pars, 1998).

Although the spatial dimension of the area has changed to some extent, it still largely retains its traditional layout. There are fourteen monuments listed by the Cultural Heritage Organization, as well as more than hundred unlisted but architecturally significant buildings (mainly historic residential houses) that determine the quality of this urban context. The circular road on the periphery of the historic core on the west and south sides as well as two imposed streets on the north and east sides of the district links this area with the urban road system. The dominant route for pedestrians is "Sang-e Sia" axis, the north to south spine, from Bibi Dokhtaran tomb to the Taj-al Din Gharib mansoleum near the old Kazeroun Gate.

Figure 7 illustrates the major type of land uses that presently exist in this area. Residential is the dominant use (62%) and contains different types of residential uses including single-family homes, multi-family homes⁸, and new constructed condominiums and apartments. The second most dominant use is access network with 19%. Most commercial uses are located along new streets on the border of the urban block.

There are also four local commercial centres, literally bazarcheh, in the proximity of the historic neighbourhood centres which mainly provide the daily or regular needs of the residents of their immediate neighborhoods.

The area contains more than 26 religious centres including mosques, local shrines, and theological schools. Although Shiraz is not a pilgrimage centre like Mashhad, mosques and shrines dominate the squat skyline of the historic core, and are the most noteworthy features of the urban landscape (Clarke, 1963). The following table and graph present the existing land use allocation surveyed by Pardaraz Consultants in 2002-4). They provide a picture of current land use pattern which has also been utilized as a basis for developing future land use plan.

A close examination of the area shows that the major monuments are in close proximity to each other and form five distinctive clusters. They are located along Sang-e Sia axis, the main spine of the area.

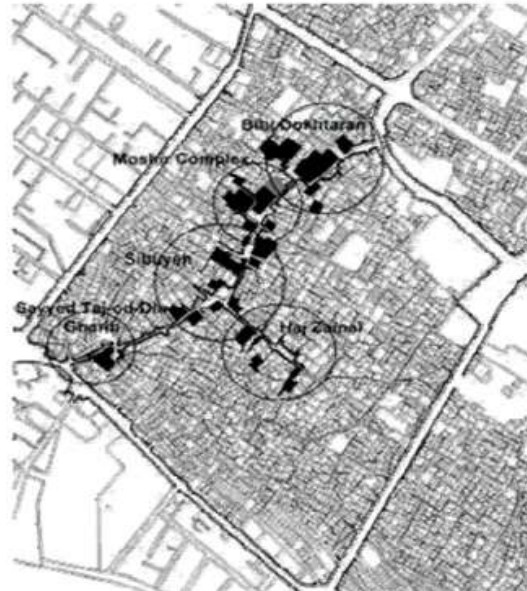


Figure 8 The monuments clustering along the Sang-e Sia axis define a heritage corridor which plays a vital role in this area

The program for regeneration of Sang-e Sia quarter focuses on this thoroughfare at the heart of the urban block which connects a number of historic buildings and monuments. The monuments clustering along the spine have their own distinctive character. They define a heritage corridor which is a vital part of the area. One such cluster is centred on the Moshir complex (mosque, local bazaar, bath, theological school, cistern, and a neighborhood unit), the most frequented tourist area. With its unique architectural heritage, it is one of the most important sights of the historic core. There are also several unique buildings, including the mausoleum of Bibi-dokhtaran, Mirza-hadi Mosque, Armenian Church, the tomb of Sibuyeh, Siavoshan Mosque, and the shrine of Taj-od-Din Qarib which are the principal elements of these clusters.

The street linking the clusters has an important role in providing continuity within a wide range of settings. These clusters have each formed a small neighborhood square. The totality of these squares comprises the main public space in this area . The essential components of this public space are a group of shops providing daily needs, a religious centre (local shrine or mosque), and in some cases a green spaces. The following section briefly introduces major elements of these cluster.

Conclusion

This paper examined the revitalization program for the Sang-e Sia quarter, at the heart of an urban block at west side of the historic core of Shiraz. It provided a historical background of this area, its social and spatial transformation and the problems generated by these transformations.



Figure 9 Physical rehabilitation of Sang-e Sia axis and newly constructed open space in front of the Bibi-dokhtaran shrine



Figure 10 The view of sang-e siah axis before (left) and after (right) completion of the physical rehabilitation and open space improvement. In this project, the infrastructure improved, the main access resurfaced, and building facades were rehabilitated with the traditional patterns particularly those which located around the newly constructed plaza.

This investigation revealed how the new political, economic and cultural conditions led to the emergence of a new path to the transformation of the historic environment. Due to the absence of political and economic interests in this case, the central government showed little enthusiasm for direct involvement. It was accompanied by the decentralization policies of the National Development Plan by which the state had to redistribute its authority, responsibility and financial resources at provincial and local level. Decentralization provided a degree of local autonomy for the local authorities to deal more effectively with their problems. Under a series of structural constraints, the local authorities pragmatically established a partnership among all major stakeholders involved. This coalition at local level allowed the mobilization of the local resources, reconciled the divergent interests and secured consensus among all stakeholders. The local authorities offered a set of practical policies, a comprehensive financing strategy, and an integrated approach dealing with both development and conservation concerns. The new approach was more sensitive to the local needs and a convergence between different approaches concerning the historic environment. Old buildings under threat of demolition have been brought back into use; the main public space of the area has greatly improved; and the religious buildings have been restored and turned into attractive places for both local visitors and tourists.



Figure 11 Restoration and adaptive reuse of existing historic building. The historic house which was in danger of destruction has been rehabilitated, upgraded and converted in to a local library and cultural centre (right and middle) . with recent social and cultural changes, historic buildings have been subject to extensive change, alteration and in some cases a considerable amount of damage. The local mosque (Haj mohammad rahim) located along main street is the best exemplar of this kind which was restored by FUDRC (left . these structures are seen not only as monuments and historic building to be preserved, but also as potential focal points that can attract tourists and stimulate the inhabitants to live.



Figure 12 Moshir centre before and after regeneration. A group of low quality buildings were replaced by a new open space and shops located around the square. The new addition was constructed in a manner that preserved the historic character. While it was differentiated from the historic structure so that the new work is not confused with what is genuinely part of the past. The new element are compatible with the scale and future of the existing historic structures.

END NOTE:

- 1- As discussed in the historical background, the city population comprised religious minorities, jews and Armenians, Each of these two religious minorities occupied a particular part of the historic core called Mahalla-ye Ara"maneh (Armenians"quarter) and Mahalla-ye Kalimiha (Jewish quarter). Today, except for a few families, none live in this area, but the physical character of these quarters, with their places of worship, still recalls and communicates about their lives and memories .
- 2- There are numerous historic houses, which were originally single-family, but have been divided into multi-family residences, a popular choice among working class and migrants.
- 3- City and district in ancient Persia
- 4- Sassanian 226-651 A.D
- 5- Achaemenid Empire (560-330 B.C)
- 6- Mongol (1220-1380)
- 7- Timurids empire (1393-1500)
- 8- Nader Quli Beg. (Nader Shah) the king of Afsharid period (1736-1750)

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