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**Recognition of the impacts of consecration culture on the social-physical frame of urban neighborhoods
(Case study: Neighborhoods of district 12 of Tehran)****Mitra Ghafourian***

PhD of Architecture, Assistant Professor and Faculty member of Architectural College of Science and Technology University. (Corresponding author)

Elham Hesari**

Master of Architecture

Mina PeySokhan***

Master of Architecture

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Abstract

Looking at the structure of the cities, especially older parts of the city, it is seen that most of the urban public parts and elements are constructed not with any reliance on state resources and credits, but based on the consecration systems and public investments. Added to the sublime religious, social and economic values latent in the consecration culture, its impact in creating identity and sense of attachment to urban places is also notable. It seems that the effect of creating identities that the consecrated places create in the social-physical frame of the cities, can today be stressed upon as a proper response to the shortcomings of the citizens' social relations and lack of the sense of belonging to the city. The main aim of this study is to recognize the role of consecrated elements in the social-physical identification in urban neighborhoods on the one hand and to determine the effects of this valuable culture in reinforcing social interactions and improving the sense of belonging to the physical spaces of the cities, on the other hand. The research method of this study includes two stages: the first was implemented with a descriptive-analytic method and was based on library sources that provide the theoretical framework of the study and the second stage that was incorporated with the survey method, using questionnaires, which were distributed among the residents of district 12 neighborhoods of Tehran. The results indicate that the consecrated places, because of their unique characteristics in the city's social-physical frame, have effectively caused the firmness of identity and consistency in urban life in these neighborhoods.

Keywords: consecration, identity, social-physical frame, neighborhoods.



1. Introduction

Today, the formation of neighborhoods has completely lost its connection to the mind of the urban man. The lack of mutual connection and interaction between man and environment in modern cities, based on Webber's theory (1920), has led to decrease in the sense of belonging to the living place, which is one of the main aspects of neighborhood identity. Neighborhoods are constructed that beside their names, have no difference with each other (Vahida and Negini 2012, 36). In new urban textures, the traditional characteristics of the neighborhoods are lost and values such as neighbor relationships, peace, sense of belonging and identity are all fading. Results from a study done by Hudseni (2005) show that the existing break in the spatial structure of today's neighborhoods and the loss of the physical identity of confined areas have led to the destruction of the incessant social structure among the residents and a reduction in the relationships and interactions between the people. The results also indicate that the formation of powerful social networks in the form of local groups and communities provide connection among the residents of urban neighborhoods.

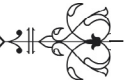
In older cities, residential areas, as the cells of the urban life, play a vital role in the lives of their residents. These neighborhoods were places for the gathering of people with common ethnic-racial, religious, economic and social characteristics and consecrated elements, as indispensable parts of public and social spaces, together with all their other functions, caused further association and interaction among the residents. The common characteristics of these residents in a certain neighborhood gave a unique and recognized identity to that part of the city and increased

the sense of unity and belonging to the physical space among the residents (Ghasemi and Negini 2010, 113).

Consecration is one of the sublime human values that is affected by the religious worldview of Islam, added to the effective social and economic role, have multiple functions in the urban daily life and activities. Physically, consecration can also be held responsible for a very vital role in the formation of the spatial structure of the cities of Iran (Harold Vreeland and Clifford 1957, 290). Investigating the close social relationships and their mutual connection with the spatial structure of these cities indicate the efficiency of the social-physical system on which these cities' structures are formed. Attention to the impacts of the culture of consecration in creating a social-physical system, which have led to dynamic and sustainable urban lives, reveals another functional aspect regarding consecration.

Together with the problems that modern urban society's face, the subject of weakness in social relationships in the cities is among the most important issue. In looking for the causes of this issue, one of the most important factors in the lack of a sense of belonging to the social neighborhood structure in the cities' residents should certainly be appointed to this matter. This lack of the attachment has a close relation with the loss of social identity that the residents have faced as a consequence of the weakness in the physical frame of the city and its neighborhoods. This study investigates the strong relation between the functional effects of consecrated elements on reinforcing the social-physical identity of the neighborhoods' residents by meditating on the notion that the consecration culture causes the formation of social identity in the people in each neighbor-





hood. Then, by a precise analysis of the social values of the consecrated public places and elements it can be stated that they are seldom discussed and considered in planning. Therefore, with regard to the importance of consecrated places and providing the opportunity for their utilization in development plans as necessities in urban management, more attention should be paid.

1.1. Research goals

The most important aim of this study is to bring up the subject of the way the consecration culture affects the social-physical identity in urban neighborhoods. This matter can be stressed upon and paid attention to as a method for solving the identity issues of the cities and reducing the damages done on their social-physical frame.

1.2. Research hypotheses

Main hypothesis: Distributing the consecration culture through the recognition of its processes in the domain of social identifying factors can create identities in the social-physical frame of urban neighborhoods.

Subsidiary hypotheses:

- Realizing consecration culture can increase the sense of security in the society.
- Consecration culture leads to an increase in the social interaction by adjusting wealth and encouraging the spirit of collaboration.
- Consecration culture and its processes can cause an increase in the sense of belonging in the society.

Theoretical framework of the study

To determine the theoretical framework, first the basic definitions and research basis are stated:

2. Aspects of consecration

The longing for eternal life has always led men to, together with constant work and ef-

fort, create places that will be sources of blessing and good during and after their lifetime. The spirit of humanity, social thought, mutual collaboration and the idea of group life forms the roots for such ideas and deeds. One of the most prominent living examples of this humanity and social collaboration is known as consecration (Kalantari et al. 2010, 34) that is also seen among other religions. In fact, consecrators are some of the most important bases of the economic infrastructures of the Islamic world (Alkabisi 1985, 64-66) and the best most effective tool for Islamic social mutual care. As it is obvious from the word, consecration means to stop and cease the possession and free its benefits (Beini 1895; ShahidAval 1989; Hendi 1989; Mohaghegh-Helli 1981). It means for the owner to cease the exact property or money in a way that it should not be sold or lent and its benefit to be spent in good causes as the consecrator sees fit. Consecration is sometimes mentioned as "running charity" (Shahabi 1964, 3). Based on religious regulations, consecration can be followed by a type of wealth adjustment and dividing (BastaniParizi 1978, 73).

3. Consecration worldview and developing urban spaces

The city as a living space is created, developed and reaches completeness in the geographical environment because it is a historical-geographical phenomenon, meaning that it is the outcome of factors that are affected by the past and the present. Many different factors are involved in the formation of the city's morphologic environment. The effect of the worldview and religious values factor on the creation and construction of urban spaces, especially in Islamic times is vital and important. With a simple look over the view and





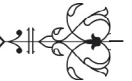
physical frame of the cities of Iran, it can be seen that the consecration systems have had vital roles in the formation of a great number of the urban elements and parts that are very important in the function and efficiency of urban life (Pion 2000, 14). Urban spaces are the binding and connecting factor of the set of the forming elements of the city (Shahabi 2004, 140). Therefore, the impact of consecration is not only on the formation and creation of the cities' public spaces, but it also gives cultural, social and economic unity and creates a type of spatial unity in physical terms among different districts and neighborhoods of the city. In fact, most of the old cities were small neighborhoods that were formed gradually and turned into cities by the increase in the population and construction of buildings and places. These neighborhoods that were not designed beforehand, no preparation was made for them for the establishment of public service centers and spaces but, it is evident that traditional old cities of Iran in their neighborhood system and structure had a strong unity and cohesion and a great number of services and urban and neighborhood needs were naturally created in them. These parts and elements are often constructed without any dependence on government sources and credit in the framework of the consecration system with people's investments. Among the most important characteristics of consecrated buildings in the neighborhoods of Iran's traditional cities is the consideration of the plurality of relationships in their utilization (Blunt 1966, 101). What is meant by plurality is the number of the different aspects of relationships in different cultural, economic, social and physical fields and their sub-categories in the relationship networks among urban elements. In fact, under the effect of the consecration

culture, the consecrated religious buildings were constructed in urban spaces with political significance and religious functions (Bagheri 2007, 164-165) on the one hand, and on the other a great number of infrastructural and structural facilities were constructed in population centers without creating any sense of responsibility for governments (Hooglund 1982, 316). Also, the consecration system has caused the consecrated properties like caravanserais, marketplaces, inns, bath houses, houses, stores and other places to constantly be in a state of reconstruction, renovation and development for more profits and consequently, provide the needed budget for the religious facilities (Bagheri 2007, 165-166).

3.1. Physical reflection of consecration in the city's development

In structural terms, consecration has a great importance in the formation and construction of urban public places and causes a type of spatial cohesion and unity between different districts and neighborhoods of the city (Shahabi 2004, 144). Looking through the view and structure of Iran's cities, it can be witnessed that a great number of infrastructural and structural facilities were constructed in population centers without creating any sense of responsibility for governments (Shahabi 2004, 140). The basis and principles of the consecration system are formed in a way that most of these places and elements are kept and renovated by the profitability capacities they had that were consecrated and in the end, they have been left established and consistent through the years. Also the perpetual, permanent, non-salable and non-transferable nature of the consecrated items and the fact that are utilized for the good of the people and other functions of the Muslim community have caused a great number of consecrated items





and benefits, especially immovable properties such as mosques, seminaries, public baths and bazaars that are often of old structures to stay firm against the events and harshness of history more than other urban elements (Ghadiri 1990, 3; Kalantari et al. 2010, 5). This impact is so much that if the public places in the structure of Iran's traditional cities that are mostly consecrated were to be omitted, nothing will be left but a dispersed broken set of houses, stores and private spaces (Trancik 1986, 202).

3.2. Consecration and social functions

With regard to the fact that consecration, in terms of the physical factor in the construction of residential areas, commercial sections and religious facilities of Islamic cities is of great significance, it also has many important social functions in the everyday lives and religious events of these cities. This role gives a type of religious and cultural-historical prominence to the cities. The main functions of the social-economic aspect of consecration are divided into four categories by professor Ehlers (1995) as follows:

- A. Providing and preparing the major part and responsibilities in religious events that are always held in cities is one of the functions of consecration. Organizing all or part of the expanses and renovation of the mosques, seminaries and Hosseiniehs, holding mourning and religious ceremonies in other religious events in religious holidays are all provided from the revenue of consecrated properties.
- B. Different aids to the poor, homeless, students and urban schools and running and maintaining some of the hospitals, baths, reservoirs and doing other works of charity for public interest are among the functions of consecration.
- C. With the revenue from consecration, cheap

houses are purchased for the poor or consecrated lands are given in long terms leases to people and also stores and workshops, especially in the market are given for business utilizations. It is because of this insignificant amount of rentals in bazaars that they are still able to hold up against the modern commerce and business centers section of the city.

D. Entrepreneurship: a great number of the employed people are directly working in consecrated properties, holy places, commercial and industrial facilities, Consecration Organizations of the cities and Islamic countries (Ehlers 1995, 52; Shahabi 2004, 143).

In his opinion, added to the economic impacts of consecration, it simultaneously has significant social effects on the structure of the cities that are distinguishable. Unified social groups that take the responsibilities in events in the consecrated properties lead to the collaboration and intervention of the people and consequently, the consolidation of the urban society. One of the interesting important phenomena in Islamic cities is the continuation of properties through the Islamic rules of consecration and inheritance. Based on Goitein's notes "Consecration gives the opportunity to the consecrator to make a number of things persistent, his or her properties for the constant utilization of the beneficiaries, his or her purposes in transforming the benefits, determining the benefits of the brothers and other related subjects, with assurance that his or her will be carried away and respected as a law." Added to the religious, cultural, educational and economic impacts, consecration also has important geographical effects. In some districts where the consecration phenomenon has spread out, the geographical view of the neighborhoods has evolved. Consecration also has been effective in the look and view





of the cities geographically. Therefore, consecration plays an undeniable role in the development of societies (Ehlers 1995, 53).

Based on Fathabadi's study (2002), the natural result of consecration can be stated based on three processes: wealth adjustment, social balance and collaboration of the society, all of which are in fact the basis of social and economic justice in the society. According to the religious regulations, with the help of consecration, the property is transported from a family to another and from a social class to another after some years and in a way wealth adjustment and distribution of wealth takes place. This is in fact a type of social insurance. Eliminating poverty is among the important goals of wealth adjustment in consecration; as in efforts for supporting the poor, helping the blind, the homeless, derelict children, orphans, captives, the sick, the elderly, the obliged, outlanders, those who need blood money for unintentional murder, celebrations, participating in harvesting, social help, etc. Further, the good tradition of consecration is another indication of goodness and humanity which man has established by the utilization of the teachings of the prophets and left in the social life domain. The spirit of social collaboration and competition in doing charity is manifested in consecration. In consecration the two aspects of self-love and humanism are embodied. One of the great points in Islam that is utilized to further have the interest of mankind is the use of self-love for men in various verses of Quran. In consecration also, the man's self-love aspect is utilized and the participation in this good work is considered as a way for man and his or her properties to be guaranteed forever and their revenue to be utilized in what he or she sees fit.

In the past, most social services were pre-

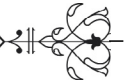
sented through consecrated properties. Caravanserais, orphanages, etc. were among the places, which were greatly needed in traditional societies, and the consecrators, observing these types of social needs, consecrated their properties. Supporting derelict children, constructing educational centers in deprived areas of the country, etc. are among the most important social functions of consecration in the society.

The third social aspect of consecration is the greatest among them. It is the aspect of collaboration, altruism, benevolence and humanism. In this aspect the best human relations are ruling and the narrow walls of individualism and indifference to other people's lives are fallen. This aspect is so important that it is not only limited to Muslims and jurists such as MohagheghHelli, in his book "Concise Benefits", has even allowed the benefit of those of other beliefs from the consecrated properties and considers the consecration of properties by Muslims for non-Muslims to be allowed. The delicate social point, which adds to the importance of consecration, is the fact that as the beneficiaries of the resources and benefits of the consecrated properties, do not directly meet the consecrator, there will be no humiliation and the beneficiaries are all respected. With regard to this matter, in the SuraBaghareh of Quran, the discreet aid to the people in need is considered better and a priority (Fathabadi 2002, 51-54).

4. Consecration and social identity

The concept of identity in relation with the city is a subject that has always been discussed and scientists have given theories regarding this connection. With regard to the nature of the subject, the notions about the mutual impacts of built environment or spaces on the thoughts and behaviors of humankind is the





same concept that is mentioned as identity and all the other semantic and content fields such as individuation, sense of place, sense of belonging, etc.

Lynch presents the clearest definition in relation with identity in the city and its spaces. In his opinion, the simplest form of meaning is identity, the meaning of a place (2002). Identity is the limit based on which one is able to differentiate or recognize one place among others, in a way that it has a specific, unique or at least special identity for itself. Local identity has a close relation with personal identity because meaningful tangible locals are suitable bearings on which personal memories, feelings and values depend. Lynch (2002) believes that several factors are effective in giving meaning and identity to a certain place among which good knowledge of the place that leads to the formation of a sense of place, events that cause the urban spaces to be memorable and structure in the sense of the way elements and parts are connected to each other on a general scale can be mentioned.

In the conclusion of the meaning and concept of identity, it can be stated that identity is the distinguishing and differentiation factor of the environment and in fact, it turns an ordinary place to a special place. Identity is the result of the social relations in the place. But, it also follows visual and physiognomic factors and elements. Therefore, this concept always points out to two important aspects: first, the tangible and objective aspect of identity and secondly, the conceptual and pictorial of the assumed identity, which is subjective (Azizi and Arbab 2008).

In fact, the physical reflections of consecration are capacities for consecration functions and these functions play vital roles in the urban life of the societies. The physical

Table 1. The two dimension of Identity in Consecration
(Source: Authors)

Identity	Objective Aspect	Perceptual Aspect
Consecration	Physical	Social

reflection of consecration can be held effective in the creation and construction of the smallest structural elements of the city such as mosques, schools, baths, reservoirs, public drinking water fountains and lighting of paths and markets to the formation of the biggest units of urban spaces like bazaars and commercial complexes (YousefiFar and Yadollahpor 2009, 43).

Social identity is also a subject in the framework of identity. To put it simply, it is the definition of one from oneself based on the membership of social groups (Chavoshian and Abazari 2002, 5). This identity is a subordinate of the cultural characteristics of the group and includes similarities that are distinguishable according to a group and based on change within the group or outside the group (Tajfel 1981). Based on this theory, one's tendency to think about oneself as someone who belongs to one or more groups is among the natural characteristics of human beings. Other researchers like George Herbert Mead define social identity as the interaction between personal attitudes and social or group organized attitudes (Herbe Mead 1964). Akhtarshahr (2007) and Nasrabadi (2004) regard social identity as a part of one's social life to which one feels attachment through consciousness and feels commitment and obligation toward it. The person is extended to others in the society and finds one's identity. Joanna Wine and Rob White define these two stages of the formation of social identity as results of one's experiences in life, location, family and social sources (Akhtarshahr 2007, 11). Based





on what was done in the study by Vahida and Negini (2012) to identify the factors that create identity in neighborhoods, there are three recognized effective factors on the social identity that are sense of belonging, social interactions and sense of security. Therefore, each of these factors notably improves the identity in neighborhoods.

In fact, social factors of identity are among the factors that play important roles in the formation of neighborhoods and the existence of spirits that is vital for their stability in them. Life style, social interactions of the residents, social connections and the nature of connections among the residents are some of the main factors of the neighborhoods' personality and identity. Urban neighborhoods are not only living places, but also effective factors in social interactions and they consolidate neighborhood relationships. In fact, neighborhoods' social conditions somehow affect the amount of the residents' satisfaction (KeshtkarGhalati et al. 2009, 43).

5. Consecration and the structural identity of the neighborhoods

The physical identity consists of characteristics that differentiate the body of the city from other cities and show their similarities with its elements. These characteristics must be in a way that the body of the city, together with keeping its time continuity, is in constant evolution and in the end will lead to the creation of whole. In terms of concept, the structural identity is synonymous with the terms "personality" and "sense of location" (Mirmoghtadaei 2004, 29). But, Lewicka, in another definition, considers local identity as a part of the personal identity that is connected to the physical environment and is inseparable from the residents of the neighborhoods,

their beliefs, life style, ideals, culture and worldview in connection with the neighborhood (Lewicka 2008, 211). The consecration system is not only the reason behind the construction and creation of many valuable elements and places in the cities, but also the spiritual and close bond between consecrated properties with religious affairs have caused the persistence and sustainability of consecrated urban spaces during the years.

In fact, the structural organizations of the neighborhoods are among the factors that create the possibility of the creation of identity in them and induce the sense of location to the place. It is necessary to pay special attention to the structural organization of the neighborhoods as one of the factors that create identity. Structural factors in neighborhoods include types of functions, facilities for access to services, change in functions during the years, etc.

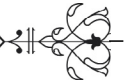
6. Factors affecting devotion

Based on the studies conducted in this field, factors affecting devotion are derived in three fields of social interactions, sense of belonging, and security.

6.1. Social interactions

According to Islamic worldview, human beings are not and should not be separated from society. Sociable people are the individuals who think they are responsible to the society; a part of the society; their interests are from the society's interests; and consider the good and bad of the society as their own (Al-lameh Tabatabaei 2007). Based on Islamic worldview, individuals' social behaviors are true and valuable if they involve the society's general interests (MesbahYazdi 2005). Based on this profound insight, humans have responsibilities and duties for the society.





Islamic civilization is founded on the basis of such an attitude and insights. In this civilization, people along with respecting their private rights have the most communication and coordination in order to achieve excellent social interests with each other. Devotion, aside from being an effective struggle with self-centeredness and condemn manifested in the individual, strengthen social relationships and spread the culture of solidarity and social consensus. Devotion by removing the basic needs of deprived individuals, help them have positive relationship and avoid breaking the norms and encourage developing social ethics. In other words, on the one hand devotion stops the individual wishes lead to individuation and people's separation from society, and on the other hand encourages people connecting with the community and developing social consensus. Therefore, in this culture, how to use properties in order to establish social relationship in line with individuals and society's development and prosperity; because if the culture of a society were not the culture of cooperation, development and social purposes, it would have traumatic society, structure and process that regardless of its outcome of the great social problems for society, deprives individuals from access to prosperity and individual development. It is also clear that the diversity of devotion properties is one of the effective factors to increase the level of relations in the society (Haji DehAbadi 2009).

6.2. Security

True and lasting security is an issue related to social justice. Although it can be possible to provide security in some societies with strong conflicts and economic and cultural stratification in which a few people in the society are in prosperity and wealth and majority of them are in deprivation and poverty, but the

security is not neither human security nor sustainable security, but extremely fragile (Haji DehAbadi 2009). As mentioned in the previous section, devotion can create social justice in the community to a significant level and affect to eliminate discrimination and economic inequality. Therefore, increasing the promotion of social security, the result of social justice, are the results of devotion. Of course devotion effect is not limited only to social security, but it could enhance security index at all levels; causes the personal development and the development of individual personality of the people devoting and the people taking advantages of devotion resources also feel more security as well (Simber 2008). In fact, it can be said that devotion is kind of charity, continuous charity whose effects and results last for a long time and also involve the people devoting and protect their financial and mental security.

6.3. Sense of belonging

Devotion is effective on creating environmental space for the citizens, so that they are more interested in the environment and their sense of belongings to the environment are increased. Some criminologists who have studied the relationship between residential environments with crime acknowledged the fact that the criminal activities are tied with the criminals' environment; For example, Shaw and McGee in their study on the areas with high rates of crime in the city of Chicago found that the highest crime rate belongs to the areas of the city with more dilapidated buildings and empty homes and the residents have less sense of belonging to the neighborhood (Vold et al. 2001). In addition to them, lack of sufficient lighting, lack of interesting design and geometry and lack of neighborhood facilities can affect reducing the sense of belonging to



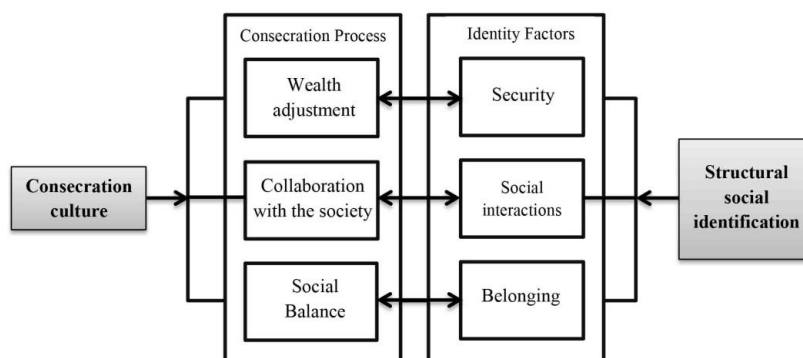


a neighborhood. According to the findings of the previous studies in Islamic community, devotion is effective on creating urban spaces with the possibility of creation of high sense of belonging to a place. Devotion to develop cities, create spaces and places needed for the society to fulfill emotional and physical needs such as mosques, schools, bathrooms, water storage, Saghakhaneh, streets lights, markets, and harmonious development of cities (Meshkini and HojiMalayeri 2008).

7. Theoretical model of the study

With the analytic investigation of wealth adjustment processes, societal collaboration and social balance and their coordination with each of the identifying social factors it can be deduced that the realization of the consecration culture in the social-physical frame of

the cities not only will lead to the outbreak of identity in urban neighborhoods, but also the result of urban neighborhoods with identities have the capability to expand this rich and valuable culture. Therefore, it should be noted that wealth adjustment in the society will lead to a sense of security for the people and their collaboration in social affairs will lead to social interactions. In fact, the distribution of the consecration culture will lead to the outbreak of identity in the social skeletal structure of urban neighborhoods through the realization of its processes in social identifying factors.



Model 1. Theoretical Model (Source: Authors)

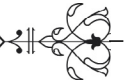
8. Methodology

In the present study, the impacts of the consecration culture on the identity factor in the social-physical frame of urban neighborhoods have been investigated using the descriptive-analytic method and field and survey researches in Tehran's district 12. The analysis of the collected data was done through the SPSS software and through the utilization of statistical methods such as frequency distri-

bution, correlation coefficient, etc.

This questionnaire will evaluate the satisfaction of the neighborhoods' residents with the existing consecrated places as identifying factors in neighborhoods. It will determine the impact of factors such as the sense of belonging, security and social interactions on the social-physical identification. The highest density of devoted religious sites are located in the regions of 14, 15, 17, 12, 13 and 10, and





its lowest density are in the West Regions 2 and 5 (ShahHosseini 1998). In the era of Qajar, people's business was the most important economic activity in the city; consequently, the most important businessmen were the ones working mainly in and around Bazar e Tehran (ShahHosseini 1998). Since the highest density of devoted places was identified in the region of 12 especially in and around Bazar, the region of 12 was chosen to distribute the questionnaire.

The questionnaires were analyzed and investigated among 60 subjects from the residents of the neighborhoods of district

12 using random sampling method. The studied sample mass was estimated using the Klein method. According to Klein method, 10 or 20 samples are required for each variable and for each question of the questionnaire is 2.5 to 5 persons were considered. Factor analysis of this study was an exploration in which the researcher without the previous default wanted the software classify the. It was attempted to extract the factors that could explain and develop the maximum variance available between items (AghaYariHir 2012). In this study like Klein method in factor analysis of exploration, 6 persons were considered for each question.

The factor analysis of the research is heuristic and after factorization by the software, the factors are categorized based on the content of items and the naming is categorized based on the highest factor load.

9. The area under study

District 12 of Tehran is one of the oldest districts of the city of Tehran, which is located in the center of the city. This district has an area of 16.91 square kilometers and has 6 zones and 13 neighborhoods. One of the most important characteristics of this district is the

fact that the Bazaar of Tehran and many cultural places, government offices and institutions, ministries and embassies are located in it. The area is limited to Enqelab Avenue on the north, to Hafiz Avenue and VahdatEslami Avenue on the west, Shoush Avenue on the south and 17 Shahrivar Avenue on the east (taken from the official website of Tehran's Municipality 2015).

Like most of the districts, this district has a residential function and all the accessories of a residential area and its difference with the other districts is because of the increase in the role of bazaar in this urban district (Baft-e Shahr Consulting Engineers 2010). The municipality's general plan in the year 1975 for organizing the bazaar and taking disturbing and pollutant workshops from it that started with the prohibition of issuing construction and renovation permits in the bazaar's area. It was only then when it became evident that what a complicated matter was the ownership of stores and houses within the Bazaar of Tehran and more than half of the bazaar is consecrated (taken from the portal of Tehran's municipality 2015). There are also several small shrines that provided the preparations for a consecration system in this district. It goes to the point where the mentioned district is eligible for being appointed as one of the best districts in having consecrated urban places in comparison with the rest of the city (Baft-e Shahr Consulting Engineers, 2010). The important point in this district is the diversity in consecration functions. According to table 2, the consecrated properties cover almost 16 percent of the district (District 12's Consecration Office 2012).





Table 2: Comparing the consecrated properties and the total district in terms of area (Source: Authors)

Total area of the consecrated properties	Total area of the district in hectares	Relation of the consecrated area to the total area
260.74	1600	0.16

9. Results

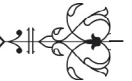
To evaluate the acceptability of the scale developed and to assess the hidden variables, the factor models and their index value were used. In this study, Cronbach's alpha value is 0.803. Factor analysis and KMO index were used to assess the validity of the structure. The questionnaire validity in this study was 0.637 which means the sample size was sufficient. The factor analysis identified three factors affecting the identity of devotion culture. The first extracted factor from items measures sense of security in relation to devoted public places which involves 14/036 from the whole variance. This sense of security, with the emphasis on the existence of mosques and their welfare facilities such as clinics, educational facilities and libraries as a single set, leads to more satisfaction and trust in people. The security resulted in devotion not only covers the beneficiaries, but also the individuals who devote and usually have good financial supports and change the attitude of the poor and socially excluded individuals and groups towards themselves, their family and property (Haji DehAbadi 2009).

The second factor of social interaction were identified which included 13/692% of the total variance. Social interactions due to the religious site and holy places will increase. Tendency to hold ritual ceremonies and utilizing these sites in this area of Tehran due to ideological and economic reasons led to people's more interactions and satisfaction. In fact, devotion is one of the most common

phenomena of collaboration, cooperation and communication providing the best and healthiest area for people's interactions and public participation. Increasing social interactions by holding various events show the cooperation of members of social groups.

The third factor is related to people's sense of belonging to devoted places which included 12/805% of the total variance. This feeling is increased more by cooperating in charity and philanthropic and charitable social activities. Sense of belonging to a place on the one hand is effective by creating the necessary environmental spaces for citizens so that their senses of belonging to the environment is increased and on the other hand sense of place is increased by working in charity and tend to be involved in altruistic and charitable social activities. Diversity of devoted sites is one of the most important factors increasing the level of relations in the society. The applications required for neighborhoods and regions in the area of living and residents' healthy environment is one of the characteristics of an ideal city which causes decentralization in the structure of urban space and help to reduce the level of tensions, social justice, and social harmony; to reduce inequality and balance wealth in urban areas (Meshkini and HojiMalayeri 2008). Factors such as the balance of wealth and social adjustment through devotion processes have led to relatively high individuals' satisfaction due to devotion properties such as sports and cultural, places, mosques and clinics which included





23.128% of the total variance. Factor analysis of the items show given to people's economic issues and beliefs, devoted places and facili-

ties cause people feel satisfied to a large extent from their living places.

Table 3- Total Variance Explain

Factor	Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	1.266	12.665	47.016	1.404	14.036	14.036
2	.927	9.266	56.282	1.369	13.692	27.828
3	.738	7.379	63.661	1.281	12.805	40.533
4	23.128	3.435	34.352	34.352	23.128	63.661

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring.

Conclusion

Devotion is among Islamic issues to increase social participation and expansion of goodness in society that shines like a sparkler on top of the Muslim community since the beginning of Islam. Considering devotion culture and supporting it can be used as a reason for the survival of citizens in society and promotes responsibility as the most important factor in creating the living environment and prevents identity crisis and its negative consequences. Also, another feature of devotion culture as one of the effective Islamic lessons in forming the physical-social frame of neighborhood is that the cases to use devotion is not limited but can be in different forms and aspects. It is not true to say that devotion is just constructing mosques but appropriate to the needs of Islamic community, devotion can be used to form physical-social frames of cities. In another words, devotion can fulfill different needs in Islamic community if its position and dimensions are well defined for people and consider the legal guarantees required to meet the intentions and objectives of the individuals devoting. Based on the previous

studies, it was clear that the rate of people's satisfaction in the neighborhoods in the region of 12 is high in compare with the devoted spaces and activities in them which is due to people's thoughts and cultural-religious beliefs. It seems that this feature is the fact that according to Lynch is regarded as the factor defining identity and environment meaning. High sense of security in devoted public places refers to Economic justice in Islamic community, an important issue constructing such a society and shaped the components of devotion culture. In fact devotion can enhance security index at all levels in the region and those dedicated to the benefit of interests, in turn, will feel more secure. Increased social interaction within the neighborhood residents created often through their participation in religious rites show the solidarity, cooperation of community members in social groups. This feature also presents social justice in the environment and as interpreted by sociologists, social energy, and collective and friendship spirit which are the examples of social interactions, provide growth and perfection of man and the Muslim community. Also, the





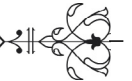
residents' sense of belonging to devoted elements leads to increasing their interests to their residential environment and sense of belonging to the environment consequently their identity to the neighborhood tissues will be increased. Other notable issues in the field of devotion culture are schools, cultural spaces, parks, sports complexes for the youth and the needs of the community. For this reason, scholars and professionals should pay attention to these needs and define new functions for devotion in this area and other areas based

on today's dynamics and developments in urban communities and the growing need for the formation of public spaces and the provision of facilities and services needed by the people. In addition, it seems there are already appropriate functions for devotion less explained for people and remained unknown or less welcomed by people. Hence, making culture and informing the public about these issues and explaining them can diversify the role of devotion among the public endowment and help urban management.

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