

center”Belcore”, the central square of Venice “Saint Marco” and the central square of Siena, as the centers of the cities, act as the trade and governing centers. In addition, there are other centers within these towns that play civic and mainly religious role.

The outstanding symbols and signs of Venice, 4. Siena and Florence, like the clock towers, are made of bricks. In Lion, the cathedral has been built on the hill. It is an undeniable fact that the churches and the cathedrals of the cities are one of their most important and valuable assets, but not an overwhelming one. In Florence and Lion, the role of the cathedrals and churches comprehensibly are stronger, whereas in Siena and Venice is somewhat less pronounced.

5. The connectivity of the squares and the centers of the neighbourhoods in these cities does not seem to be overwhelming. Although, to some degree, the accessibility of commercial squares, religious squares, wide streets, narrow alleys, passages and the spaces between the building blocks is clearly visible.

6. In all four cities, the dwelling buildings,

in an extrovert manner can be seen above the commercial units in all passages and streets. In reviewing the “social-cultural” and “skeletal-spatial” factors of our sample cities, it is observed that, despite their historic past, the primary structure of the living quarters and the neighbourhoods, that could indicate the existence of unity and harmony of all the determining factors of organized form, do not exist as a whole. The variations of the medieval towns, notwithstanding their own reasons, could be one of the factors for the lack of unity, organization and harmony of the space and the neighbourhoods, so much so that the structure of the neighbourhoods as a complete cells of a whole body has been retained in its undeveloped initial form in the city organization.

In conclusion, no clear answers for the questions that have been raised in this study, in relation to the existence of neighbourhood order, that have been elaborated above, was obtained. This could partly be due to the limitation of this particular study.

Endnote

*This article describes the discovery-based learning based on research activities in Europe trip in 2015.

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the busy atmosphere of trading quarters (Vikno Bridge in Florence, Del Campo square in Siena and the alleys of Venice), the communal and racial history of Florence that in medieval period consisted of four large neighbourhoods, with its own church and also seventeen neighbourhoods have the names of the animal in Siena, could all be the manifestation of the neighbourhoods with the identity (Fig.12).

Conclusion

In review of the field work and the connected studies carried out on four medieval cities of Florence, Venice, Siena and Lion, in order to establish the real meaning of a complete neighbourhood, the determining yardstick of different factors of the spatial organization of the city were employed. Toward this end, two determinant groups of “skeletal-spatial structure” and “social-cultural structure” were used to introduce the four cities.

Therefore, in order to comprehend the meaning, a general definition of a neighbourhood has been presented. A complete neighbourhood is one which, beside having all the necessary factors, they should be in a juncture in such a way that they are answerable towards the function of the neighbourhood. In another words, in a neighbourhood, apart from social and cultural aspect, we need to insist on the skeletal and spatial aspects too, in such a way that the neighbourhoods, as a smaller units of the whole city, should have the characteristics that the city has and function in a semi-independent way. As a result, having had the field observation and in line with the presentation of quality visual comprehension, the following, the following conclusions were arrived at:

In medieval times, the towns were different

Social Interactions and Belonging

As it has been elaborated before, the observation shows that the open spaces of the city were suitable for commercial, social, and civil activities in the medieval period. These centers still play a strong role in social connections as the main factor of extrovert attitude, the political and social life. Such spaces help to create a sense of trust, belonging and communality among the citizens (Fig.13).

from the present towns that have medieval background. The concept, the definition, role and position, shaping pattern, distinct factors and shaping principles of the social, skeletal and spatial structure indicate that the medieval towns, in their early form, had some of the characteristics of today’s towns, but in a primary form. Contrary to this, the ancient Iranian towns have enjoyed the unity, connectivity, uniformity of all the skeletal, social factors, the factors that lack in medieval towns, leading to tension between the public and private spaces.

The following points could be ultimately concluded:

1. The basis of Lion and Florence goes back to grid and chess-board like Roman structure, however, as the time passed by, they lost their initial structure and in medieval period, they have mostly lost the grid, but still have retained the distinct characteristics of the Middle Ages, despite the continued changes in the following periods.
2. Venice and Siena have retained their natural and organic structure of the medieval period.
3. Florence, in medieval period had two city centers, i.e. the Republic Square and the Siniorita Square. The Lion city



Fig. 12. Colorful views of houses with infrared windows and flower pots in Venice- Sloping alleys of Siena- The entrances are framed by the stone and decorated with sculptures of livestock (Lyon).
Photo: Farnoosh Dabaghian, 2015.



Fig. 13. Lyon, Venice & Siena. Social interactions in the main fields of the city or in open spaces between urban blocks.
Photo: Farnoosh Dabaghian, 2015.

to the readability and the façade of the cities. But, the organic and natural characteristics of Siena and Venice and their compact space, have reduced the readability of the cities. Similarly, the role of the facial signs should not be overlooked. Some samples of the neighbourhood identity are: The narrow and inclined streets in

Siena, the terrace houses with protruding windows in Venice, the entrance with the inscribed and adorned stone tablets in Lion and Florence, the stone cobbled streets, the quiet atmosphere of some of the neighbourhoods, the long distance of rich dwelling quarters from the hustle and bustle of the crowded neighbourhoods and markets,



Fig. 11. Lyon & Venice.
Top-Left: Main routes
Middle: Sub-routes
Right: Entrance to the houses
Down: Medieval courtyards.
Photo: Farnoosh Dabaghian, 2015.

- 2.The order of the empty and occupied spaces
- 3.The sounds of the neighbourhood
- 4.The smells of the neighbourhood
- 5.The history of the dwellings

It is worth mentioning that gaining a detailed extensive knowledge about the social and cultural structure of these cities, due to short stoppage in the cities under the study, does not do any justice and more extended research is

needed. The results of the research, based on the observations, are as follows:

The readability of a city is a vital aspect of it, where one can gain knowledge and create a clear perception about the facial structure of the city. The relationship between the city blocks (filled space) and the squares and the streets (empty places) and also the organized chess-board like structure of Lion and Florence have contributed

either followed the topography of the land or used the flat spaces.

The construction of the houses, tightly, next to each other in a row, is the indicative of building style in the Middle Ages towns, with an empty center in the middle. Dark and narrow alleys and passages, devoid of plants trees or gardens in even public spaces. In this era, the green spaces could be seen in private lands, in courtyards, houses or churches.

Hierarchies

Adhering to the hierarchy, has been the indicative of the introvert character of the towns and the desire to strengthen these features as one of the most fundamental principles of the architecture of the traditional cities in Iran. However, in European cities and especially in the Middle Ages, introvert aspect has been followed and the hierarchy in the skeletal structure has seldom been observed.

In the feudal system, the hierarchy of the upper class, middle class and the poor has been as such, that the rich live in the center of the town, near the commercial, religious and political centers, govern and control the town, Medici family in an example of the rich in Florence. The less well-off live further out and the poor get the town suburbs. Ethnic minorities and other religious denominations have their own ghetto, usually out of the city gates and in an enclosed environment (Shakoei, 1993: 74). The Jews quarter in Florence is one of the examples of such neighbourhoods (Fig.10).

The Review of the Social and Cultural Structures of the Cities

The neighbourhoods have always been the dwelling places of traders, specialists, religious minorities and various social groupings, in a

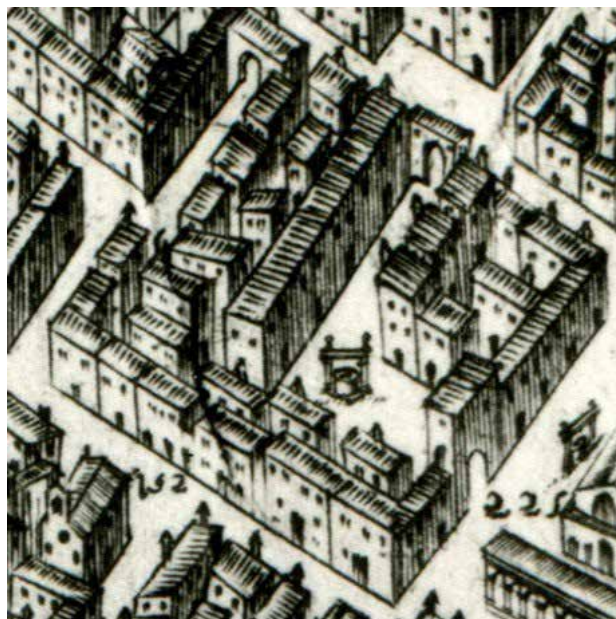


Fig.10. Florence, Ghetto map.
source : www.walksinsideitaly.com.

way that the social settings and atmosphere of a neighbourhood was consistent with distinct cultural values of that community and determined the level of support and relationship between the individuals (Tavassoli, 2002:9). Many factors determine the level of interdependency, support, unity, social relationship and connectivity within a neighbourhood like: religion, race, occupation, culture, language, values and economic activities. Therefore, the mixture of many neighbourhoods, due to their inherent characteristics are made of identical troops. The determining factors, in review of the neighbourhood organizations of our sample cities include:

1. The identity of the neighbourhood (Fig.11)
2. Social interactions and attachments

Neighbourhood Identity

The indicators of identity of the neighbourhoods in our four cities are as follows:

1. The readings and appearance of the neighbourhood



Fig. 8. Florence, santa maria del fiore Cathedral and Signoria Square (Citadel Military)
source : www.guidaperfirenze.it



Fig. 9. Siena, City Hall and Tower Clock Tower in Del Campo Square.
source : www.guidaperfirenze.it/ www.alamy.com.

competes with the cathedral and the rest of the religious centers of the town. The markets that are strewn all across the neighbourhoods, rendering them quite captivating.

3. In Florence, The gigantic presence of the cathedral and churches, with their splendid grandeur, from the top of Michael Angelo square are the most memorable point. Beside these, there are many administrative and government buildings with their brick towers are prime examples of the ancient signs.

4. In Siena the city hall and the brick clock building in Del Campo square are among the most outstanding memories and signs of its glorious past that attract the attention of the visitors upon arrival (Fig 8 & 9).

The shaping of the pattern

Although in shaping of the Middle Ages cities different social, political and economic factors played a part, but we can not deny the deny the geographical, topographical and climatic contributions. The placement of the Middle Ages cites were chosen primarily on the basis of defensibility of such places. That is why they have been built on highland or islands and then the fortifications were built around them.

In our study samples, Lion was built between two rivers of Roon and Soon, Venice was like an island with many water channels connected to each other. The primary nucleus of Florence was built at the banks of Arno river and Siena was established on highland. It has been already mentioned that the creation of security, defense against the enemy and control of the aliens were among the prime reason for the fortifications that were erected around these cities. The high walls, beside separating the city from the surrounding, was a symbol of independence and the prosperity of the inhabitants to afford the costly venture. The paths of the fortifications,

open up to a square, add to the value of the square. Other openings in Lyon are in a shape of small opening, in Venice as a private space serving several households, in Florence either as a private space or semi-public squares, but in Siena, due to the defensive nature of the city, such spaces are limited (Fig.6).

4.The city blocks and the residential buildings, according to the requirement of the era and in direct contact with the paths and the pedestrians, have been built on terrace basis, with the narrow alleys dividing the rows of the houses. These buildings have, in some case protruded into the streets, so much so that in some cases the width of the street is entirely blocked and by building low passage ways are scattered across the city like Venice and Siena. In Lyon and Florence also, the residential quarters, with their Roman nature, have more organized rectangular shapes with wide passages and chess-patterned shapes and during the medieval period, the passages were built parallel to each other, radial and branched out.

5.The inhabitants of the medieval towns used to build their businesses on the busy streets and next to their dwellings.

6. The workshops were built on the ground level and the living quarters above that. The existing samples of these still function in Lyon and Venice (Fig. 7).

The results of the finding all the four cities in the study

A.The connection of the city center with the neighbourhood center and the key centers such as the open spaces opposite the churches in cities like Florence and Lyon were very strong and tangible.

B.The connection between the primary network with the main neighbourhood passages in Florence and Lyon could easily be seen. I Siena and Venice, however, due to radial and organic

structure of the cities, the connectivity between the primary and secondary network was not so evident.

C.The connection between the public and private spaces in more visible in Venice and Florence.

D.The connection between the service, cultural, religious, and political spaces in Siena and Venice is more dispersed.

The Outstanding City Factors

The city signs that enable to distinguish one neighbourhood or locality from the other, give distinct characteristics to every part of the city. Such signs, in any manner or form, build direct and deep relationship with the visitors establish the perception of the visitor from the city. We can therefore refer to the churches, clock-towers, the squares, the city hall, the garrisons and the administrative buildings within these four cities. Lion and Florence with their Roman history and the medieval cities of Venice and Siena, have their own indicative sign that differ from each other. In Lion and Florence the physical signs are visible all across the city, whereas in Venice and Siena the signs are only visible in the center of the town where activities are concentrated. Therefore:

1. In Lion, the signs are reflected by the churches, so much so that the three most important neighbourhoods of the city are recognized by their churches. Another prime examples of this city is the fact that the churches and the cathedrals are all built on the hills and the highlands. Another factor that could be mentioned about the Lion is, the market that connects the three Saint Paul, Saint Jane and Saint George churches with each other.

2. In Venice, the clock tower and the Saint Marco square are important features of this city. The brick tower, in terms of height and grandeur

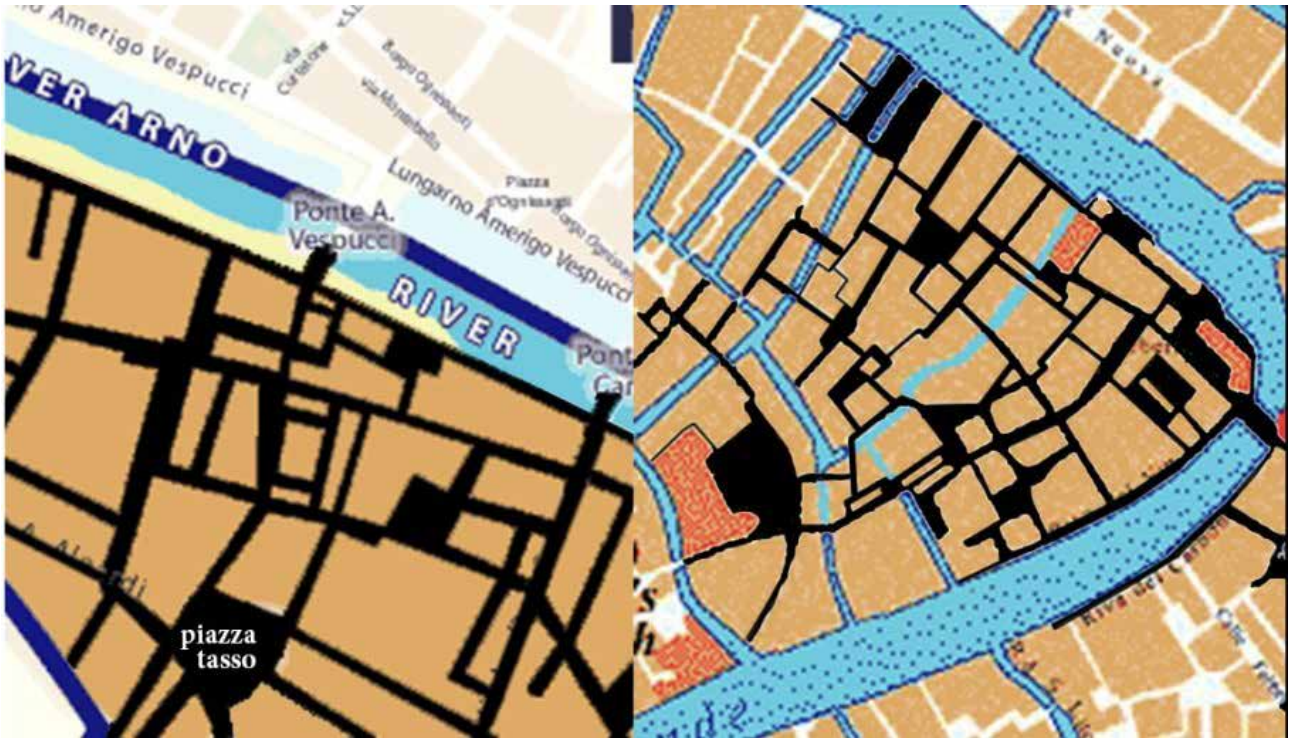


Fig. 6. In the cities of Venice and the southern part of Florence, two or more fields create continuous spaces. Left: Florence. Right: Venice. Photo: Farnoosh Dabaghian, 2015.



Fig. 7. Lyon
Photo: Farnoosh Dabaghian, 2015.



Fig. 4. The main fields, as the main centers of the medieval cities, were to deal with administrative, commercial, and government affairs.
Top: Delcampo Square in Siena.
source: www.eardleydesign.com.
Down: Signoria Square in Florence.
source: www.brunelleschihotelflorence.com.

1. Trade and governmental squares, apart from acting as the center of the town, have encompassed all the administrative aspects of the town like all governmental and municipality buildings, the trade court, the garrison and trade activities of the town etc. Like Del Campo square in Siena and Siniorita square in Florence (Fig.4).

2. Smaller and less important square, in connection to the main square, create two center network for the town. Such squares act as the open space in front of the churches or



Fig. 5. Open spaces on the front of the church were used for religious and commercial affairs.
Top : Saint Jean Cathedral in Lyon.
source : www.hanway.es.
Down : san Lorenzo church in Florence.
source : www.firenze.repubblica.it.

cathedrals, to enable to hold a large crowd for religious ceremonies like the open spaces in front of Saint Paul and Saint Jane in Lyon, Santa Maria Asvanta in Siena and Saint Jovanni square in Florence (Fig.5).

3. Another categories of open space relates to the ones that are usually situated at the end of the narrow alleys. The narrow alleys with three story compact buildings, ending to an open space perceived to depict something of value. These narrow alleys when suddenly



Fig. 3. Neighborhood or city Center.

Top-right: Lyon (Bellecour Square), source : www.gites.fr. left: Florence (Republic Square), source: www.Dreamstime.com. Down-right: Venice (San marco Square), source : www.AliExpress.com. left: Siena(Delcampo Square), source : www.Dreamstime.com.

centrality of daily and weekly service offer, and commercial exchange etc. could be emphasized.

The structural (connection between the elements)

The networks of paths and roads are the main factor of connecting different units of the town, connecting the main city entrances to the center, which like Florence and Leon, due to their Roman background like Venice and Siena have organized systems and sometimes due to having security and natural characteristics have organic nature. We can therefore, in review of the city structure of the four cities, this question could be posed that:

Have the determining factors (the center of the

city or neighbourhood, secondary and main networks, public and private spaces, different service centers etc.) of spatial structure of neighbourhood been present?

The connection between the factors and the results of the conclusions are as follows:

The streets of the Middle Ages played the most significant role in skeletal structure of the towns like Florence and Leon which were the Roman garrison towns. However, during the development and renovation, they lost their geometric shapes and during the following periods the remaining geometry was gradually eroded.

Along these streets some spaces have been formed that are mentioned here:

Centrality or the nucleus

In observation and review of the four cities, this question could be raised: Could the existing public spaces be defined as the center of the city or the neighbourhoods?

According to which aspects in table no;1, have these centers been identified?

In view of the review of four squares of “Belcore” in Leon, “Saint Marco” in Venice, republica” in Florence and “Delcumpo” in Siena, the following findings have been ascertained:

1. Belcor square of Leon during Roman era was used as an army and trade center, whereas in 18th century, during the reign of Luis the 14th, this square was used as a public one. In contemporary period, it is used for social events, festivities and sound and light programs. The role of this square, throughout its history, has been maintained as the center of the city, despite the difference in its usage throughout the same period.

2. In Florence, the first nucleus of the Roman city is formed up the north of the Arno river, where it sits along two north-south and east-west directions, from the crossing of which the city square is created as a rectangle; known today as the republic square. Florence is one of the outstanding examples of a growing city among the European cities, so much so that all through its history, the fortifications around the city kept expanding. The fortification of the 12th century was followed by another one in 14th century (Moris,1995:104. Siniorita square, right in the middle of the town, since the Middle Ages, has been used as the center of social and civilian activities for 6 centuries (Fig. 2).

3. In Venice, the Saint Marco square was made along the river path, and ever since, it has been used for social, cultural, religious, and political activities. This square, as the center of the



Fig.2. The blue lines depict the Roman fence.
source: www.timelineflorence.com

city and an open space in front of the Bisance Cathedral, has gone through many changes throughout its history and the following centuries, from shopping stands to building annexes, depending on the intention of usage.

4. In Siena, the undulations of the topography of the area and the question of access has been so intertwined so much so that it is made into an outstanding place. With the presence of the cathedral and the markets around, it is true manifestation of a center for social connectivity, between a spiritual life and daily commercial activities. The city has been created by organic curved paths spinning round the center of the city. The main part of the valley passes through the square and the city is located across the visual line of the square (Fig.3).

In each of these squares besides common and social activities, have their own particular skeletal structure. The centrality of their local emblems and signs in squares like Saint Marco and Del Campo, and the centrality effected by cultural and social values in all four squares, due to cultural, political and historic events, social and urban activities, festivities, carnivals, and

Del Compo in Siena, Siniorita in Florence, and Saint Marco in Venice, were in fact initially the slaughter markets. These three squares are distinct examples of large open public spaces, where commercial activities are simultaneously carried out within their compound.

Having said so, the main factors of the middle Ages towns, in line with the aforementioned effective factors, have been manifested as the market and the church. Beside what has been said about the origin of their existence and the common social, economic and political background of these towns, we can divide their spatial organization into two types of chessboard network and the uncontrolled organic. The sample types of Venice and Siena have organic structure and Florence and Leon follow Roman Nucleolus, with chessboard organized pattern (Fig.1).

Spatial Organization of a town

The spatial organization of a town consists of a backbone and a network system which relates to inter-connectivity of all practical aspects the renders unity to the town; and every minute part of it is spread all across the town and the living quarters. In a more comprehensive definition, which we intend to set forward via this study: “the spatial organization of the city, is the result of the manifestation of the citizens’ organized perception for the space and their communal living environment and in fact, we can refer to the term spatial organization, where there is enough organization between all aspects of a town to render it as a unified system”(Mansoori, 2007: 51).

Among all that, a neighbourhood, as one of more distinct aspect of the town’s spatial organization, connected to dwelling, acts as an independent sub system. Therefore, in order to have better understanding of a neighbourhood,

beside describing its concept and organization; we must not only consider its “skeletal-spatial” aspect, but also on its “social-cultural” aspect to get better overall view. To the same degree that different types of dwellings or the skeletal fabric of an area, distinguishes them from rest of the town, the kind of communication, social relationship, occupational type, language, racial background, and even the type of noises the come out of that neighbourhood, give us better conception about it all (Lynch, 1995).

In this study, therefore, for the sake of distinguishing the order that encompasses all units of the town and spatial structure of the Middle Ages towns, determinants of “skeletal-spatial” structure (like the centrality, structure, hierarchy, pattern of realm shaping, urban and communal spaces, daily and weekly services, the emblems and the signs etc.) and “social-cultural” structure (like the identity, historical continuity, social interaction of the races, professional syndicates and the minorities etc.) have been reviewed, to find out about the ancient fabrics of Leon, Florence, Venice and Siena, based on our observation and interconnectivity of different parts of their fabric. The observations in analytical section, have been empirically studied via existing documents, in order to arrive to definite answers in relation to the set questions.

The analysis of the findings

The review of the Skeletal-Spatial Structures of the towns

The review of the determinants of the neighbourhood order in the four towns under the study, contain the following point in skeletal-spatial structure section: 1.Centrality or the nucleus, 2.The structure or the connection between the neighbourhood factors, 3.Distinct elements of a town, 4.The pattern and 5.The hierarchy.

based on three factors of “The feudal order”, “revitalization of the trade” and “the role of the church” in such a way that have dramatic effect on the development of industry and the shaping of the spatial organization of the towns. The church, by itself, has been instrumental in rejuvenating the trade, and become the unifying center for trade, governing body and religion; and the cathedrals of the towns to became the consolidating factors of coherence of spatial

organization.

The markets around the cathedrals, due to the gathering of people and their movement get established (Mumford, 2013: 424). Such markets are stretched from the entry gates to their centers, and where number of people pass by, like the main roads, they automatically turn into the town market and gradually turn into the commercial centers of the Middle Ages towns. (Moris, 1995:108). The squares like

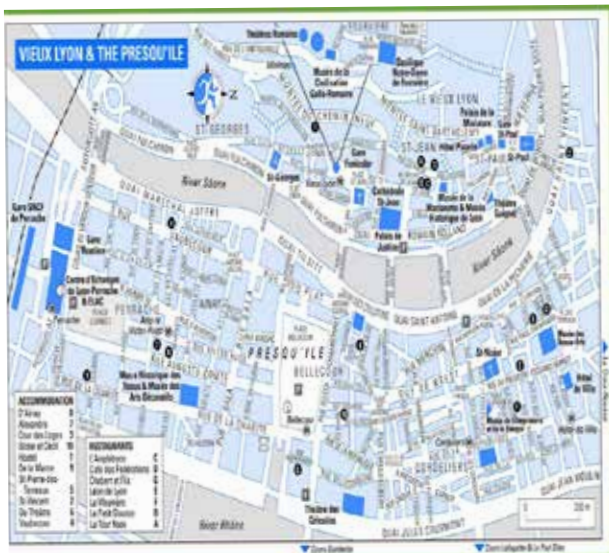
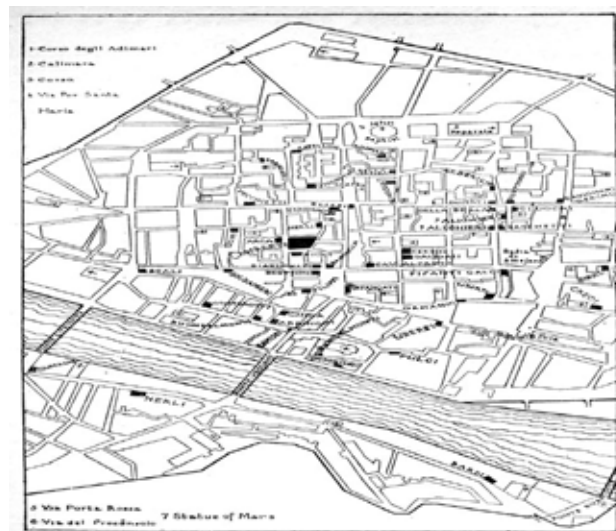


Fig.1. Comparison of urban patterns in four medieval cities. The cities of Lyon and Florence have a Roman core with a regular pattern, But the urban pattern of Venice and Siena is organic, irregular and radial.
 Lyon (France). source: www.ontheworldmap.com. Florence.source:https://www.gutenberg.org/files/37793/37793-h/images/illus047_fs.jpg. Venice. source: www.keywordsuggests.com. Siena (Italy). source: www.orangesmile.com.

mentioned in our bibliography section.

Introduction of the determinants

These indicators have been addressed in order to determine the existence or non-existence of the elements that constitute the formation of the spatial structure of the neighbourhoods and also the level of the neighbourhood development in the towns under the study. Considering the limitation of the study, efforts have been made to use the available information and the field observation. Hence seven indicators in two groups of “skeletal-spatial structure” and “cultural-social structure” were determined and applied on four towns of Leon, Venice, Florence and Siena. These indicators can be seen in table1 that has been introduced in theoretical

section and analytical findings.

Theoretical Foundation:

The formation of the towns in the middle ages

The shaping of the urbanization of the European cities shows substantial variation, in such a way that, by the end of 10th century, the towns experienced economic revitalization, population, trade and industrial expansion in rural and urban population centers (Benevolo, 2007:35). Despite the dereliction of many Raman towns, some like Leon and Florence have managed to become nucleus for the following middle ages towns.

According to the history book of city shapes, the Roman garrisons were turned into trade towns (Moris, 1995: 95) and development is

Table 1. Characteristics of the spatial organization based on “skeletal-spatial structure” and “cultural-social structure” to determine the level of development of neighborhoods in medieval cities. source: Author.

Questions	Main Determinants	
* Could the existing public spaces be defined as the center of the city or the neighbourhoods? According to which aspects that have been mentioned have these centers been introduced? 1- Centrality affected by local symbols 2-Centrality influenced by cultural and social values 3- Centrality affected by daily and weekly services	1-Centrality or the nucleus	skeletal-spatial structure
* Have the determining factors (the center of the city or neighbourhood, secondary and main networks, public and private spaces, different service centers etc.) of spatial structure of neighbourhood been present? 1- Link between downtown and neighborhood center 2- Link between main networks with main roads 3- Link between public spaces with private spaces 4- Link between service, cultural, religious and political spaces	2- The structure or the connection between the neighbourhood factors	
1 -Church 2- Market 3- City Hall 4- Military organ 5. Clock Tower	3- Distinct elements of the town	
* Is there a clear distinction between neighborhoods when entering cities? 1- Organic 2- Focused 3-Rectangular 4- Circular	4- The shaping up pattern	
1- Accessibility 2- functionality 3- spatial(Create privacy)	5-The hierarchy	
1-The readings and appearance of the neighbourhood 2-The order of the empty and occupied spaces 3-The sounds that come out of the neighbourhood 4-The smells that one is subjected to 5-The history of the dwellings	6-Neighbourhood Identity	Social and Cultural Structure
1- Ethnicity 2- Classes 3-Religion 1- Feeling the proximity of physical elements to each other 2- Ease of access to places 3- Walking 4. Residence history in the neighborhood	7- Interactions and Social Belonging	

Introduction

The shaping of the governing body of the towns in the middle ages, based on the economic, social and political powers shows that two factors of “production and trade” and “domination of the religion over the wisdom” within the spatial skeletal structures of market and the church played a significant role, giving the towns an organic planning body due to the need for security and the expansion of the social activities. The neighbourhood organizations in such towns however, as a part from an entire system and in line with the aforementioned factors of the extrovert nature of the western architecture, has led to differences in shapes

of the rural and public spaces to an extent that the meaning and concept of neighbourhood organization and the dwelling structure of these towns differ from what we see in traditional Iranian neighbourhoods. Hence, by reviewing the social, economical and political characteristics of these towns and their the skeletal-spatial structure and the fact that due to their distinct social and natural position were built on Roman samples like Leon and Florence or remains of the middle ages town patterns like Venice and Siena. These towns have somehow have kept their skeletal structure of their ancient origin.

The questions for the research could be proposed as follows:

Have the medieval towns been qualified for having neighbourhood organizations? Were the neighbourhoods in these towns small parts of a whole body, and had their own distinct separate integrated elements? What are the “social-cultural” and “skeletal-spatial” factors? Is it possible to find parts in these towns that had their own independent characteristics? Could we find structural unity from these parts and clusters, when we put them together? And is there any order within these parts?

Therefore, based on the literature the research hypothesis is:

In towns of the middle ages, with reference to the definition of the neighbourhood, it is not possible to find complete neighbourhoods that have the “skeletal-spatial and “cultural-social” structure. Meaning that, on the one hand, according to the physical- spatial determinants, with components such as the center and the nucleus, the structure and the link between the

small parts, the neighborhood and the governing social relations, hierarchy, city signs and the formation pattern and on the other hand socio-cultural characteristics of the neighbourhood like social identity and belongings and the interaction which play important role in the urban residential structure.

Research Methodology

In terms of nature and methodology, the present research is descriptive and analytical. Some parts of the theoretical information was obtained through the study of the documents, reports, and matching of the observations with the historical documents. However, the most significant part of the information were gathered through objective empirical observations, studying and evaluating the samples. In the meantime, in analytical section, with the determination of specific features of a perfect neighbourhood, recalling of the images have been dealt with. To this end, for the purpose of further study of the existing documents on this subject, we refer the readers to the original documents that we have

Dwelling Structure and the Neighbourhood Order of the European During the Medieval Period

Case studies: Cities like Florence, Venice, Siena and Lyon*

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Abstract

The early societies of the Middle Ages population centers were merely based on the army camps and the surrounding areas which provided for the needs of the inhabitants and the defense of the realm. However, with the changes that the societies were gradually subjected to, as the time went by, small towns were sprung up by joining up the castles, the dwelling centers, service centers, industrial centers, shopping centers and the improvement of the trade, leading to an organized social structure.

Initially, the early middle ages societies and spatial structure were devoid of any city structure, but during the 11th and the 12th centuries, the archeological remnants from the Roman cities, were revitalized and some castles were transformed to trade centers. The neighbourhood structure in these towns, however, as a unit from the whole, considering the factors already mentioned and based on extrovert nature of the western architecture, has led to number of differences between the urban and public spaces. Therefore, the meaning and the conception of the neighbourhood order and its dwelling structure, in number of ways, are different from those of traditional neighbourhoods in Iran.

Having said so, with the aim of structural review, the fabric and shaping of the towns in the middle ages on the one hand and the identification of the distinct cultural, local and historic aspects of the four European cities on the other hand, we go on to review the spatial structure, skeletal, social, and distinguish the creation of the neighbourhoods the system formation of the cities.

This article is a descriptive and analytical statement, based on field visits, case studies and the library data collection methods. The criteria for measuring the elements of spatial organization including (core and center), (structure) and neighborhoods (the small urban system) has been determined. The results of the finding indicates that by definition of a complete neighbourhood and the review of the elements of spatial organization, the towns of the middle ages can not considered an organized towns with a complete and coherent spatial organization of neighborhoods and residential structure, but rather have remained in its undeveloped form.

Keywords

Middle age towns, Spatial organization, Skeletal structure, Social structure.