

The Street as the Edge: Street Landscape Design based on Social Studies

Case Study: Aran and Bidgol Common Street

Maryam Rezaei Ghaleh* and Maryam Ramezani¹

Imam Khomeini International University

¹Deylaman Non-Profit Higher Education Institute, Iran

✉ Maryam.rezaei.gh@gmail.com

Received March 18, 2018; revised and accepted August 1, 2018

Abstract: Today, the streets play a very important role as the most important element of citizens' perceptions. Meanwhile, the urban edges will play an important role in the minds of citizens according to Kevin Lynch idea. Therefore, if the urban space simultaneously has the identity of street and edge, it becomes a very important element in the city. This element, more than mere street or urban edge, can help to strengthen citizens' sense of belonging to the city. Such a personality space has a difference from street and edge, but at the same time, it is a set of characteristics of both. This new identity will have a unique meaning in the minds of citizens that it leads to pay attention and strength the identity in the direction of meaning to the city. Therefore, the subject of this article is the recognition and introduction of street landscape that is also the mind edge. This organic street is located in the historic city of Aran & Bidgol (a city near Kashan) in Iran country. Aran & Bidgol has been created from the combination of the two old towns "Aran" and "Bidgol". In fact, the desired street is a two-sided edge. "Aran edge and Bidgol edge" have been gathered in a unique identity called Street. This street, on the one hand, in the mental aspect of the people of these two cities, separates "Aran" and "Bidgol", and on the other hand, is the link between the two cities. That is, this street is a combination of two identities, Aran Identity and Bidgol Identity in addition to having an independent identity. And of course, with the special following characteristics of this street, there is less a similar street.

Key words: Edge, Aran & Bidgol, border, street, mental perspective.

Introduction

The edges, like paths, must have form continuity throughout their length. When the adjacent two neighbourhoods do not have the opposite landscapes, it is necessary that the two sides of edge between two neighbourhoods are different to each other so that the observer can feel "inside" and "outside" of environment (Lynch, 1960). Recognition of Aran-Bidgol's common border street requires the information and knowledge gathered in the following areas:

Recognition of street, edge and role of edge in the mind landscape of citizens, a brief historical recognition of how to create the city and its development, the social recognition of the people that includes the people of Aran and Bidgol, and their commonalities recognition in this special issue.

Social studies in this city include three parts:

1. Recognition of Aran and Bidgol people separately.
2. Recognition of the people living on the common border street and their needs as the first street users.
3. Recognition of future perspective of city society and the common border street.

*Corresponding Author

Research Hypotheses

The common border street of Aran and Bidgol has an “identity for itself”. This street has an independent “personality”. This street has been created organically and gradually, but it is now an emerging creature. This street is a two-sided edge and it is considered a modern social unit.

This street has socially huge potential for the unification and linkage of most people of Aran and Bidgol, and it is possible to use proper planning of its potential in order to link and share more people on both sides to achieve common interests.

Methodology

The research method is field research and since it is related to the humanities and social sciences, it is qualitative. Information gathering methods through library studies, observation, interview, questionnaire, physical examination of architecture, and recognition of relationships, social relationships and citizen needs and through any behaviour that will make us more aware of the citizens, such as living with the people and sitting down and talking to them. Interviews have been conducted in two ways: In the first way, the semi-organized interview with the voters and the influential people in Aran and Bidgol was made separately in both communities (for more recognition of identity of each city separately in the past and now (coexistence of two cities) and forecasting the future perspective of city). In the second method, an organized interview with residents or shopkeepers in the selected street (Navab) was conducted as an explanatory questionnaire. Also, one of the most important ways of collecting information is either face-to-face or participatory observation, since this is the only way through which a fairly complete socio-environmental knowledge can be achieved and it leads to see, listen and make experience the reality by researcher and it makes him eyewitnesses.

Objective testimonies for a long time and even today are one of the decisive factors in measuring and accepting credit, description and narration (Fokuhi, 2004). In this regard, the researchers decided to stay in the study area and live with the people to approach the social group (which was not a member of it and did not enter it with the previous presumption). It is necessary that we penetrate inside the group so that we can pass through its borders and we are accepted in it and we can understand the culture of that group which

is not expressed necessarily as an important part of it (Fokuhi, 2004).

Social Role of Street

Rob Kerier considers urban spaces mainly in street and square classes (Krier, 1979). Roger Trancik mentions the most important urban spaces as streets and squares. He emphasizes that once again streets and squares in cities should be spaces for social expression and moving on to stop cars (Trancik, 1986). Considering the above mentioned and many similar cases, the significance of the street is taken as the urban space. On the other hand, a site identity is a special combination of social relations and therefore it becomes always “without stability, controversy and multiple” (Madanipoor, 2005). The street, which is one of the most important places for the formation of social relations, is not exception from this rule (Jacobs, 1992). According to John Lang, the quality received from a city depends heavily on the quality of its streets (Lang, 2017). However, different social groups of street user should also be considered in the streets. For example, children in the cities need a non-specialized out-of-home base to play and hang around and help shape their concepts from the world (Jacobs, 1992).

The viable streets are social. In other words, the street is a kind of open-air living room in which neighbours, especially children and elderlies interact with each other (Afshar et al., 2009). The city idea had been accepted as a gathering place of social encounters and meetings in all civilizations until the twentieth century as a natural phenomenon. At all times, humans have been enthusiastic and wishing to meet each other, except for our era, which is a reality (Cullen, 1995). In other words, the streets beyond the functional goals must create a community, get people to act and interact, provide the group for what he cannot achieve individually (Nobakht, 2009). And the streets should encourage collectivism and participation of people in community, as well as places for pleasurable public demonstrations to spend time on activities such as relaxation (Nobakht, 2009).

Edge and Its Characteristics

The edge is a linear factor. It is a boundary between the two parts, gaps, along the length between two continental parts of a city. Edges are side factors and not the axis of equilibrium and symmetry. They may be factors that block or limit some of the other factors. But to some extent it can be penetrated inside them. They may be like a string between two regions, a line along which two regions connect each other (Lynch,

1960). Edges are linear elements that are not used as a way, or the nature of their way is not used in this discussion and hidden in a halo of other functions (Bently, 2008). Urban edges can be examined in terms of nature in two objective and subjective categories: The objective and physical edges are divided into two natural and artificial categories (Diagram 1). The mind edge is the edge that there is not its body, but it defines a length in the minds of the citizens and it connects two urban points (Yarahmadi, 2010). Often the edges may be the path and wherever the edge is not blocked by the walking observer. Mobility on the edge is one of the main causes of its landscape. The edge is seen as a way to make stronger its borders as the way in the mind (Lynch, 1960).

Some of the expected qualities of the city's edges include: Visible, 3D Edge appearance, Edge Sequence, Continuity and Scope of vision, awareness on moving along the edge, matching the design with the scale of movement (Yarahmadi, 2010). It is possible to add the effect of the edge if allowed to penetrate into that visual factor or the factor that moves the view. In a way that it has connected to the texture of its two neighbourhoods in depth. In this case it should be considered as a "link",

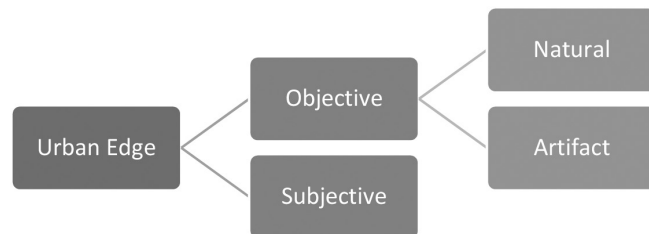
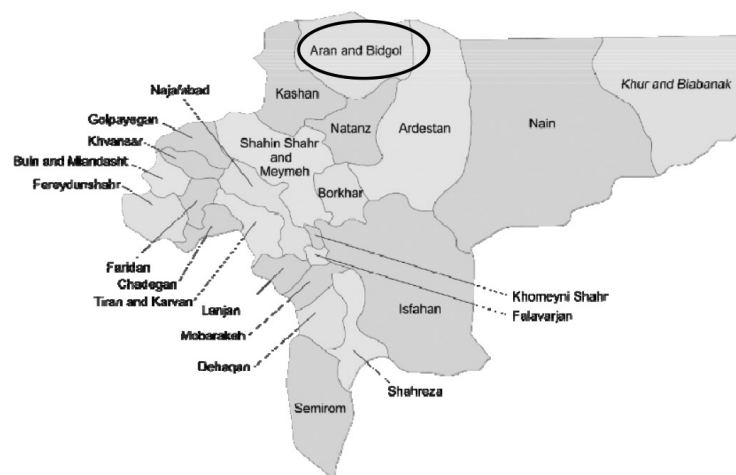


Diagram 1: Categorization of the urban edge.
(Source: Writers)



Map 1: The progress of physical development.

(Source: Aran and Bidgol's worn-out texture studies in 2009, Advisor: Ivan Naghsh Jahan)

not a single border. The link that takes two different pieces of the city together (Lynch, 1960). On the other hand, one cannot deny the social role of the edge, especially when the edge is a two-sided edge. In other words, there are people who live in different culture, history, and even dialect. But on the one hand, social interactions can be improved by strengthening beliefs and commonalities. Or, on the contrary, separatism arises with the decline of commonalities.

Recognition of the Body Structure of Aran and Bidgol

"Aran and Bidgol" is located near Kashan city in Iran. The city has been created from the fusion of the two old towns, Aran and Bidgol and it has a valuable historical texture (Map 1).

Each of these two villages, Aran and Bidgol, had Rural Wall. They are very close in terms of architecture and urban planning (Maps 2 and 3). Over time, these two villages that are placed near each other have expanded. And they have moved beyond the walls of the surrounding area to reach each other in the contemporary era (Map 4). Over the past four decades, they have grown completely matured together and they have had great physical development.

Now, at the first glance, it looks like a single city, and it is only by thinking more and talking to residents that the past can be understood.

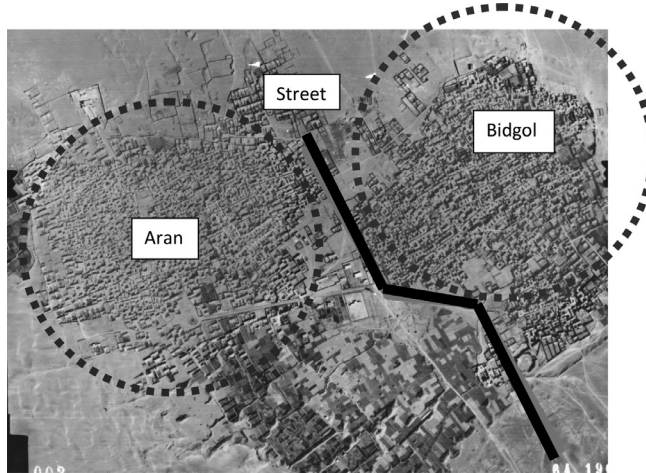
Define a Street as the Edge in Aran and Bidgol

As previously mentioned, the two cities of Aran and Bidgol have come together on the north-south street (Figure 1). One side of street is Aran and on the other





Map 2: Aerial photo of 1956 Aran and Bidgol.
(Source: Iran National Cartographic Center)



Map 3: Aerial photo of 1956 Aran and Bidgol, Common Border Street.
(Source: Iran National Cartographic Center)



Map 4: Historical map of Aran and Bidgol, Common Border Street.
(Source: Iran National Cartographic Center)

side is Bidgol. In fact, this street has two sides of edge: Aran edge and Bidgol edge which has gathered in unique identity called street. This street is known as the symbolic border between Aran and Bidgol. Perhaps the main reason for this is to place the mentioned street on rural wall of Bidgol. This boundary exists in the minds of people, but the body of the street does not show such a border. The reason is the new constructions that have been made in the city development. This street on the one hand is the mental aspect of the people of these two cities, separating Aran and Bidgol, and on the other hand, is the link between the two cities. That is, in addition to having an independent identity, this street is a combination of two identities, Aran Identity and Bidgol Identity.

Anyway, around the borderline street on both sides of the street, today, there is a mix of housing. And the people of two cities live together. Although today's mixing housing is seen everywhere in the new city, it is still bordered by the edge of the old cities in the minds of the people of this street. Although this street has been gradually and organically formed by people themselves and without urban management, it is not of high value in terms of architecture. But mentally, it has a unique and special personality in the whole city. Also, as the aerial photograph shows, this street is now one of the main north-south arteries of the city and plays the role of the backbone of the city. This street, which once was a subway and outside of both villages, today, with a new



Figure 1: The location of common border street in the aerial image of Aran and Bidgol.
(Source: <http://www.google.com/earth/index.html>)

personality, plays an effective role in the city's body and because of the specific mental perspective of this street in the minds of peoples and the growing body of the city, it is anticipated that the role of this street will become more and more important day by day.

Recognition of Aran and Bidgol from a Social Perspective

Recognition based on Library Studies

Economic and social and technological changes of developed countries to the rest of the world, including in Iran, have transformed the social fabric of cities such as Aran and Bidgol. These changes, with the construction and development of roads and economic networks, have, to some extent, destroyed the context of the old neighborhoods and merged neighbourhoods. But at the same time, it can still be seen in some neighbourhoods of previous traditional features (Aran and Bidgol Comprehensive Plan, 2001).

Language Features: The language used in Aran and Bidgol is Persian language. There is a difference of accent between Aran people and Bidgol people.

Religious Background: The religion of the Aran and Bidgol people is Islamic and a large group of people are Shiites. There is nothing about the religion of people in pre-Islamic periods (Naraghi, 1986). It can be said that this city is among the religious cities of Iran.

Recognition based on Objective Observations

Ceremonies and Religious Rituals: There are several traditional rituals in the city that are held in different times and places. Ritualistic behaviours (celebrations, feasts, collective mourning) can strengthen basic function and do group solidarity and help to integrate individual behaviour and a group structure (Aminzadeh, 2007). But the most important and influential ritual ceremony is Muharram in the city (Figure 2). With the start of the lunar month of Muharram, a traditional mourning ritual of the month begins. Mourning bands are considered as an urban ritual because they bring people to the streets and give spirituality to the urban environment and may include running the play (Aminzadeh, 1999). The city has been exited the normal process of holding this ritual and it is turning into a massive scene. A play is performed by residents, in which actors and viewers represent a single entity (Aminzadeh, 2007).

People with Traditional Approach: The traditional form of people life makes them more dependent on their



Figure 2: Hosseiniyeh Vshad, Aran
(Source: Writers, 2010)

family, relatives, ethnicity and neighbourhood like past time, and they have every opportunity to socialize and visit their elders and acquaintances. The most important elements in the mind of these people is the religious sites in the city. These places are not the only space for pilgrimage and worship but a place for recreation, spending leisure time, visiting, getting to know new news and etc.

Neighbourhood Dependency and Identity: The people of Aran and Bidgol have certain social behaviours. They define their identity by connecting to their old neighbourhoods, and the neighbourhood identity plays an important role here. Strong neighbourhood identity is the reason for the return of people to the old neighbourhoods during the Muharram mourning.

Converting Mentality to Objectivity: From the sculptures and ritual elements of the squares, streets, and special ritual exhibitions and mourning show, it can be concluded that these people have a special interest in the subjective view and the transformation of subjectivity into objectivity. Most of the selected landscape elements related to "Muharram ritual" in "Aran and Bidgol", which in addition to displaying the mentality of the city people, represent the identity of this city in the minds of other people (Figure 3).

Recognition of Aran and Bidgol based on Interview

Semi-organized interview with voters and influential people in Aran and Bidgol

Persons who have been interviewed were asked to explain their answers.

In this interview, the questions have been divided into three main sections:



Figure 3: Market neighbourhood center, Aran.
(Source: Writers, 2010)

1. The willingness of people of Aran and Bidgol to link the two ancient cities (the unification or separation of two cities from each other)
2. Recognition behavioural and collective city centres
3. Recognition common border street (Edge)

Conclusion from semi-structured interviews

- The sense of high belonging to the region, and especially their own city (known as Aran or Bidgol people, and they are patriot).
- Aran and Bidgol are considered as a city and they consider their co-existence as inevitable.
- The old and sometimes existing disputes and conflicts are caused by the unawareness of some of the city's elders and the views of outside of the collection.
- All of them have pointed to the existing potentials, including industrial, tourism features, patience and hardworking human beings.
- It refers to being traditional, religious, and high neighbourhood belonging among the people of this city.

Social Residents' Recognition of the Common Border Street (Edge)

For social recognition, an organized interview was conducted with residents or shopkeepers on the street. In this interview, the questions have been pre-designed and provided to the interviewees to complete it. In the end, they were asked to draw separately their mental perspective from Aran and Bidgol and Navab street. Then their responses are analyzed and statistically sureyed.

Conclusion from the Interviews

The ancient texture of Aran and Bidgol has been placed in the form of two specified, distinct areas approximately

500 metres from each other. And there was a cemetery and arable land at that distance. The common border street had been a gravel path with a very narrow width along rural wall of Bidgol and on the east side of the old agricultural lands of Aran.

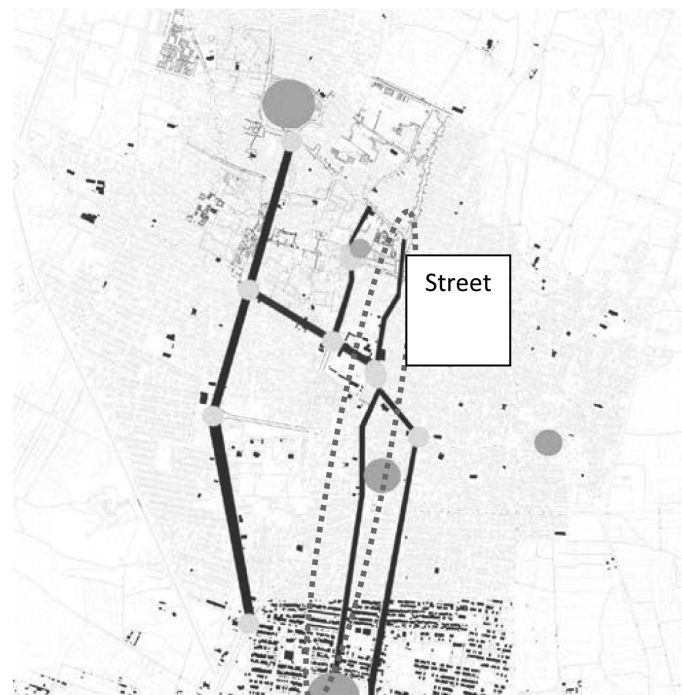
Results from a Mental Perspective

- The main points in the residents' mind are the priority of religious places and streets and squares of the city, respectively. Most people draw the network of important streets and squares of the city and their main emphasis is on the northern-southern orders. 55 percent of the people pointing to the common border street completely and 45 percent have seen half of the street, the southern side.
- In drawing a mental image of the street, they have pointed more than 40 percent to the angle of the street, and plotted it curved or defeated. The beginning and end of the street is more prominent in their minds (Map 5).

Conclusion of Objective Observations

Our desirable behavioural base means the edge belongs to the inhabitants of the texture that they are still largely adhering to traditions and they have the thought approach of traditional people.

Street Performance: People come to the street for a certain purpose, and they roam less



Map 5: Aggregation of the mental image of people from the city. (Source: Writers, 2011)

Viewing: A remarkable point in the social behaviours of these people is the viewing. They are seated on platforms located next to the houses and watching street.

Hours of Life on the Street: As for the hours of people living in this street, it should be said that, like any other traditional city, they are submissive to holy times. People here have adapted themselves to nature. In the morning, they start their works on sunrise and end their works until the Azan pm and close their business to attend prayers. In the afternoons they go home to rest. At this time, the city is almost shut down. The presence on the street and other areas of the city will eventually last until 9 pm, then most people are inside the houses and the city is closed again. The busy days of the street are sunset (hours before and after sunset), which will certainly be different hours in summer and winter. In the winter, people are more likely to use light of sun in the afternoon, and they come out sooner and go home sooner. In the summer, on the contrary, they come out at near sunset to avoid sunlight, and return home later to enjoy the night's cool.

Future Goals and Policies of Aran and Bidgol City and Its Edge

The greater link between Aran and Bidgol will lead to different benefits to all citizens, including Aran and Bidgol people. And the following reasons indicate that this link is considered as the main city's future policy:

- Political and economic interests

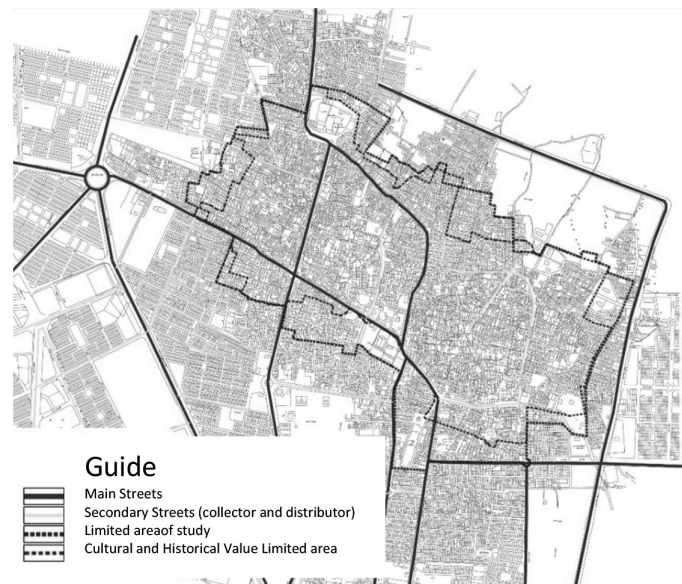
Having a single identity brings together common interests for attracting more national credits and appropriate urban facilities and infrastructure, while at the same time cultural and historical independence under the unity of the two cities can find a higher political position in the country and benefits from it.

- City development process

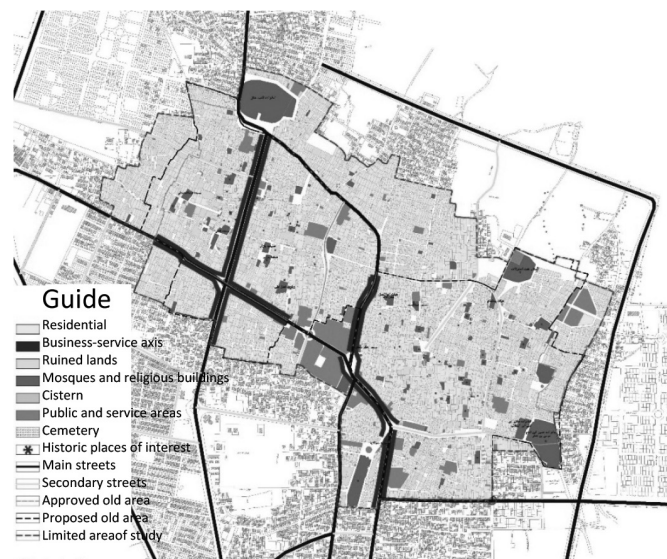
How to expand the physical structure of the two cities in recent years and approaching together and, eventually, getting together and at the same time increasing the interactions between the people and the settling of each residents of two cities in the opposite area, indicate an increase in this trend in the coming years (Maps 6 and 7).

- Flourishing capacities and potentials

The street locates in the historical centre of the city. It's an important access point for urban transport and attracts tourists (because street is an edge).



Map 6: Grading of urban accesses.
(Source: Detailed plan, 2011)



Map 7: Urban land uses. (Source: Detailed plan, 2011)

Conclusion

Emphasis on landscape and identity elements in cities lead to continuous mental imagery and readability. The edges are very effective in identifying the main lengths in the city's structure to create a single totality and to keep alive its natural, historical and artifact identity. The common border street of Aran and Bidgol as an edge is also no exception from this rule. Paying attention to this important landscape element in Aran and Bidgol and highlighting its social role helps to identify the city and bringing more people to it. In studies from a variety

of perspectives, it looked at the common border street, and it was concluded that the special characteristics of the street that the total of them excludes this street from other streets of this city are as follows:

- Being organic
- Urban two-sided edge as mind edge
- A street on the common border between two historical parts of Aran and Bidgol (collection of two cultures)
- One of the main north-south ways of the city
- Placing in the historical area of the city
- Placing in the heart of contemporary city
- The existence of public, service and government zones
- The existence of commercial land use row
- These features in total represent the gradual

development of this street and the special and new significance and identity that has been found today. A street as the urban edge that has a unique character. A street with important roles in the city is also rising in the future. The unique spatial and social location of this urban space will give it great and expanding potentials. The most important potential of this street is the link between two historic villages that are also very interesting for out-of-town contacts in addition to citizens. Considering the points mentioned on this street as an edge, it can be taken a step towards the growth of the city by identifying the goals that are appropriate and in accordance with the needs of the community, and strengthening the positive points and trying to adjust the negative points of this space (Figure 4).



Figure 4: Common border street panorama. (Source: Detailed plan, 2011)

Among the most important of these applied goals, tourism can be used to strengthen the street's role in the city. Natural tourism (considering the proximity of this city to the Maranjab desert) and historic tourism for this historic city can be strategic goals, so that tourists coming from all over the world will be invited to this city's edge to take a closer look at the link between the two historic cities. And this will contribute to the growth of the city.

References

- Afshar, E., Mahmoodi Rad, B. and M. Mahmoodi Rad (2009). Concepts and Principles of Planning for Special Street. *Quarterly Journal of Abadi Architecture and Urban Planning*, **63**, Tehran.
- Aminzadeh, B. (1999). Hosseiniehs and religious sites, Statement of identity of Iranian cities. *Journal of Honar-ha-ye-ziba Memari-va-Shahrsazi*, **6**: 55-66.
- Aminzadeh, B. (2007). The recognition the effect of collective rituals on the configuration of the traditional city (Case Study: Semnan). *Journal of Honar-ha-ye-ziba Memari-va-Shahrsazi*, **32**: 5-13.
- Aran & Bidgol Comprehensive Plan (2003). Housing and urban planning organization of Isfahan province, Volume I.
- Bently, Ian and others (2008). *Responsive Environments*. Oxford: Architectural Press.
- Cullen, Gordon (1995). *The concise townscape*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, Boston.
- Fokuhi, N. (2004). *Urban Anthropology*. Ney Press, First Edition, Tehran.
- Ivan Naghsh Jahan's advisor office. (2009). *Studies on Aran and Bidgol old texture*.
- Jacobs, Jane (1992). *Death and Life of Great American Cities*. Vintage Books, New York.
- Krier, R. (1979). *Urban spaces*. Academy Editions, London.
- Lang, J. (2017). *Urban design: A typology of procedures and products*. Taylor and Francis, London.
- Lynch, K. (1960). *The Image of the City*. MIT Press, Cambridge.
- Madanipoor, A. (2005). *Designing Urban Space; Attitude on the Social and Spatial Process*. Translation by Farhad Mortazayi, Urban Planning and Processing Co., Tehran.
- Naraghi, H. (1986). *Social History of Kashan*. Scientific and Cultural Press, Second Edition, Tehran.
- Nobakht, M. (2009). Special Streets and Urban Planning. *Quarterly Journal of Abadi Architecture and Urban Planning*, **63**, Tehran.
- Trancik, R. (1986). *Finding lost space: Theories of urban design*. John Wiley & Sons Press.
- Ya'ra-Ahmadi, S. (2010). Investigation the role of edges in realizing landscape purposes. *Journal of Manzar*, **11**, Tehran.

CAPITAL PUBLISHING COMPANY

Recent and Forthcoming Publications on Climate Change and Environmental Sciences

Mohanty	Advanced Numerical Modeling and Data Assimilation Techniques for Tropical Cyclone Predictions
Goel	Advances in Soil and Hazardous Waste Management
Rakhecha	Applied Hydrometeorology
Behera	Bioenergy for Sustainability and Security
Nagaraajan	Climate and Natural Resources
Subramanian	Coastal Environments — Focus on Asian Regions
Nagaraajan	Drought Assessment
Křeček	Ecosystem Services of Headwater Catchments
*Kumar	Emerging Contaminants in the Water Environment: A South East Asian Scenario and Challenges
Naqvi	Geology and Evolution of the Indian Plate (From Hadean to Holocene - 4 GA to 4 KA)
Sharma	Geology of Andaman - Nicobar: The Neogene
Basavaiah	Geomagnetism: Solid Earth and Upper Atmosphere Perspectives
Raju	Geostatistical and Geospatial Approaches for the Characterization of Natural Resources in the Environment: Challenges, Processes and Strategies
Mitra	Global Environmental Changes in South Asia: A Regional Perspective
Sikdar	Groundwater Development and Management: Issues and Challenges in South Asia
Thangarajan	Groundwater Flow and Mass Transport Modeling
Ghosh	Groundwater Governance
Ghosh	Groundwater Modelling and Management
Thangarajan	Groundwater: Resource Evaluation, Augmentation, Contamination, Restoration, Modeling and Management
Ray	High Impact Weather Events over the SAARC Region
Machiwal	Hydrologic Time Series: Theory and Practice
Beheim	Integrated Watershed Management
Chatterjee	Macro-Economics of Mineral and Water Resources—Important Issues
Ramanathan	Management and Sustainable Development of Coastal Zone Environments
Krecek	Management of Mountain Watersheds
Raju	Management of Natural Resources in a Changing Environment
Raju	Management of Water, Energy and Bio-Resources in the Era of Climate Change: Emerging Issues and Challenges
Das	Microbial Fuel Cell: A bioelectrochemical system that converts Waste to Watts
Kayal	Microearthquake Seismology and Seismotectonics of India
Talapatra	Modelling and Geochemical Exploration of Mineral Deposits
*Tiwari	Modern Singular Special Based Denoising and Filtering Techniques for 2d and 3d Reflection Seismic Data
Mohanty	Monitoring and Prediction of Tropical Cyclones in the Indian Ocean and Climate Change
Jha	Natural and Anthropogenic Disasters: Vulnerability, Preparedness and Mitigation
Nagaraajan	Natural and Mad-made Disasters: Assessment and Management
Subramanian	Rivers of South Asia
Ramanathan	Safe and Sustainable Use of Arsenic Contaminated Aquifers in the Gangetic Plain: A Multi-Disciplinary Approach
Behari	Sustainability, Green Energy and Climate Change: Revisited
Datta	Theory and Principles of Simulation Modelling in Soil-Plant System
Kurisu	Trends in Asian Water Environmental Science and Technology
Mohapatra	Tropical Cyclone Activity over the North Indian Ocean

*Forthcoming

For more detailed information on individual titles, please log on to our website www.capital-publishing.com