



## Using the Principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design in Iran

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### Introduction

We live with crime every day. It has become, unfortunately, a fact of life. Discussions on the subject have traditionally focused much less on prevention than on arrest and punishment; measures that cannot be taken until after a crime has been committed. Only in the last 20 years have designers and architects begun to see the need to plan and build with more than just the traditional threats of nature (fire, earthquakes and hurricanes) in mind. They must now consider the threat of crime. **CPTED** as defined by the National Crime Prevention Institute: "The proper design and effective use of the built environment can lead to a reduction in the fear and incidence of crime, and an improvement of the quality of life."

### Principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design

There are four overlapping CPTED strategies.

1. **Natural Surveillance:** A design concept directed primarily at keeping intruders easily observable. Promoted by features that maximize visibility of people, parking areas and building entrances: doors and windows that look out on to streets and parking areas; pedestrian-friendly sidewalks and streets; front porches; adequate nighttime lighting.
2. **Territorial Reinforcement:** Physical design can create or extend a sphere of influence. Users then develop a sense of territorial control while potential offenders, perceiving this control, are discouraged. Promoted by features that define property lines and distinguish private spaces from public spaces using landscape plantings, pavement designs, gateway treatments, and "CPTED" fences.
3. **Natural Access Control:** A design concept directed primarily at decreasing crime opportunity by denying access to crime targets and creating in offenders a perception of risk. Gained by designing streets, sidewalks, building entrances and neighborhood gateways to clearly indicate public routes and discouraging access to private areas with structural elements.
4. **Target Hardening:** Accomplished by features that prohibit entry or access: window locks, dead bolts for doors, interior door hinges. Presented along with each of these CPTED strategies are guidelines which, as a homeowner, builder or renovator, you can apply to reduce the fear and incidence of crime and improve the quality of life.

## History of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design in Iran

At a glance, historical urban design in Iran reflects the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.

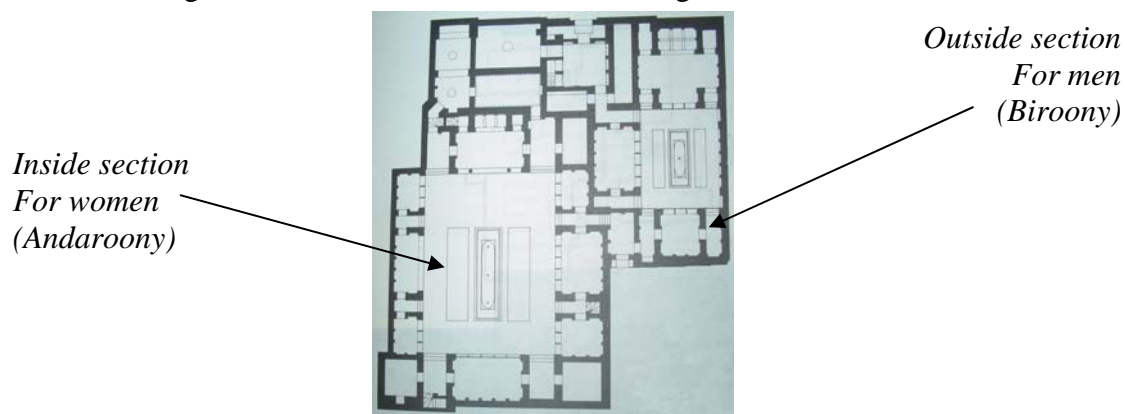
Historically, the cities of Iran especially those cities in warm climates, have applied strategies and characteristics to prevent crime. In these cities the most important principle for increasing safety is the use of surveillance to recognize offenders and strangers.

Another element of CPTED that has been used historically throughout Iran is access control. The use of walls and gates to control access to the city allows people entering and leaving the city to be monitored.

The design of Iranian cities has incorporated the gathering citizens in a limited area, creating density. This allowed societies develop a sense of territoriality and defend their space against offenders. This principle of territoriality is essential in developing a sense of ownership within communities, and subsequently allowing citizens to defend themselves against crime.

Iranian cities located in the desert share a set of characteristics called "Harim"<sup>i</sup>. These characteristics protect every house from observation. This is especially so that strangers or "Na mahram"<sup>ii</sup> cannot see women and girls, allowing them to behave freely away from stranger's eyes.

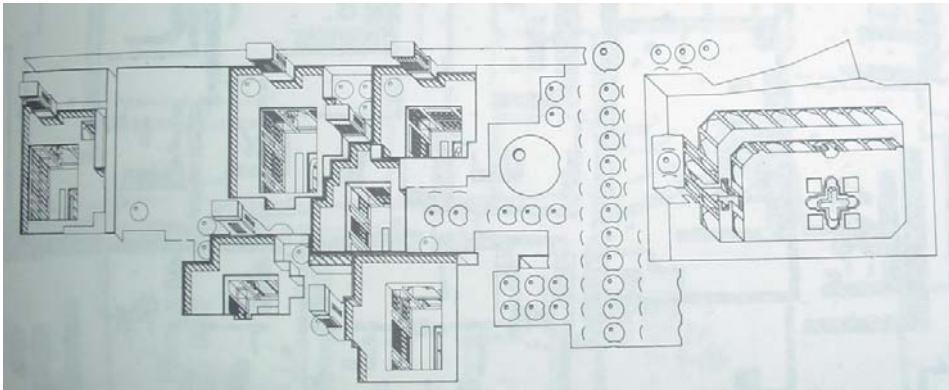
This is reflected clearly in "Kavir"<sup>iii</sup> architecture. Homes are built with tall walls and without windows into outside spaces. The entrance door had two kinds knockers. One of them is for the women and the other is for men. The entrance to homes is a small space in a corner of the yard. The home itself had two parts, outside and inside<sup>iv</sup>, with inside being smaller than outside. The inside belongs to women and children, and outside belonged to sir and master of house and his guests.



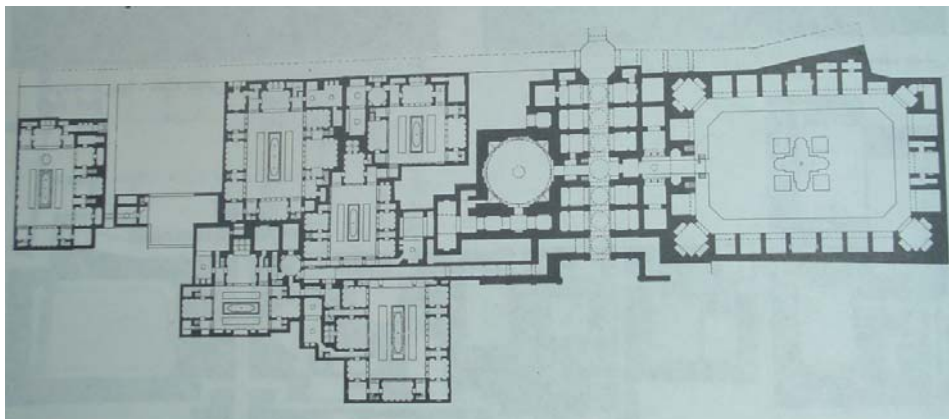
*Plan of a traditional home in Yazd-Iran*

In the past the neighborhood had special continuity and identity in Iran. The residence of each neighborhood knew each other and so a stranger could be recognized very soon. Also playing of children and toddlers outside of home was under surveillance of women who sat in front of their home and talking with each other.

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*Perspective*



*Plan*

#### Adjustment of houses in historical texture of Yazd city (Iran)

In the past architects built cities with traditional principles and these principles have been transferred to the next generation. All of spaces were identified and the dimension of cities was in a more human and smaller scale, but after expansion of cities natural surveillance in cities decrease.

#### **The present situation of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design in Iran**

Today the atmosphere of cities of Tehran has changed. Neighborhood relationships have been lost and it results lack of surveillance. Familiar people and strangers can't be recognized and territory and ownership haven't meaning anymore. This problem exists in big cities much more. Crimes happen more easily and more often in great cities. Perceptions of safety are created by patrols and police, and there is no perception of safety from residential surveillance.

Nowadays our public spaces more or less are places for selling and buying drugs and gathering offenders and will be a place to happen various crimes. The rate of crime is varies according to kind of place and space.

Actually in the past in Iran and other countries urban spaces includes squares and streets that was completely designed and identified, but in recent period (with regard



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to the importance of accesses) when these accesses (highways, bridges, crosses, ...) want to find their settlement in city then create some spaces that are lost and can't be seen and so become to indefensible spaces. In the other way we can say that indefensible space is an objected of events and revolutions that are happened in cities.

Indefensible spaces have some special function that are unpleasant in some aspects which include: throwing garbage to using drugs , robbery , begging , gathering vagrants , violating , robbery , using and selling drugs and so on .

In 1960s the revolution of building highways subsided, western countries started to proceed to quality of urban cities found that this lost spaces created several problems for urban texture so they tried to find some solutions for spaces and identified this spaces as urban spaces.

Later that this experiences reflect in Iran , municipality proceeded to this for example municipality of Tehran control the spaces under bridges and subways and make it to an alive urban space with creating some facilities for citizens .

If there is public surveillance in these spaces it can be a suitable urban space but if hasn't been considered all aspects in urban spaces and doesn't respect to light and public surveillance on them it will become an indefensible space.

This shows that our public spaces aren't furnished so that all social groups (e.g. women) can use them equally. In addition there isn't any attention to urban furniture and difficulties that they can create.

One the examples of indefensible space are that in different places of cities, great vertical boards are installed on flying bridges and homeless people sleep behind them at nights or in days peddlers gather in this places because this places in out of public Surveillance and this matter can cause several problems for citizens.

### **Some guides in using the Principles of Crime Prevention Through environmental Design in Iran**

Crime prevention by environmental design isn't new. Our grandparents respected this matter in designing their cities and neighborhood. Today we are responsible to design our living environment so that safety improves and this will result *an improvement of the quality of life*.

In some cities there are some solutions for CPTED as some codes & acts. For example at nights all of the stores because of the corners that create in their shop – windows should illuminate their shop – windows. So regarding suitable illumination could be a good solution.

The other solution is maintaining theses spaces alive and under public surveillance. This mean that urban spaces design in such a way that people who walk or drive in them can watch them or police who pass there can control these spaces. Because corners that are in darkness or are not under public watching can make indefensible spaces.

So we should survey all of the cities in Iran, all of these spaces should be identified and should think some suitable solution for them. These solutions can be used in

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urban furniture arrangement and in some aspects require some codes to improve these spaces. The important point that should also be respected is that the study should be local and the solution should be local too.

Of course there should be a general code but each space should have a local study and local solution.

However preventing the crime by environmental design is important and necessary and creating this may be possible by regarding these two matters:

1. on the basis of global experiences and concepts
2. on the basis of religious culture and believes.

In the first case it is clear that global experiences and finding will help very much to reach the favorite results. So it is necessary to use experts in relation with this.

The next case is identify and express global concepts by local – religious culture and believes. Islam has emphasis "Mahram "and "Na mahram" between men and women very much and this matter have dictated special laws that is a main principle in Islamic society and so this laws lead us to special methods in environmental design. May be we need special spaces to regard this principle. The spaces that plus to being safety against various crimes should preserve girls and women against stranger men (Na mahram). Indeed for our society urban spaces should be a "Hejab" for people plus to safety.

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<sup>i</sup> - in Persian means : domain personal

<sup>ii</sup> - in Persian means : people (especially for men )who are not a close family with you

<sup>iii</sup> - desert

<sup>iv</sup> - In Persian pronounced : "Andaroony and Biroony "