Muslim Pious Foundations as Urban Nucleuses during the Sustainable Development of Ilkhanid Cities: a case study of Tabriz

A. Mohammad Moradi, Professor of Iran University of Science and Technology, Architecture and Urbanism faculty, m.moradi@iust.ac.ir

S. Jafarpour Nasser, MSc Student of IUST, Architecture and Urbanism faculty, s.jafarpour.n@gmail.com

Paper Reference Number: 213, 0106-689
Name of the Presenter: S. Jafarpour Nasser

Abstract

Ilkhanid urbanism influenced by the political, socio-economic, religious and cultural conditions that occurred during the Mongol invasion on Central Asia and Iran, formed on context of the Seljuk structure of cities. The culmination of this method that has been illustrated in Tabriz as an important capital of Ilkhanids (1265-1313), was simultaneous with flooding of several groups from various regions and nations into the capital. To provide urban nucleuses around which the immigrants could settle, urban development during the Ilkhanid period organized along the construction of governmental pious foundations (abwāb al-birr) outside the ancient walled city as new neighbourhoods. The waqf institutions based on their sustainable design through maintenance of buildings in good condition and analytic hierarchy process perform a determining role in the growth and structure of Muslim cities, both on the level of political and economic control and on the level of social cohesion. This pattern traversed its own evolution toward the creation of designed metropolis with rapid urban growth.

This study attempted to survey of the sustainable development of Ilkhanid cities and their influence on formation of Independent neighbourhoods. Analytical research method and archival study are research methods. To illustrate these views, the example of Tabriz as a city with Ilkhanid urban organization background is discussed, by using archival and narrative texts, architectural evidence, legal and historical sources, and contemporary theoretical discussions. The purpose of this study is offer a new approach to rehabilitation of pious foundations to sustainable development of residential areas lying on the outskirts of a city.

Key words: Ilkhanid urbanism, Sustainable development, Pious Foundations, Waqf, Tabriz.

1. Introduction

Ideological, religious, economic and political factors result in a concentration of population, material and cultural goods, and authority. This concentration in turn stimulates several developments, which may be summarized as follow: firstly, a differentiation of institutions, social classes and professions, under the influence of the requirements of the city and its functions; secondly, the development of a sense of identity and value-systems which are the basis of the self-representation and image of the city; thirdly, the consolidation of mechanisms that are needed to regulate and reproduce the essential functions of the city; and fourthly, the formation of a hierarchical network of towns that are economically, and/or culturally and/or politically related and from which the city partly derives its particular identity and functions. It is these four forces which to a large extent produce what is generally seen as typically urban and that is expressed in the organization and regimentation of space. Urban systems, affect especially the economic infrastructures of cities, the types of trade facilities and their design, facilities for migration, travel and deposit, but also signs of appurtenance to overarching political and cultural framework with which the city systems overlap (Leeuwen, 1999). In Islamic teaching, efforts to achieve legal property have been considered as kind of worship, mechanism of eliminating poverty.
and the distribution of wealth such as paying alms, paying attention to the poor and orphans feelings, Ehsan and charity with vulnerable strata and all more important friendly Waqf tradition. Experience of waqf in Islamic counties has been shown that benefices can achieve the objectives connected with development of social role. For example, urban services, education, health and treatment are indexes of development. Developing waqf culture in the fields of education, health and social welfare have considerable influence on promoting social development (Sami, 2006). The variety of its foundation and its continuous growth over centuries, covering most aspects of urban development and community services and utilities demonstrate its efficacy as a legal and administrative system (Hamouche, 2007). The hypothesis of this study is that the waqf system developed as an autonomous comprehensive organization with symbiosis between the Islamic law, and the daily practices and various customs in the Islamic world. The suggestion of such a general function derives from religious, economic, social, cultural and therapeutic activities of waqf. The aim is to analyse the impact of the waqf on the urban development and management of the traditional Muslim cities in light of sustainability issues and the contemporary municipal organizational structures. It is our assumption in this study that the waqf system played a crucial role in these complex sets of relations that were concentrated in Tabriz, as a mechanism both to structure these relations and to preserve them for future generations.

2. Research Methodology
In this study to determine the urban evolution trend of the Tabriz during Ilkhanid period, the policies applied to urban development planning was sought by archival studies through an analytical approach. Therefore by study of the pre-Iilkhanid urban organization of Tabriz according to the documents available and matching obtained data is drawn sketch map of Tabriz during 12th century, then with putting the Iilkhanid layer thereon, achieves the Iilkhanid structure of the city to study of the policies and patterns of urban growth. Comparative research method and archival study are research methods. This study draws upon archival and narrative texts, architectural evidence, legal and historical sources from different periods with focus on the 14th century, and contemporary theoretical discussions of the relation between imperial ideology, urban patterns, and urban development.

3. Waqfs and Urban Structure
Waqf is a pious endowment in which a property is generally held in perpetuity with the usufruct devoted to a charitable purpose. A property donates for the sake of divine reward becomes in legal terms the property of God (Hamouche, 2007). Islamic countries objective experiences have shown that waqf has been able in distribution of wealth in society and using finance and property in the line with well-meaning humanitarian to develop opportunities and access vulnerable to the main infrastructure development (Salarzehi et al, 2010). The main function of the waqf institution in the urban context is that of a mechanism of integration, on different levels. In our view, it is the integrating function in the domains of the economy, the social structure and the administration that represents such a pattern during the evolution of waqf as an institution. In economic integration, waqfs served as the basis for large economic projects or investment funds to revive economic activity and to finance the restoration of buildings, markets and other vital components of the economic infrastructure. From the perspective of social integration, the social dimension of waqfs essentially concerns the various aspects of the structuring of social relations and social life. The mosque was the foremost symbol of identity and the center of a whole variety of linked institutions and monuments that buttressed this function. As a result, the mosque was usually located at the center of spatial structures and substructures where other parts of the social infrastructure were also concentrated (Leeuwen, 1999).
Given the central role played by the waqf pious institution in the social and economic life of Muslims’ pre-modern cities this can hardly be surprising. As no such thing as municipal authorities had ever existed in those cities, the waqf proved the most important (if not the only) means by which ruler and senior state officials could provide their citizens with the most basic and essential public services (Peri, 1992). Land and construction may also be made waqf for agricultural utilization or for any other productive utilization in industry and urban areas (Kahf, 1998). Waqf or pious foundation aims to provide the goods and services which either could not be provided for at all or sufficiently due to the failure of the market mechanism or the government. In addition to awqaf aiming at providing health services, education, and food distribution etc. the use of funds accumulated in waqf in an efficient manner is being developed through cash-waqf and human development projects to enhance their contribution to the economic development of the societies (Asutay, 2007).

4. Waqf and sustainable urban development
The Brundtland Commission provided the often-quoted definition of sustainable development as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs” (Akkar Ercan, 2010). Sustainability, therefore, is about meeting basic human needs and wants by researching and identifying new ways of creating economic vitality, protecting and maintaining healthy environment, and building healthy communities (Bauen et al., 1996). Therefore waqf institution for its autonomous investment in a permanent system that has a means to preserve founder’s properties plays a role of sustainable structure. Waqfs were thus a typical device to build structures which would enable a society to control processes of change, to preserve the two essential assets of the community: the exploitation of material resources and the expression of its system of symbol. It is here, too, that the essential function of waqfs within urban structures should be sought: the connection between urbs, the city in its material form, and civitas, the idea of an urban community. This dual nature defined it as a mechanism which was essential for the organization of urban space and for the development and expansion of the city (Leeuwen, 1999). The form of waqf was also apt since it secured the stability of the investment; if we want to evaluate the economic significance of urban waqfs, then, we should take into consideration that Waqfs often formed the nucleus of projects of urban construction.

Waqfs covered a myriad of municipal services (health, education, social welfare) and utilities (potable water, traffic system, and defense) in old cities. In other words, most infrastructure (streets, canals, and aqueducts) and public facilities (mosques, schools, hospitals, soup kitchens, orphanages, cemeteries and public baths) and economic facilities (markets, Qaysariyyas, and khans) relied in their municipal management on waqfs funds. Besides providing urban societies with services, waqf also played a crucial role in the physical development of cities. Most landmarks and historical buildings that were initially erected by rulers, notables and high officers, owe their survival nowadays to the waqf system (Hamouche, 2007). Moreover, several important public works, such as the paving of roads, the building of the cities, were also carried out with the assistance of the waqf (Peri, 1992). Some of waqfs had a form of building complexes combining religious, social and economic facilities such as mosque, hospice, bathhouse, market, and thus created urban nodes in the city that marked its physical structure (Hamouche, 2007). Usually these building complexes established outside the inner city as new towns and neighborhoods nucleuses. Surrounding self-organized urban settlements of the waqf pious foundations has created a sustainable urban development in Muslims’ traditional cities. Such mentioned phenomenon leads to rapid urban growth of Islamic cities during 13th century.
5. Pre-Ilkhanid Urban perspective of Tabriz during 12th Century

After second destroyer earthquake of Tabriz in 434 AH/1042, Fasih says the town was rebuilt in the neighbourhood of the ruined city; the reconstruction must have been rapidly achieved, for Nasir Khusrau; he visited Tabriz only four years later, in 438/1046, found the place rich and populous, although less than a square mile in area; it seems to have remained this size, small in comparison with contemporary Ray or Nishapur, until the Mongol period (Melville, 1981). Nasir Khusrau visited Tabriz during Ravvadiyan dynasty, he says each length and width of city wall was 1400 steps, thus the rampart of city had been square. With overcoming of Atabakan (541-622 AH), because of strategic location of Tabriz, agricultural and industrial productions, and trade route, political feature of city promoted and began growing out of the defensive walls. Hamavi in 610 AH says the city had strong walls that had been surrounded by gardens (Jafarpour, 2010). In order to understand the pre-Ilkhanid urban organization of city can be important the determining of the boundary of Ravvadi wall and the location of its gates. Mustufi has mentioned that the periphery of city wall was six thousand steps and has had ten gates: Rey, Ghaleh [citadel], Sanjaran, Tagh, Dorub, Jui-Sard, Dardasti-shah, Narmiyian, Naubara, and Maukaleh-Mahalla that latter gate was quarter (Mustufi, 1983). Approximately, the periphery that Mustufi has noted is equal with Nasir Khusrau’s written. According to the other sources and documents available such as endowment deeds of the Rab-i Rashīdī and Muzaffariyye (Moshkvar, 1974), achieve many descriptions about gates and their other names in subsequent rules, and determine their location in city. With comparison of historical maps of Tabriz during Qajar rule, we can demonstrate the location of gates and boundary of Ravvadi city wall in sketch map Tabriz during 12th century (fig. 1).

![Figure 1: Sketch map of Tabriz, Pre-Ilkhanid urban organization during 12th century (Jafarpour, 2010).](image-url)
6. Urban development of Tabriz during the Ilkhanids

From the time of the Mongol Il-Khans and especially Ghazan khan (1295 - 1304), Tabriz rapidly increased in size, expansion beyond the old town walls being contained within a new Ghazani wall. Tabriz developed as a major centre of international trade, and despite its temporary eclipse as capital by Sultāniyya (1313); it remained the most important city in the northwest of the country and the chief seat of the governors (Melville, 1981). Urban growth of Tabriz during Ilkhanid Empire began with reign of Aqa khan (1265-1282) and selection of this city as new capital of Ilkhanid dynasty. Its triple roles market in a tribal area, strategic site, and stage on the major east-west trade route ensured its importance to capital transfer from Maragheh. Following this issue, it became a political, commercial and religious center of vast territory. Construction of Sahibiyaa as a first Ilkhanid pious foundation in Tabriz inside the city walls at Meydan quarter and near the castle by Sahib Divan Shams-uddin Muhammad Juwaini (Karbalai I, 2004) vizier of Hulagu Khan, Aqa and Ahmad Tegüder, represented its domination on prior Seljuk urban context of city.

Soon after the Mongol conquests of west, the semi-sedentary Mongol and Turcoman groups from middle Asia and number of famous clans of central Iran plateau began flooding into the Ilkhans capital. Thereupon with settling of immigrants in gardens and suburban lands of Tabriz, one of the Ilkhanid viziers’ policies to organizing of religious, social and economic facilities of new residents was construction of pious foundations as urban nucleuses outside the city wall. Accordingly the model of Ilkhanids’ urban evolution to development of significant cities is based on creation of trans-regional metropolises with rapid city growth. In this way two methods are presented for urban development:

1. Construction of new neighbourhoods around the self-organized pious foundations that are situated outside the old city and thus created urban nodes in the outer-city that marked its physical structure with combining religious, social and economic utilities.

2. Construction of satellite towns with separate walls, inner and outer neighbourhoods, large spacious gardens and rural regions that administrative part of town located in glorious waqf institution known as abwāb al-birr or abwāb al-kheir.

Therefore construction of pious foundations such as Dou-minar by Sahib Divan Sa'd-uddin Sawoji vizier of Ghazan khan and Oljeitu (1298-1311) located in Surkhab quarter, Sayyid Hamza complex attributed to Amir Sadr-eddin Hamza bookkeeper of Oljeitu near the Surkhab gate (Karbalai I, 2004), 'Alishah complex that was built by Taj al-Din 'Alisah Gilani, the vizier of Oljeitu and Abu Sа'īd, who was buried there (1311-24), Mustaufi says it was built outside the Narmiyan quarter, that is just beyond the Narmiyan gate, which was to the southwest of the inner city (1983; Melville, 1981), Ghiyath-uddin son of Rashiduddin and vizier of Abu Sа'īd (1317-1334) has built Ghiyathiyya complex outside the Mawkeleh or Khiyaban gate, Dimishqiyya which was on the eastern side of town, on the south bank of the Mihran-rud near the Sangin bridge outside the Rey gate. It was built by Baghdad Khajeh, daughter of Amir Chupan, in the name of her brother Dimishq Khajeh, and was finished in the reign of Abu Sа'īd, her second husband (d. 734/1334), (Karbalai I, 2004). All of these are urban nucleuses that forming suburbs around the old city. After death of Abu Sа'īd, Chobanid dynasty was in power and Sulayman (1339-1343) was their elected Ilkhan. The Ustad-Shagird complex was the work of Amir Ala'eddin Sheykh Hasan-i Kuchak, and was built in 1342. The name arose because part of the decorative calligraphy was executed by the master Khaja 'Abdullah Sairafi and part by his pupil. According to Karbalalai the building was also known as the 'Ala'iyya and sometimes called the Sulaimaniyya. This complex situated inside the walled city near the old square in Sang Siyah quarter (karbalai I, 2004). The location of this complex represented chupanids domination on old city as a main part of their capital, (fig. 2).
Figure 2: Sketch map of Tabriz Metropolis, Ghazani wall and urban development of Tabriz during Ilkhanid period (Jafarpour, 2010).
On the other hand along Ilkhanid urban policies, the construction of Ghazaniyya as a imperial town with city-pasture urban organization type by Ghazan khan and Rashidiyya with city-hill one by famous Ilkhanid vizier Rashid-uddin Hamadani, were core-periphery models of town-building with different types. Both towns arranged around founders’ pious foundations. In both waqf institutions were situated outside the walled city, in large spacious areas and religious, social, economic and hygienic utilities were carefully maintained.

During this period the most important change occurred during the rule of Ghazan khan, who converted to Islam in 694/1295. Ghazaniyya (on the western grassland of Tabriz, called Shanb) was built around gardens and palaces that Ghazan transformed into a cultic-memorial complex. His mausoleum rose up in the center of a garden, (Drobyshev, 2006). The tower was constructed as a mausoleum for Ghazan Khan called high Gunbad, work starting in 697/1298 and continuing after his death in 703/1303. He had set up a burial vault in advance. Site of Ghazaniyya was consistent with the founding of an Ilkhanid religious-governmental center and the tribal subsistence of Mongols’ clans. In the other side of city Rashidiyya or Rub‘-i Rashidi, was built on the lower flanks of the Vyilan Koh, within the new city walls created by Ghazan Khan. The quarter contained many fine endowments, similar in scope to those erected by Ghazin on the western side of the city. On the vizier's murder in 1318, the Rashidiyya was sacked and plundered by the mob, but the buildings were maintained and enlarged by his son, Ghiyath al-Din (Melville, 1981).

Construction of Ghazani wall around inner city, suburbs, cemeteries and gardens of Tabriz in 1302 was the most important factor to underlying of future development of city. Mustufi says new wall surrounded all gardens, suburbs, Veylan Koh and Sanjaran, with twenty five thousand feet circuit and six gates: Ujan, Ahar, Shervan, Sardroud, Sham and Saravroud. Ghazaniyya located outside the wall and Rub‘-i Rashidi inside, (1983, 76). Thus during Ilkhanid rule Tabriz became a designed metropolis, its suburbs and satellite-towns was managed autonomously by sustainable and self-organizing administrative mechanism that based on waqf institute and acted as municipality in modern cities (fig. 2).

7. Conclusion
In this study has been tried to show how decisive the role of waqf pious foundation in the formation of urban evolution in the case of Tabriz. All major urban extension in Tabriz in the period under study and all reorganizations of the spatial structure were supported by forms of the waqf institution. It seems justified to say that the vitality of Tabriz derived to a large extent from its strong infrastructure of waqfs. Urban systems, affect especially the economic infrastructures of cities, the types of trade facilities and their design, facilities for migration, travel and deposit, but also signs of appurtenance to overarching political and cultural framework with which the city systems overlap. Also waqfs served as the basis for large economic projects or investment funds to revive economic activity and to finance the restoration of buildings, markets and other vital components of the economic infrastructure.

It is through these functions that waqf networks formed the pattern underlying urban development. Thereupon integrating mechanism of waqf institution has used as a political solution to form urban nucleuses around the significant cities of Ilkhanid Empire. These building complexes provided essential needs and urban services such as social, religious, economic, and hygienic facilities for new residents of suburbs. Therefore the city began to expand outside the walls with rapid city growth and arranged suburbs around the gates. Sustainable planning and autonomous management of waqf institution ensured its location in sustainable development of Muslim cities. In this way each of the neighbourhoods had self-organized system to administration as municipal.
References


Jafarpour Nasser, S. (2010). Rehabilitation and revitalization of Sahibolamr square as an urban space with focusing on historical and cultural axis of Heart - Tabriz - Istanbul [in Persian]. Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism, Tehran: Iran University of Science and Technology.


