



Indicators of Iranian- Islamic Gardens on Reclamation of Timeworn Structures

Mohamad Rahim Rahnama¹, Mozghan Pouremad^{2*}

1. Associate Professor, Faculty of Letters and Humanities, Department of Geography, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran

2. Ph.D. Student of Urban Geography and Planning, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad (FUM), International Campus, Mashhad, Iran

Abstract

The main aim of this study focused on identifying the indicators of Iranian - Islamic gardens influences on creating suitable atmospheres to meet human innate needs (feel of comfort, aesthetics and point of view) either in internal dimensions or the external views. Personality, in expert's believes, is to be sought in the context of timeworn structures. This case study executed in the historical structures of Sarshpor applied a 161 individuals as the statistical sample filling a questionnaire. An analytic- descriptive method was used. To collect data, both library survey and a field investigation (questionnaire) were applied along with consulting and interviewing active experts. The results showed that Sarshor is a timeworn dense structure with an overall of 63.48 percent either left or ownerless lands potential for imposing various cultural or social damages. Centric city gardens are considered as new strategies to create and enhance recreational atmospheres in the process of reconstructing and renewing the timeworn city structures to achieve modern structural patterns and to enhance the quality of life for residents who are living in these localities.

Key words: Garden, Personality, Timeworn Structures, Mashhad, Centric City Gardens.

Introduction

Gaining to the objectives of Islamic rooted utopias has been always the goals of Iranian municipal designers. Iranian historical gardens are among the best patterns reflecting the interactions between human and the nature. These type of gardens are considered because they can fulfill human being's physical and mental needs. The wise mixture of plants and water components accompanied with religious and aesthetics principals contribute a long-term sustainability to these structures. Bag (garden) was first used in middle-modern Persian (Chegini, 2002). This term is rooted in sacred concepts meaning a segregated place(Barati, 2004). Regarding the cultural paradigms dominating every post and pre Islamic as well as the contemporary period, this term has got a new identification so that many other terms such as Pardis, Bostan, Narenjestan and Behesht(Paradise) are now used for the same term. Iranian gardens are among the most ancient ones worldwide with a long-term history in Iran. With their various usages they formed the basis of Islamic designs all over the Islamic world (Dickie ,1968, 238). The designs of the Islamic gardens root deeply in Iranian, Arabic and Turkish gardens (Petruccidi, 2006). There is a holy relationship between nature and the Islamic worldview Indeed, Islamic gardens act as symbols of Quran drawn paradise so that the Islamic designers have constructed some identities of the paradise regarding the Holy Quran's pictures of the paradise (Ansari, 2007). Therefore, Iranian garden designs form the principals of municipal plans so that we can call a city "garden" and a garden " city"(Mirfendereski, 1995). The history of building City Gardens goes back to Sassanids dynasty at the time of Teymour

kingdom in Samarkand when he established a string of royal gardens.. This is not achievable unless designing some modern Islamic structures in the municipal context of these localities in the form of centric city gardens. Hence, the main objective of defining the indicators of Iranian- Islamic designs is to identify the characteristics and the criteria of these patterns in addition to utilizing some modern techniques to design standard atmospheres in the timeworn municipal structures. This study is seeking for producing an effective movement for gaining reliable data in the forthcoming future for designing green recreational places and reclamation of timeworn structures regarding the necessity of monitoring per capita area of these facilities by assessing and ranking the designing indices to meet the people's expectations of a modern town.

Indicators of identity in Iranian- Islamic gardens

Municipal designs in Iran are influenced by climatic, cultural, political and religious factors in which have contributed particular deep meanings to the drawn and built patterns that indicate the sustainability of the patterns in the course of time. Some studies have shown that mental, spiritual and physical growth resulted from the moral balance and faith to God will appear when applying adequate knowledge, technology and standards to design the buildings.

First of all it is necessary to know the characteristics of Iranian – Islamic gardens in the contemporary era and to know the necessary components of an identified design. Various natural and artificial factors are involved in forming municipal architectures in addition to environmental phenomena and aesthetics dimensions such as religious believes, traditional etiquette, behavioral patterns, technology ,knowledge, etc.

The Iranian – Islamic designs provide a suitable area for nature, water and light components to parade together and to produce unique consociation between municipal designs and architectural methods. This type of consociation shows the structural and formative influences on conceptual and religious aspects of the designs. A set of these components show the identity of the design. Totally these elements show cultural indices of a country, in this case, Iran.

Iranian- Islamic garden is a cultural, historical and structural phenomenon with a particular arrangement producing an idealistic environment. In fact an Iranian garden is a holy link amongst beauty and usefulness (Piernia, 1979). These gardens are geometrically square or rectangular e.g. Dolat Abad and Fin. These gardens show the link of natural and artificial environments. The main criteria for constructing these types of gardens include area, usage, structural characteristics, climate and the era when it is built. Designing of the gardens is of some hierarchal principals, symmetry, center and rhythm. The apogee of the symmetry is observed on the major axis of the garden (Soltan zadeh, 1999), thus we can simile the garden as a metaphor of paradise in its beauty because of its symmetry that is considered as a real beauty in Islamic art and architecture.

The main geometrical structure of the garden is biaxial or three axial that are formed based on the reconciliation of the building and the garden that starts from the entrance portal and the main palace on the direction of the major axis of the garden parallel to the geometrical length of the garden. In Iranian gardens the geometry of the building is highlighted by the geometry of the open space of the garden (Masoodi. 2003).

Architectures arrange all artificial components in the Iranian gardens and produce the total structure of the garden in coincidence with water and plant elements. The major and the biggest buildings are dedicated for governmental issues and the small one that are in the form of small rooms are dedicated to inner lives. These small places do not misarrange the gardens collocation (Mirfendereski, 2001). The buildings in the gardens consist of a portal that is used for the wards and the casts. In some gardens the portico on the upper stair of the portal id dedicated to welcome quests. These gardens are usually pent with interlaced walls. The main palace is located at the center with four platforms in a square, an eight sided or a cycle

design with a 12 – 25 square meters (Pirnia 1999). The palaces have 4 porticoes in four main dimensions. The floor of the palaces is always built upper than the ground surface mostly to provide the ability to use of the outer sights of the garden (soltanzadeh, 1999). Another reason for this type of design is that when you enter the garden you see the farthest point of the garden in a more near place that makes you to move toward the palace. Thus when you arrive to the palace you think of a very big garden in area. Indeed, the design tricks your eye so that simultaneous sight of a real and a virtual picture forms a vertical continuousness (Daneshdoost, 1984).

Water in Iranian and religious culture is a sacred element and the sign of spruce in Islamic thought, thus Iranian put a significant consideration to water sustainability especially when enriched with Islamic thoughts (Nagizadeh, 2005). The holy prophet of Islam (P.B.U.H.A.H.P¹) says: “if you scatter a knowledge or run a river you will see the consequences even after your death”(Nahjalbalaghah)

Undoubtedly, the role of plants among all other natural resources is highlighted in municipal designing. There have been different patterns to plant the trees including linear, superficial and massive, the first for creating a virtual large area for the garden and the latter for providing an obstacle for view. The most economic patterns for planting the trees are linear and massive because while you take a glance at the garden you see a wide area of tall trees in which are idealistically planted in ordered rows that provide the forthmentioned virtual view in your mind (pirnia, 1979 and Ansari, 1995).

Gardens, in addition to its structural features put significant effects on mental dimensions of the humankind. In the Iranian design of gardens the emphasis is on peace and thought (Shahcheraghi, 2012). The Iranian and the Islamic gardens, both designed according to the Quranic verses, resemble the paradise such we can trace the green trees, running waters, pools and flowers (Zomar surah, verse 20), doors and walls, plants and shades(S.Raad,V.29), pools(S.Kowthar,V.1). This type of design is the most meaningful pattern in utilizing God’s beautiful creations (Shimel, 1976)

The analysis of patterns and architectural elements of the Iranian cities indicate that particular meanings have been created in particular periods and completed in the following era. This completion is deeply matched with that particular place and period as well as the religious and cultural elements that cause the independency of these elements from the time passed. However, we can observe the nostalgic multi-scaled appearance of Iranian gardens. Unfortunately, nowadays, because of the lack of the knowledge of the meanings of Iranian- Islamic gardens and the lack of correct links between these identities and municipal architecture, we have cut the procedure so that we rarely see any newly built structure with the minimal standards of design and execution.

Characteristics of centric city gardens in timeworn structures

One of the main challenges in the country is exhaustion of some structures in the cities. These type of structures consist an average 10 percent of the city area (the statistics are drawn from the indices published by the Supreme Association of Architecture and Municipal designs). Renewing the timeworn structures is a continuous challenge in managing cities and for policy makers. Sustainability, wisdom and simplicity of the values laid behind the historical structures encouraged us to reclaim the structures regarding the need of their renewal by identifying the roots of the principals applied in designing historical places especially the natural elements. Elimination of the exhausted structures and contributing dynamic to these localities depend on their historical background that are associated with their economic, social, cultural, religious and historical issue. Nowadays, the historical places need to be renewed because the low quality of municipal indices in these localities has resulted in mutual low quality of life. The consequences of this mutual interaction has led to some abnormalities in our society so that have converted these localities to some unsecure, unbecoming, unhygienic, crowded, stressful and

¹ Peace be up on him and his progeny

environmental and sight contaminated places. These diverse conditions are highly advanced so that in some localities the extent of these abnormalities is near to a critical threshold. However a great need for a comprehensive planning is smelt for these localities. Therefore, to eliminate the limitations and to enhance the current status to renew the existing structures it seems that the new ideas for establishing centric city gardens is one of the major recommended solutions.

Table 1: Problems of Timeworn structures

	Structural	Social	Environmental
Timeworn Structure	Low quality of buildings for exhaustion Narrow arrays Low coefficient of penetrability and non- identified Edges Lack of safety and strength Shortage of laws Very low renewing process Absorption of low quality activities Non consistent activities with the textures No reliable owning system, relatively low prices of the land Improper constructions Low spatial quality Abnormalities in sight viewing Lack of public libraries or cultural centers	Lack of citizenship facilities Lack of open areas Lack of recreational atmospheres Improper ways to achieve to these places Increasing trend to leave the timeworn localities Exhausting and degradation of public places The young people trend to leave the localities because of timeworn structures Lack of security Lack of a good fame in possessing social element\s Pessimistic thoughts of the locality Lack of recreational centers Decrease in social communication Trend of poorer people for residing in the localities and particular classes such as addicted individuals	Lack of green atmospheres Environmental pollutions in the result of crowded places or traffic Lack of open places Lack of good landscapes in these landscapes
Centric city gardens	Establishing positive structures by identified structures and avoiding left segments Increasing the coefficient of usage Linkage between different structures Establishing identified entrances and green corridors Change in city landscape Establishing linkage between the gardens and the surroundings A significant role in renewing and developing the traditional structures Developing the quality of the so called structures/	Enhancing creational atmospheres in the localities Considering municipal management to renew the timeworn structures Establishing citizen’s satisfying places Enhancing security issues Balance in the nature of problematic localities Initiative feelings for the residents to stay in the localities Enhancing national pride and identity considering positive pictures in the minds Enhancing peripheral peace Absorbing people Enhancing social and cultural qualities Recalling the previous memories	Establishing concentrated green places in the timeworn structures Maintaining and enhancing ecological qualities Minimizing the environmental, sound and visual pollutions

Centric city gardens

Today, apartment style of living, high prices in grand cities and smaller towns are the causes for neglecting the natural heritages, thus it is evidently seen that per capita green area in declining. However, absence of natural elements in daily livings especially the timeworn localities has added to stressful behaviours resulting in decreased peace, security and many other healthy mental indices. This phenomena finally lead to decreased mental hyiegeny in the total society. In this study, we are seeking for finding a proper solution to renew these exhausted structures throughout establishing some more naural places in problematic places to enhance the qulity of resident’s lives. Studies that have investigated the historical variations of gardens in Iran show susyainablity and dynamic in the buildings of the historical palces in which play a significant role in structural designs if the cities. Iranian gardens are of internal monoity that is in confliction of their external various views so that various colors has various meanings but their soul of design is completely identical. These types of gardens bear particular social and moral values in historical localities but the modern built places lack of and advantage. Currently, automobiles are among the most destructive factors affecting these structures. Changes in these values and elements has lead to various changes in form and texture of the localities, decrease in per capita residentialm and green recreational areas, changes in pathway networks, changes in local activities, wannng personal limits, decrease in social interactions and wannng cultural values. However, Iranian- Islamic gardens can act like enriched pattern for modern designs. In this study the idea of establishing Iranian- Islamic gardens that we call them” centric city gardens” is recommended. These kind of gardens are wise, ecologic and modern places with Islamic Iranian elements. These dynamic new gardens are established in most crowded and polluted places to free human being from apartments and traffic and to contribute peace to him and link human kind with the nature. Therefore, these centric city gardens maintain their inner identity and a dimensionless quality with the ability to change the sight of timeworn city structures. The main objective of these city gardens is to recycle the vivacity to the exhausted structures using different elements of historical structures. These gardens are considered as initiatives of human activities such as social communications . these centric city gardens in the first step should be capable of enhancing their self physical status an secondary the circumstances of the surrounding environment. Centric city gardens are moving corridors that allow their users to act more freely. Therefore designing of these corridors can inspire more motivation, arrangement, spatial drawings, enhanced minded picture of the nature in the identified gardens and a national pride as well as remembering the memories.

Table 2: Indices of centric city centers in localities

<p>Climatic features</p>	<p>Proper response to climatic circumstances Response to environmental critics Meeting ecological indices Decreasing air, visual and sound pollutions Maximal use of solar energy and wind energy Establishing a sustainable environment Improving the quality of the environment near the city gardens</p>
<p>Cultural and social features</p>	<p>Enhancing the quality of the localities to be active Meeting individual and group needs Enhancing mental hygienic status Enhancing communications and social interactions Producing the sense of peace and security Participation in group works Enhancing social strategies Educations about the environment Providing some conditions for the private and governmental sector to take part</p>

	in the plans Enhancing the quality of spare times, and social and moral values Absorbing the residents by providing a cheerful picture in their mind Providing a balance and attractive atmosphere Establishing some modern environments in intensive localities
Formative features	Iranian –Islamic elements for designing gardens Using visual tools Symmetry arrangement, open and colored atmospheres Flexibility, suitability, simplicity, symmetry Mixing internal and external atmospheres Diversifying the activities Matched design with the modern patterns Sustainable designs in the cities Creating a visual stop point Ordered development in the centric city gardens and the surroundings

Thus, one of key issues in designing centric city gardens is to remove pessimistic thoughts about the timeworn structures and to replace them with optimistic views of natural elements like water, plant and soil that creates physical peaceful sense, recreation, more friendly visits, relaxation, social interactions and some atmospheres for voluntary exploitation, cultural and educational activities that absorb a wide range of people, increase the positive senses of residents and prevent them to change their locality.

The activities recommended for the centric city gardens should be arranged on the basis of Iranian-Islamic indices and their coincidence with modern needs. The design of these gardens must be more completed than the previous ones and help improve environmental, cultural and social sustainability indicators to create a sustainable development. Another challenge in renewing the timeworn structures is their spatial and time distance between the established gardens and the surrounding environment that play a significant role in resident’s acceptance for these new places and in their security coefficient since in these localities we observe a much more criminal behaviours relative to other localities in a city. However, it is recommended to establish them adjacent to some public places such as markets and mosques. In addition the population of the localities should be determined to calculate the per capita need of each locality to green places. Then, the centric city center should be established in a place with the highest impact factor. Furthermore, the area and the usages of the gardens must be determined based on correct environmental and social needs as well as the relative demographic scales.

The structure of central city gardens play a valuable role in renewing, repairing and developing traditional places. These gardens are of multidimensional and artistic influences, have sacred atmosphere with suitability, a high utility and providence as well as sustainability. The structure of these gardens has provided policies and management schemes with some indicators of green standard places to achieve a sustainable development for absorbing peoples in participating into renewing plans of the timeworn structures. Therefore, for identifying the municipal architectural principals in Iran we should provide a list of their identities so that match with the executable laws of the country and viewpoints of the designers. According to the modern needs of the country, these identities should be always updated to save the designing method of the critical risk of depletion of prominent meanings. Finally, some executable investigations should be done to complete the plan of centric city centers.

Study area

The origin of Mashhad goes back to the era of Imam Reza(P.B.U.H.A.H.P). The existence of Imam Reza’s holy shrine in this city has contributed it an international, regional and local as well as historical –

regional value that has recently resulted in some new designs to renew the timeworn municipal structure of the city. Unfortunately, these movements have led to degradation of some rare heritages including Arg Hokomati (governmental palace), city gates, etc causing a depletion of historical heritages in the city (Rahnama 2009). Mashhad is the biggest religious city of Iran with a population of 2,427,000 individuals in 2006 that accepts about 12,000,000 individuals as the pilgrims. Area of the city reaches to 300 square kilometers with a city center of about 168 ha consisting of about 150,000 individuals (Rahnama, 2009). At the beginning of the recent century Mashhad consisted of 6 great and 10 small localities. Bala khiaban, Paen Khiaban and Sarab are among the greatest and Sarshoor and Arg are among the smallest (Mpdarress Razavi, et al 2007). In this study we selected Sarshoor located at 352 meters long from the holy shrine. Sarshoor structure is an organic timeworn texture with various left lands. Of the historical characteristics of the locality we can mention its historical name "Sarshoor" and its especial spatial market structure. This market plays a linear centric role so that many other market corridors are related to the main passage of the market. This locality is located at 8th section of the 1th municipal zone in Mashhad consisting of 2226 households, a gross population intensity of 117.4 individual per ha and a gross residential intensity of 213.7 individuals per ha. The total area of the locality is about 70 ha and a population of 9052 individuals in 1991 and a pilgrim growth rate of 68.98% that will meet to 82.97% in 2016. Its constant residential area is about 296,068.6 square meters, renting area of 652,250.18 square meters, trade-residential area of about 341,849.3 square meters, a mixture of usages of about 175,303.39 square meters, and green parks of about 4,990.17 square meters, with a relative ratio of area at about 48.13%, 10.61%, 5.56%, 2.85% and 0.81% respectively (Moshavertash, 89-90).

Hypotheses

Totally, this study assumes that it is possible to renew the timeworn structures by applying the indicators of designing the Iranian-Islamic gardens. Thus getting known in companion with evaluation the factors forming these gardens helps both the managers and the designers to achieve a proper atmosphere. This leads to a more satisfaction coefficient of the individuals who reside in the timeworn structures. Therefore:
 H₁: It seems that the most significant indicators of the Iranian-Islamic gardens are dynamic designs and peaceful patterns that produce calmness in the timeworn structures.

H₂: It seems that constructing Iranian-Islamic gardens can enhance the current status in the locality.

H₃: It seems that the lack of certified standards and the improper circumstances of the green environments in the timeworn localities has resulted in non-satisfactory senses for the people who reside on these types of structures.

Results and Discussion

For testing the hypothesis of the study, first of all the indices of Iranian-Islamic gardens and the indicators of establishing centric city gardens in timeworn structures were defined. Then field data were collected by using a five option questionnaire. The objective of the questions was to evaluate the influences of Iranian-Islamic gardens on renewing the exhausted structures.

H₁: It seems that the major indices in designing Iranian-Islamic gardens are dynamic, cheer and peace in the timeworn structures:

Islamic-Iranian indices that show the amount of satisfaction and standard of green parks was investigated. City gardens can fulfill the needs. These indicators consist of the visual elements, symmetry, full and empty atmospheres, shades and lights, flexibility, suitability, simplicity and sustainability. In addition establishing the centric city gardens result in more cheerful streets and more peaceful structures. Thus this hypothesis is recognized.

H₂: Utilization of the Iranian-Islamic gardens result in enhancement of the current status of the locality

According to the first hypothesis and investigating the indicators of Iranian – Islamic gardens in Sarshoor and international per capita standards for green areas it was found that considering these indicators will improve the quality of designs in the locality that contribute to local identity, open spaces, achieving to a cheerful and dynamic environment in which lead to some enhances in local sights of view, safety level and social and cultural qualifications. Therefore, this hypothesis is also recognized.

H₃: It seems that the lack of standards result in residential unsatisfaction:

According to the field investigations and the findings that support the unsatisfaction especially in the size and the patterns of the designs, the statistical analysis showed a significant relationship between occupation, age and the dimension of the family with the level of satisfaction. Thus the third hypothesis is recognized too.

The most effective step for renewing the timeworn structures is to establish the centric city gardens at the center of the exhausted localities to contribute them their previous dynamics. This suitable pattern besides maintaining the architectural elements of Iranian – Islamic gardens produce cheerful atmospheres in the timeworn structures that needs to be informed of the potential capacities of these particular structures. Centric city gardens are designed for ecological, environmental, recreational, scientific and educational uses. Therefore establishing these types of gardens seek for enhancing the levels of social interactions, safety, peace and sight viewing of the localities in accompany with welfare for the citizens.

Conclusion

According to the results drawn from the questionnaires 68.17% and 31.83% of the answerers had an occupation or were seeking for a job, respectively. 76.96 % of them were educated in diploma and the remaining had an education level below the diploma. Most of the answerers were in the range of 20- 39 or more than 50. Accordingly, the resident households in Sashoor consisted of 2-7 individuals. The results showed that 28.58% of the answerers were the owner of their homes and 71.42% of the them were tenants. Most of them had their own store or the pilgrims. In addition a significant number of houses were bought to the hotels, motels or mosques. The older houses were rent to the pilgrims that is a sign of a big amount of residential traffic in Sarshoor. The international and the national standars of per capita green spaces is at least 7 square meters . Iranian- Islamic indices are also very important factors influencing on the amount of resident's satisfaction that is identified as a significant indicator for defining the quality and the quantity of designing the centric city gardens for achieving to a dynamic and peaceful atmosphere of these types of structures. The results show that high densities of population, low per capita ratio of the green parks and low vegetation cover are the origins of the environmental pollution that is a sign of environmental poorness in the locality. Regarding the intensive population a 63364 square meter area is necessary for the Sarshoor locality although the only place in this regard is about 4990.17 square meters located at Ayatollah Khamenei alley. Thus, we are faced with a threatening shortage of green parks in the locality of 58373.83 square meters. This problem gets more critical when a greate number of pilgrims annually rush into the locality. Therefore the municipality should dedicate or buy some areas to establish green places. We firstly recommend a left 4169 square meters segmet located at the eastern side of Imam Reza street. The optimal pattern for establishing such places should consider the distance and compatibility of the newly established parks with educational, cultural, athletic and residential centers as well as the circumstances of recreational places for producing a sustainable locality. The second recommendation is the left segment adjacent to Ghare Khan rivulet with an area of 11000 square meters. We believe that this place has the potential to produce a cheerful, dynamic and safe atmosphere that meets the needs of the increasing volume of pilgrims and the residents. If this segment is renewed then the Sarshoor main passage will be renewd too that plays a significant role in improving the multidimensional quality of the locality and encouraging national pride and local identity. Green housetops are recommended as the third solution to gaining the per capita green area staandards. However it is

recommended that when certifying the final justifications for the buildings to be constructed the green housetops should be obligatory.

- 1- Emphasizes should be put on main streets and intersections
- 2- Making links between Imam Reza street and Sarshoor locality
- 3- Enhancing the position and the quality of localities in the level of cities and residential scales.
- 4- Creating a typical entrance for the locality to improve the penetration coefficient of the residential structures
- 5- Producing a pattern for establishing suitable green parks in left or exhausted segments of land.
- 6- Enhancing the structural position of Sarshoor with the least degradation of the current appearance and the maximal utilization of Iranian- Islamic gardens.
- 7- Making links between Sarshoor and the newly established localities.
- 8- Fixing of the current circumstances of the residential segments of Sarshoor and preventing of their depletion in the result of highly degraded status of the locality.
- 9- Activating the internal parts of the locality by establishing centric city gardens and producing a cheerful atmosphere in the locality.
- 10- Maintaining and enhancing the ecologic qualifications in the locality
- 11- Maximal use of renewable energy resources.
- 12- Decreasing environmental pollutions

statistical cross tabulations show a significant relationship among the number of individuals in each family and the satisfaction coefficient. Infact individuals ranging from 15-20, older people, individuals whom their occupation is in a locality other than Sarshoor and the crowded families feel less satisfaction than the others mainly because of environmental pollutions, shortage of recreational green centers, not considering the private personalities and improper designs.. The city gardens play many outstanding roles in establishing social interactions amongst people that result in enhancement of moral values. Thus the findings show that lack of standards in designing the green parks and lack of meaningful designs result in resident's unsatisfaction

Recommendations

- 1- Investigation in all kinds of standards including climatic and environmental ones.
- 2- Use of left segments of lands to establish green places
- 3- Considering Islamic Iranian elements in the designs
- 4- Enhancing the quality of green places and maintaining the existing standards
- 5- Developing centric city gardens for children to establish their initial social interactions
- 6- Considering aesthetics indices in the timeworn structures
- 7- Encouraging residents to not leaving the locality
- 8- partnership of governmental and private organs.

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