Tangible and Intangible Components of Al-Najafi Heritage Street as a Factor of Liveable City

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Abstract

Cultural heritage has an important role in the contemporary developments of the city. Urban development is linked to heritage cities' cultural identity by sustaining the heritage value of the urban space, which influences the heritage value. The study's focus is on the tangible and intangible elements of the heritage streets in cities with a unique architectural heritage, which faced crises and war disasters. Al-Najafi Street in old Mosul city is a famous heritage street that included tangible and intangible elements and affected the disaster of the war in 2017. Developers are facing difficulties in protecting the heritage value of the city during the reconstruction process of urban development. The inattention to the intangible elements leads to creating an empty city (dead city). The study aims to determine the tangible and intangible components of the heritage streets in the old Mosul City. The methodology applies qualitative approaches using visual observation for the case study and a survey of the pedestrians in the case study. Results show that facades, details, symbols, and materials are the important factors of the tangible elements. In comparison, the intangible factors are organizational urban structure, activities, and traditional art crafts, which are the key elements of reviving the street and the city to be a liveable city, avoiding the Old Mosul City is a dead city.

Disciplinary: Architecture (Heritage Architecture, Theory of Design, Urban Design).

1 Introduction

'Dead cities' is a term for cities that were newly built, reconstructed, or renovated. It does not depend on the degree of urbanization and integration of services in those cities, but rather on the degree of matching between users' and residents' needs with the tangible and intangible elements of the cultural heritage. The Old Mosul City faced various factors that led to being a dead city, inactive and not habitable, especially after 2017. Despite the urban, economic, social, and psychological conditions that the city contained, the desire to revive the city has become important to Mosul city in particular and the province of Nineveh in general. Despite reconstruction processes, availability of services, and providing living needs, there is a lack of response and attraction towards making the city more vital. This paper examines the most important factors and practical ways to revive the city. The research aims to highlight the tangible and intangible elements of the cultural heritage of Old Mosul City. These elements included (cultural activities - festivals - heritage elements - urban landscape - interior design of streets and alleys, facades, and materials). A theoretical framework is based on reviewing literature related to enhancing the vitality of cities, which highlighted the importance of these elements and neutralized them for environmental factors. The theoretical framework included the "Belonging to place" and "Attached to place" aspects. Various factors influence the liveability and quality of life, which depends on the strategies of urban development.

The heritage streets attract visitors to the city to find their psychological, emotional, and physical needs. Al-Najafi Street was established in a significant urban area in Old Mosul City. It is one of the physical components of the city that consist of tangible and intangible heritage elements. Al-Najafi Street has outstanding cultural features and heritage value represented by its heritage buildings and intangible cultural aspects, such as cultural and commercial activities. The current study deal with both tangible and intangible elements of the heritage street. The tangible and intangible elements are the factors of the sustainable heritage value as mentioned by UNESCO (2018). There is a relationship between the cultural features and urban development, urban development is linked with the cultural identity of historical cities, and developers should consider the intangible factors as the heart of urban reconstruction and renovation processes. It is important to reconstruct the relationship between the place and the users (UNESCO, 2018). Moreover, culture is recognized as a key element of heritage cities' planning strategies and urban development, turning dead cities into tourist cities (Nocca, 2017).

The inherited cultural elements can be perceived in urban spaces as physical elements. Therefore, heritage buildings and activities combine cultural heritage elements, including knowledge, beliefs, law, customs, and other capacities and habits acquired by society (Rusalic, 2009; Karakul, 2011). Cultural heritage, including its tangible and intangible components, constitutes a key resource in enhancing the liveability of urban areas. Therefore, urban heritage conservation has become a strategy to balance urban development, quality of life, and sustainability. (UNESCO, 2011). Thus, the urban heritage conservation strategies are an important

policy during the urban development processes of the historical area, leading to achieving a liveable city by enhancing the quality of life by connecting the past and future generations' legacy. The term "Cultural heritage" as the UNESCO definition "is the legacy of physical artifacts and intangible attributes of a group or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations" (Shyllon, 2016).

The study of the death of cities has displayed an emergency role for developers to understand logical solutions to develop, reconstruct, and renovate cities with attractive elements. The term dead cities is a definition of cities that contains the requirements of a liveable city but is almost empty of users. The Old Mosul City was destroyed before and during the liberation operations in 2017. The markets were destroyed, vandalized, and burned intentionally to eliminate the heritage and cultural elements inherited from generations. The demolishing of the active bridges Al-Jisr Al-Qadeem, which links the old city with the left bank, forced the residents and users of the traditional markets, shops, crafts, and professional work to flee to more reliable areas for housing and commercial use. New areas in the city shifted to commercial centres. Therefore, the construction, restructuring, and restoration processes of traditional markets, retail centres, and houses became an urgent need to revive Old Mosul city.

Various challenges face reviving Old Mosul City, although the city is not completely restored and rebuilt, the requirements of a liveable city are available. One of the challenges facing revitalizing the city is residents' unwillingness to return and practice their traditional life inherited from several generations. The city has a special social and cultural nature inherited from generations, including tangible and intangible elements. The traditions, habits, daily inherited activities and the social diversity in the city before its destruction are the essential elements to produce the cultural heritage character.

Therefore, the study addresses the variables related to the reviving of the city. The integration between the cultural, social, economic and urban elements is the key to liveable cities. The study highlights the importance of social and urban factors for the revitalization of cities. Despite the urban, economic, social, and psychological conditions in the old city of Mosul, the desire to revive the city has become important to the city of Mosul in particular and the Nineveh Governorate in general. Therefore, the research problem is that "the urban development and restoration processes in the Old Mosul City drop out the tangible and intangible elements of the cultural heritage in achieving the liveable city principles". This study will answer the following questions to find a solution to this problem:

- What are the heritage streets' tangible and intangible cultural heritage components that can enhance the quality of life to achieve a liveable city?
- What are the cultural and social factors that integrate with architecture to produce a living city?
- What is the role of Belonging to place and Attached to place in producing dead cities?

The study's objective is "to determine the tangible and intangible components of the heritage streets in the old Mosul City". The current study aims to achieve the integrative

relationship between cultural, social and urban elements to revive Old Mosul city. Reaching the research goals depends on finding the role of belonging and attachment to the place, which is the research focuses. Additionally, tangible and intangible elements, such as facades, street elements, and activities investigated in the current study.

2 Literature Review

Previous studies related to reviving the heritage cities depending on the integration between the tangible and intangible cultural heritage discussed in the current part of the study. The literature is presented in two categories; the first category is related to the users' physical, psychological, and emotional needs that should be available in liveable cities. In contrast, the second category related to the details of the aspects linked to the liveable and sustainable city's factors in terms of culture, economy, and architecture.

Tarik and Hussein (2017) mentioned the importance of heritage cities and buildings as a resource of the civilization and culture platform, inherited for centuries. Heritage architecture is considered the physical evidence of civilization and thoughts. The researchers identified the environmental, cultural, and social factors of sustaining the cities that influenced the developers and investors to revive the heritage cites, preserving the heritage architecture. Providing the services and life requirements and governmental support is a key to making the heritage city a focal point for visitors and investors, which is the dynamo of dynamic cities (Tarik & Hussein, 2017). Sultan (2013) explained that the heritage components are necessary for heritage cities to be active and liveable. The integration between the tangible and intangible heritage elements is represented by the quality of the components and the value of matching, which affected cultural, economic, and architectural sustainability. These types are (Sultan, 2013):

- Physical heritage elements: consist of buildings, architectural elements, historic elements, interior details, furniture, and facades.
- Non-physical heritage elements: consist of folk arts, knowledge, habits, festivals, visual arts and performance arts, languages, accents, and religions.

The previous studies mentioned the importance of integrating the tangible heritage elements with the cultural values included in the intangible cultural heritage, consisting of various components representing the non-physical heritage culture in physical forms, such as festivals, galleries, and artifacts art crafts. These activities are the best way to inherit the intangible cultural heritage, which should perform in architectural and interior heritage environments. It will confirm the originality as UNESCO and Venice document reported, which performing culture should be available in the heritage cities to be listed under the 'World Heritage Site' list that involved the authenticity and integrity in presenting the cultural heritage components.

On another side, Ghazala (2013) explained that heritage architecture is a sequential process of the model of civil, cultural, and religious values moved from one generation to another. The integration between the buildings, architectural forms and elements, habits, traditions, arts, and

traditional activities represents deep values and originality. The research abstracted the tangible and intangible heritage elements that should be available in heritage cities after being rebuilt, reconstructed, and renovated (Table 1) (Ghazala, 2013).

Table 1: Types of affected heritage elements on the reviving of heritage cities.

Types	Representing by	Image
Physical	Built heritage	Buildings and cities
	Archaeological heritage	Historical sites
	Movable heritage	Historic stones etc.
	Textual heritage	Documents and paintings
Non- physical	Audio heritage	Stories and traditional says
	Traditions and habits heritage	Religion and cultural activities
	Tradition arts heritage	Folk arts and visual performances

(Source: Adopted from Abo Ghazala (2013))

The availability of the positive values of the 'Attached and Belonging' factors is a key element of liveable heritage cities. The sense of being part of a place and belonging should be provided for the users. Therefore, including strange and foreign architectural and interior design, style, and elements reflects the non-authenticity of the city in presenting the intangible cultural heritage in the physical forms in front of the visitors and new generations. The matching of social and cultural identity is the point of restored heritage cities. After disasters, reviving heritage cities is a critical process that needs to restore the traditions, habits, and attractions.

Attachment to the place is one of the important factors to revive the cities. Elements of 'attached to place' should be available in the city by matching the city's physical environment and users' functional and social needs (Caan, 2011). This factor is linked with the mental image of users and former residents of cities. Any change in the matching value between the mental image and the existing image creates a factor of strangeness and not belonging to the city. Therefore, the factor attached to the place reflects a negative indication and affects the sustainability of heritage cities, which gradually will lead to a decline in the municipality's performance (Song, 2010; Moore, 1979). For the cities that have been rebuilt, reconstructed, or renovated, it takes more effort to rely on the non-physical elements (intangible) to attract users and revitalize the city. Some researchers focus on reviving destroyed cities by depending on intensive and periodic cultural and commercial events, giving positive results.

Various factors represent the quality of life considered by the designers. Amongst the factors are the street's walkability, urban public spaces, nature, safety and health. (Southworth, 2016). Whereas preserving the cultural heritage of the streets will enhance the quality of life and achieve the liveability of the heritage city. According to Shamsuddin et al. (2012), the term "liveability" is related to the physical elements that can enhance the quality of life. Walkability is associated with the sustainability of the city, which is one of the liveable components. The term liveability is equivalent to the quality of living in a city (Shamsuddin et al., 2012). Liveability is a term to measure a place's human well-being and quality (Kallidaikurichi & Belinda, 2010). The characteristics of the street are influenced by various elements, such as function, culture, social,

architecture, heritage, and identity. The cultural aspects directly affected the characteristics of the heritage street and its tangible and intangible cultural heritage that affect the users' needs and perception, which is influenced by the liveability of the heritage cities (Rahman et al., 2015). According to Rahman et al. (2015), the street should be suitable for activities, which can be divided into three categories:

- Necessary activities related to the function of the street.

- Optional activities related to enjoying life.

- Social activities are related to the cultural aspects of the users of the street.

3 Method

The research methodology is a qualitative and quantitative approach (mix-method) using covert observation and monitoring tools for the perennial places of the old city of Mosul, especially the markets, alleys and public areas. As for the face-to-face interview method with pedestrians in the position of study. The special questions sheet is designed to interview users, residents, and visitors of the Old Mosul City using a purposeful sampling strategy. The selection of samples for an interview was done after visual observation of the pedestrians, tracking the activities and movement in the city. The interview questions contained variables related to 'belonging to the place' and 'attachment to the place' as the most important factors affecting the degree and value of living in heritage cities.

The quantitative part of the study used the survey form designed to cover all types of respondents (users, visitors, and residents). Visual observation is used to report information and collect data for the site to discover the range of integration between the requirements of users and the existing condition of the street and the city in terms of preparing the infrastructure, physical, economic and urban environment. The survey is divided into four levels:

- Level of main and access roads and car parking

- Level of markets and commercial buildings

- Level of alleys and sub-streets

- Level of residential buildings and services

Figure 1: Images of Al-Najafi Street after the war before the reconstruction process in 2017

The case study was selected from the Old Mosul city, which is 'Al-Najafi Street'. The street is one of the most efficient traditional streets in the city. The street is a commercial function with traditional handicraft shops, partially destroyed during the war (Figure 1).

The survey questions included themes related to the past, current, and future images of the street. The survey was used to illuminate the users' needs and views on developing the street and the city to be liveable. The questions included the theme of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, which is connected to the city's users directly and affects the liveability of the city.

4 Result and Discussion

The interviews result of current and previous workers, residents, merchants, and owners of commercial buildings and shops in the city showed that the reconstruction and restoration of residential and commercial buildings are important for reviving the city as well as handicrafts and industrial professions are important to be on in the city. This importance comes after attracting users themselves to the old city by providing facilities or procedures that facilitate opening their stores. Moreover, the needs to rely on cultural events, festivals, and even advertisements to promote and attract attention to the importance of the old area are necessary, especially in Al-Najafi Street, which is the core street and linked to various types of locations in the Old Mosul City. The majority of the interviewees (78%) indicated cultural events, shopping festivals, and even art festivals in reviving the city and attracting investments. Likewise, most of the samples pointed to services, bridges, and accessibility to the city, which play a major role in reviving the city. One of the interview samples indicated that reviving the municipality depends on restoring the core of the traditional market, which has been disintegrated into a new core in separate areas of Nineveh and Mosul. The interviewees, who were working as a merchant and owners of shops in the old market area said:

"I think the old city of Mosul, especially the markets are dead for several reasons, the most important is the stability of professionals, craftsmen and traders in other areas outside the vicinity of the old city, and even if it is completely rebuilt, it is difficult to revive it as it was before the year 2014, it may return gradually and with periods that may reach 2 to 5 Years". (Interview No. 12)

On the other hand, the survey for some of the old Mosul areas and the four levels mentioned above showed that most buildings, streets, and longevity stores are self and sporadic efforts in the city. However, the lack of experience of realtors, merchants and retailers in attracting people to the city reversed a somewhat negative picture. The condition of the main streets and roads in the city, especially around the commercial areas, is closer to being ready. They are still rebuilding and restoring at a low accelerating rate for buildings and markets. The return of some fish and shops and restaurants, one of the important cultural heritage in old Mosul city, has significantly increased demand for and exploration of the city. In the observation of the site, the researchers observed the people's interest to revive the city. Some people work on tangible and others on intangible heritage elements. Various activity was held in the streets and buildings within Old Mosul City, such as Forums, educational seminars, and reading festivals. One of the activities is stored in the

traditional house after being restored and rehabilitated to be a foundation to support the tangible and intangible cultural heritage, which is called the "Baytana Foundation for Culture, Arts and Heritage", which is what the city needs to revive (Figure 2).

Figure 2: photos from the heritage and cultural activities in 'Baytana'

A questionnaire was distributed to 210 pedestrians in the old Mosul city. The majority of the respondents (87%) showed the importance of heritage elements, especially traditional facades. This ratio indicates the importance of reviving Old Mosul city to the respondents. The respondents selected the facades, materials, and techniques in sequence as elements of tangible heritage. While, the elements of intangible heritage, the respondents choose the traditional handcraft and shops (74%). Respondents 68% showed the importance of reconstructing the street. The old image with developing some elements and services in the street is connected with the contemporary era.

Moreover, the respondents 56% showed non-satisfaction with the restoration process, and it needs the global organization and authorized community to observe the procedure. Respondents 92% indicated the great role of the traditional activities that are run by the local and foundations linked to the heritage and culture in the old Mosul city. The results show the negative value of the "belonging to place" and "attached to place". The results indicated the positivity of the respondents' needs in reviving the Old Mosul City. In contrast, the current needs of the users, visitors, and owners in the city conflicted with the existing situation of the city, which has negative impacts.

5 Conclusion

The negative value of the two factors "belonging to place" and "attached to place", is a negative indicator of deserting the city and making it less vital, which requires additional efforts not only in the field of infrastructure construction but in the field of cultural and social reconstruction. Architecture has a great role in creating and sustaining the mental image and urban scene for users in the old city to stimulate its properties. The old city of Mosul is lively, and attention must be to promoting factors that make it more vital. Otherwise will turn out to be among the forgotten and dead cities. The city needs to rebuild the artistic, cultural, customs, festivals, and other tangible and intangible cultural heritage elements. Therefore, the research recommends 1). Supporting the activities that are in charge to reflect the original cultural heritage of the ancient city of Mosul financially, logically and morally, as it is the key to revitalizing the city and the 'Baytana' Foundation for Culture, Arts and Heritage provided an excellent example of

belonging to the place; 2). Holding shopping festivals in open spaces of the city; 3). Reopening the Iraqi Maqam house 'traditional Music building' in Mosul and activating its role; 4). Attempting to collect and reopen shops, restaurants, and owners of a heritage nature; 5). Attention to the services and roads leading to the old city; 6). According to the law, helping residents, and owners of real estate and commercial stores reopen their projects by offering temptations, such as tax exemption, interest-free loans, or free building materials, provided they adhere to the identity of the original building.

6 Availability of Data and Material

Data can be made available by contacting the corresponding author.

7 Acknowledgement

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