

Visual Analysis of Urban Spaces in Tehran: Spatial Identity, Public Life and Contemporary Transformation

Delaram Zare

Dr Bhanuben Nanavati College of Architecture for Women, Pune, Maharashtra, India

Dr. Shubhada Kamalapurkar

Dr Bhanuben Nanavati College of Architecture for Women, Pune, Maharashtra, India

Abstract

The urban space in Tehran provides evidence of a complex interrelation among cultural heritage, daily public life, and contemporary changes in metropolitan areas. The current study uses a systematic visual analytical framework to identify some of the various types of religious, commercial, recreational, civic, transportation-related, and recent urban spaces throughout Tehran. The analyses focus on the physical characteristics (spatial enclosure, permeability, edge condition) of these urban spaces and their physical activity patterns, users' diversity, cultural attributes, boundaries separating public from private spaces, security/safety, inclusiveness, and other manifestations of everyday life. Findings suggest that the majority of religious/heritage spaces continue to provide strong cultural and symbolic identities to citizens while providing continued opportunities for social gathering and public usage. Spaces traditionally used for commerce and pedestrian usage present strong social interactions at edges with active edges, high levels of pedestrian traffic, and highly permeable pedestrian movements. Parks/recreational spaces generally present large amounts of open and inclusive areas. Modern cafes/shopping malls/transit nodes/modern monuments reflect the evolving forms of leisure, mobility, consumption, and semi-private interaction. It is suggested through the study's findings that the combination of inherited spatial practices and new metropolitan practices in Tehran creates its urban spaces. Visual analytical techniques were also shown to be very useful tools for examining the relationships between the form of urban spaces and both cultural identity and changing patterns of public use.

Keywords

Tehran, Urban Spaces, Visual Analysis, Public Life, Urban Transformation.