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#### HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE

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Fig. 5. Open arena of El Hedim governmental square has provided the commercial opportunity. Source: <https://jeddi.org/g/var/albums/2012-08-PSM/Morocco/Meknes/meknes-place-el-hedim.jpg?m=137203136>.



Fig. 6. Trading goods in El Hedim square, Mekens. Photo: Sajjad Moazen, 2016.



Fig. 7. Kyan bazaar in Ahvaz with similar shape to Moroccan squares. Source: [www.khouznews.ir/files/fa/news/1393/5/7/24211\\_870.jpg](http://www.khouznews.ir/files/fa/news/1393/5/7/24211_870.jpg)

of the city and hosts a large population from various strata. Large presence of people in urban spaces results in reinforcing the sense of security, making it a memorable place with identity during time and citizens will feel more belonged there. Such a space is often prosperous, successful and lively because of the overcoming of commercial function. It seems that the main factor of liveliness in Moroccan squares is also the overcoming of commercial function. Commercial function sometimes take place in a primary and mobile form like street peddling, selling from handcarts, and sometimes in a small shop.

## Endnote

\*The article based on a field trip entitled "The Tourism of Moroccan, native Landscape which was held in september of 2016 and was funded by "NAZAR research center".

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Studying Moroccan public spaces shows that liveliness of these spaces is mainly depended on the activity and not the physic and shape. Regardless of factors that could add visual attraction to the shape of a public space, these arenas are permeable and accessible and because of keeping their look throughout history, they possess originality and identity; citizens are faced with varieties of activities and are allowed to offer their goods, services and art, or take advantage of services provided by others. Eventually, this public spaces is held meaningful by people and they feel the sense of belonging to there. This type of governmental intervention in urban management results in maximum presence of people, crowd and dynamism of the space, more prosperity of these arenas during active hours, reinforcing the sense of security, memorability of the place in people's minds, increasing the sense of belonging to the environment and eventually liveliness of the public spaces. Commercial functions, The most important factor in liveliness of the public spaces. What we mentioned as Moroccan public space is the same "Saahe" in Arabic and the direct translation of it in Farsi is "Meydaan" (square); we call them Meydan-e El Hedim or Jemaa el-Fnaa. Actually, Saahe is an open arena which is called square, area or other names. More accurate comparisons of similar examples in Iran and Morocco shows that the arenas that Iranians call market, is the same public space or square in Morocco. Kian market in the city of Ahvaz is an open arena for outdoor business (Fig.7) and is different with Iranian market rows or "Souk"s in Arabic countries. Kian bazaar is similar to Jemaa el-Fnaa or El Hedim squares or the Fifth Mohammad Street in Casablanca.

Confounding land-uses in public space, specially overcoming of commercial function like trading activities in Moroccan squares, is the factor that results in liveliness of these spaces; whether it is called square or market or public space. Being in these spaces which are actually arenas (possessing

massive shape and not linear) and belong to the pedestrians, illustrates the course of their activities in city scale. If you visit these squares last hours of the day or beginning of the night, you will see them more crowded and full of movement; to the point that the arena's openness is not observable. Grouping of street peddlers in Jemaa el-Fnaa and El Hedim squares and their layout next to each other, somehow divides the square into several rows of hypaethral markets and the same trait of spatial openness and unity of the square in the dense historical texture allows the simultaneous activity of lots of people, suppliers of goods and services and receivers; and not its physical beauty. It seems that if the commercial function of the space and its trading activities are removed, these squares will lose their present prosperity.

## Conclusion

What is seen today as Morocco's lively public spaces, is similar to what used to be in this country's primary cities; Trading activity in the shape of street market. This native and land marking element is preserved in the present cities and makes much prosperity. Although Moroccans have access to facilities and construction techniques by their connection with European countries, they still have preserved the same looks and patterns of the past, to the point that despite of the presence of numerous tourists, there aren't any malls even in the main and largest arenas inside the historical texture of the city.

Public space in Moroccan cities have the similar space as the day market or arena (and not row market) in open Iranian arenas; Regardless that the outdoors and open arenas in Moroccan cities are called public space, square or street market. Square or market is the place for daily trading. The presence of numerous functions and specially overcoming of trading activities results in liveliness and prosperity of the public space. Thus street market or square is a type of public space, permeable, and easily accessed, lots of people visit there in the active (awake) time





Fig. 1. Boujloud Square; the open arena and public space of Fes, Morocco. Source: <http://17.alamy.com/zooms/18f81b9a5a4c493b99869b8b680b0d68/africa-morocco-line-of-women-sit-on-steps-outside-gate-of-bab-boujeloud-apd5pa.jpg>.



Fig. 2. commercial prosperity in Jemaa el-Fnaa square in 1914  
Source: [www.marocantics.com/photos/uncategorized/jamaelfna.jpg](http://www.marocantics.com/photos/uncategorized/jamaelfna.jpg).



Fig. 3. Thrive of Mobile trading in Jemaa el-Fnaa square, Morocco  
Photo: Sajjad Moazen, 2016.



Fig. 4. The nighttime perspective & liveliness of Jemaa el-Fnaa square as a “street market”. Source: <http://images.kojaro.com/2015/11/Jemaa-el-Fna-marrakech3.jpg>.

is justified being located adjacent to the king’s castle and also to the city’s walls. Thus it is natural that people feel the sense of belonging to the square and have lots of memories from different eras in mind.

It seems that El Hedim square still hosts shows, governmental ceremonies and even public demonstrations in the contemporary era; because a square with El Hedim’s scale and location cannot be seen in historical texture of Meknes. Because of the variety of activities taking place there, El Hedim is the main public space of Meknes and a lively and dynamic place for social interactions of citizens. At the moment, the main function of the square similar to Jemaa el-Fnaa is trading, specially in small scale and street peddling in the afternoons (Fig .6). somehow that seeing the number of users in the space and the way of their activity is the evidence of El Hedim’s liveliness and dynamism during the day until midnight.

in the following.

Marrakesh is the present capital of Morocco. Jemaa el-Fnaa square is the most important square of the city and was built against the inside walls of the city in the 11th century. As the city expanded, now the square is located at the center of the city. This square is completely organic and doesn't have a specific geometrical shape. Jemaa el-Fnaa is known for acrobat shows, storytelling, street music performance and distribution of foods and handicrafts. This public space is so fit for values that was registered at UNESCO in 2001. "The souk" located at the northern side of the Jemaa el-Fnaa square is the most important market of the country for its distribution of requirements for tourists and citizens. The only way to get to the market is through the Jemaa el-Fnaa square and by foot. Regarding the location of Jemaa el-Fnaa square; being at the edge of the city (against the city walls) and attached to Marrakesh's market, it seems that this square used to be an open arena serving the market and maybe a kind of dock. What is seen in the past pictures taken in the 20th century is similar to events taking place in the square now. Jemaa el-Fnaa was a hypaethral market in a wide arena in which suppliers and demandants meet and prepared their requirements (Fig.2). This culture has continued during time and now Jemaa el-Fnaa square has a more complicated and designed shape of the primary market; Street peddlers who have hanged all of their goods to themselves and constantly move, vendors who offer their goods on carts (Fig.3) and small mobile shops that take up more space and create shadows for themselves.

Studying the history of Jemaa el-Fnaa square, knowing the events that took place in this square and observing the present situation, all is the evidence that this square was and is a lively and dynamic public space since the beginning until now. Buying and selling activities and commercial function, are the main and primary factor of forming of this square adjacent to Marrakesh's market. Therefore, not only

the physical element did not have an important role in foundation and survival of Jemaa el-Fnaa square, but the functional element – confounding land-use and overcoming of commercial activities – resulted in prosperity of the square, memorability and its stability in the minds of the citizens. Jemaa el-Fnaa square is serving the tourists and citizens by day, and turns into a "street market" by night (Fig.4). The presence of a large population throughout the history and their activities in this square, now makes Jemaa el-Fnaa represent a specific originality and identity, people sense they belong there and it is considered as secure and lively environment.

The city of Meknes (center of the Meknes province) was the capital of Morocco during 1675 to 1728. El Hedim square is the main square of the city, located between the old texture of the city and the royal city. This square was built by Molay Esmail in the 17th century, by destroying a part of the historical texture of Meknes for declaring the Royal announcements and public executions. El Hedim square is the heart and main square of the Meknes and it is a place for children's soccer games, street peddling, colportage and family promenade at the moment. The main activities of the square happen in the afternoon and it is known for its performance of street artists such as storytellers, acrobats and Arab and Berber musicians. The square ends up at Bab Mansour (Mansour gateway), the input entry of the castle and Molay Esmail's royal city, in the south and is connected to the city of Meknes in the north.

The history of El Hedim square shows that it was a governmental square which the king chose to declare public announcements and sometimes execute sinners in public. Although commercial function was not the main and primary element of forming the El Hedim square, but it seems that it could have played the part of a dock area for trading goods (Fig. 5), As this gap was located adjacent to the urban texture and connected to the market on the other side. Therefore governmental and commercial function of the square

permeability, ability of personalization, readability, flexibility, richness and the possibility of measured and controlled change (Ibid).

Other theorists like Violich, Roger Trancic, Colman, Michael Southworth and Francis Teabalds have also considerable sayings about qualities of a desirable urban design and characteristics of a lively urban space. With studying and analyzing the sayings of urban design intellects, it seems that few common concepts are used as indicators of liveliness of public space. Regardless of the physical indicators such as taking consolidation, hierarchy, human scale, coordination and compatibility with background into account, the most important indicators of liveliness in public space can be divided into 3 groups:

- Confounding land-use, variety of activity, flexibility
- Permeability, ease of access.
- Originality, meaningfulness, sense of belonging, readability.

The first and second group are related to functional indicators and the third group is related to identical-historical indicators. All of the mentioned indicators eventually cause increase in the presence of the people of society, increase in social cooperation and interactions between them in bed of public life and resulting in increase in security of urban space, specially public spaces.

### **Liveliness in Moroccan public spaces**

Moroccan public spaces are divided by scale into two categories of minor and major. It seems that there is no middle scale public space in this country and there is only local or extramural. Regardless of the function of mosque in an Islamic country like Morocco which could singly be a kind of lively and successful public space, all of the public spaces in any scale, included variety of functions and activities. It seems that the presence of commercial function and buy-sell activity, whether in minor scale and street peddling or in larger scale, is the main factor of liveliness in the public space.

On the other hand, newmade spaces are built in modern part of the cities which look like the late European examples; although their function is still depended on Moroccan culture. The present study will not attend to the modern public spaces and only studies organic and historic public spaces. Field studies and satellite images show that gaps of the historical and dense texture in Moroccan cities are often low-range and built and designed in local scale. In addition to open arenas in local scale, though rarely but there are cases of public spaces that:

- Are located at the edge and against the walls of old cities; although now with the expansion of the city, they are in the cities.
- Are created adjacent to one or multiple coarse and historical land-uses, or at the intersection of two or more crowded ways.
- Their extent is far more than the public spaces inside the texture.
- Previously had other function at the time of building. During time and with more people present, turned into nostalgic and memorable places.
- Are open integrated arenas which turn into street markets at active times of the day.
- Liveliness of these spaces is often depended on commercial function and buy-sell activity.

Jemaa al-fnaa square in Marrakesh, El Hedim square in Meknes and Boujloud square in Fes (Fig.1), are examples of qualified with the above mentioned traits. Open and wide arenas where most of the activities is buying and selling goods in minor scale; Including few small shops in gaps or its branching rows, mobile handcarts, street peddling and colportage. The goods distributed in these squares are daily requirements of people such as foods and clothes and also services like storytelling, fortune-telling and Hanabandan whom their equipment is easily assembled and disassembled daily. Liveliness and success of these public spaces is dependent on repetition of attendances and thus crowding the space. The present study examines two of the most famous cases of public space in Morocco



of street).

- The space should be a mixture of conjunct buildings with different ages and situations.
- Efficient compact density of people regardless of the reason of their presence in the space (Jacobs, 2007).

Some theorists recognize liveliness among other factors as factors of success and desirability of a city plan:

- Kevin Lynch introduced the efficient quality of urban design and in result increase in quality of urban life as a product these four factors, Meaning (sense), Compatibility, Accessibility, Control and supervision:
- Liveliness; as the concept of possibility in biological and sociological survival of human in urban environment.
- Meaning (sense); as the concept of mental role playing and meaningfulness of the city's places.
- Compatibility; as the concept of adaptation of urban form with different activities and behavioral circuits.
- Accessibility; as the concept of ease of physical penetration into different textures of the city.
- Control and Supervision; as the concept of providing the possibility of selection and intervention in management related affairs by citizens and using the city's public scene.

In the following, Lynch offers two super-criteria in order to adjust the relations between the quintuple criteria; in his opinion two main questions should always be considered in prescribing urban design interventions and actions, based on each one of the quintuple criteria.

- Super-criterion of Performance: Is the suggested action as effective, depending on its cost?
- Super-criterion of Justice: Which part of the citizens or social classes will pay for the aforementioned action? (Golkar, 2001)
- Allan Jacobs and Donald Epilard (1987) believed that urban design qualities are owed to liveliness,

identity and control, accession to opportunities, originality and meaning, public life, self-reliance of the city and the environment belonging to every person in the society.

- Prince Charles introduces ten directorial propositions labeled as qualities which should be considered in designing the environment: Location, Hierarchy, scale, coordination (Harmony), consolidation, materials, symbols and signs, decoration, art and paying attention to the native society (Homan, 2001).

• Ian Bentley et al. offered 7 criteria of permeability, variety, readability, flexibility, visual coordination and the ability of personalization for the urban space's desirability in their book "Responsive environment":

- Permeability; Providing accessibility (Physical contact) and visual contact with various parts
- Variety; presence of various functions, various forms and various persons and social groups in urban spaces
- Readability; Ability of easily reading the environment and easily navigating to intended places
- Flexibility; ability and power of the space in accepting its functions and different activities
- Visual Coordination; coordination of visual characteristic of the environment with function and meaning of the environment
- Richness; paying attention to the delicacy and details in different sensory stimuli (and not only visual stimuli).
- The ability of personalization; inhabitants and citizens feel belonging to urban space and making it theirs (Ibid).

Sometime after publishing said book, Bentley added three new criteria of Performance (from the point of view of consuming energy), Hygiene and protection of ecosystems to the seven primary criteria, under the impression of the criticisms to his comments.

- Bryan Gaudie also has the same opinion as Ian Bentley in 1993; Gaudie counts desirable urban design depended on the qualities of liveliness, harmony with background, variety, human scale,

In order to perfectly understand the concept of liveliness, it is important to have a true understanding of the word “Quality”. “Quality” is manner of a thing or phenomenon which leaves certain emotional and mental effects on human (Paakzad, 2006: 35). It is used to describe the “Degree of Perfection” in objects and phenomena; it’s a two-sided concept, clear and explicit but yet multilateral, understandable but yet evasive. When this word is used for intangible qualities like beauty, glory, influence and suchlike, it will have a multilateral and evasive concept (Golkar, 2001). The word quality (Kaifiat) is described as the manner, modality, trait and state of something in the Amid Farsi lexicon, and it means the nature, type, or characteristic of something in English.

Several intellectuals have talked about urban space, success, desirability and its liveliness. Urban space’s liveliness is the reflex of number and specially kind activities that are taking place there (Khsto & Saeidi Rezvani, 2010: 65). Jan Gehl, Kevin Lynch, Jane Jacobs and Ian Bentley are from the people who mentioned the concept of activity, usage (birth factor of activity) and related concepts like life and urban space. Now the question is that what does activity mean? “All human actions that happen in order to fulfill one of his needs” (Paakzad, 2007: 41). On the other hand, the Danish urban engineer, Jan Gehl divided activities to 3 types based on being obligatory or voluntarily:

1. Necessary activities (obligatory); like going to school or work, waiting at the bus stop (Gehl, 2008:3)
2. Optional activities (recreational); like amusement and social activities, sitting in park, hiking (Ibid: 5).
3. Social activities (depended on others presence in general space more than anything); like children’s playing, group activities or passive activities such as watching others (Ibid : 6).

According to the above category, a lively urban space is one in which considerable number and variety (Age and gender wise) of people are present there in a wide range of the day’s timeline and their activities usually

exhibit in selective or social type; people come there voluntarily and not obligatory, and spending some time in the space. It means the space should be such that people come and stay (Khstoo & Saeidi Rezvani, 2010: 66).

A lively public space is a generally open – including streets, sidewalks, public squares and parks- , accessible for all people of age and gender in most of the day, and a place for amusement, passing leisure time, establishing social interactions and activities which take part in its vitalizing and dynamic. Presence of commercial units and prosperity of buying and selling activities, specially in daily consumer goods, results in more liveliness of the space. Somehow the space in front of a small bakery can be as effective in the relations between people as the space in a daily market, and can become a lively public space.

### Indicators of a lively public space

In addition to liveliness of urban spaces, liveliness can also include concepts such as justice, efficiency, compatibility and flexibility of the environmental qualities. Eventually liveliness of the city, if stabled, could result in viability (Ibid:71). Several intellects have defined the concept of liveliness through accounting its behaviors.

- Charles Landry separates the concept of liveliness from viability. He puts 4 general approaches forward as thematic forms and has proposed 9 effective in criterions in order to recognize a city lively and viable: effective density of people, variation, accessibility, safety and security, identity and distinction, creativity, connection and cooperation, capacity of collaboration and rivalry (Khsto & Saeidi Rezvani, 2010).
- Jane Jacobs introduces most important criterions of liveliness in urban space below the concepts of usage variation, shape variation and activity variation:
- The space should preferably have more than two uses.
- Most blocks should be short (Regarding the element



## Introduction

Public space has a unique display in different places. Despite being close to Europe, Moroccan public spaces have more similarities in common with public arenas in historical cities of Iran. It seems that public spaces are intertwined with Moroccan urban structures; mosque, market, square, bathhouse and coffee house, are examples of Moroccan public spaces and main pillars of the historical city's structure. Public spaces formed in the historical textures of Moroccan cities have often smaller scale than European ones; maybe they could be called neighborhood center or hangout spot. Sometimes, there are land-uses like mosque or hermitage, Sqayeh and suchlike in parts of an open arena (although not wide) between the granule and dense texture. In addition to small open arenas in historical textures of Morocco, it rarely has wider examples of public spaces; el Hadim square in Meknes, Jemaa el-Fnaa square in Marrakesh and Boujlud square in Fes are the biggest active public spaces of this country. Public spaces that were designed and built in the newmade area of the cities in the recent years, are not the subject of this study; although they are more similar to European cases.

## Definition of public space

Among all the different spaces known for leisure time activities, public spaces of the city have a special place in which people gather around to see each other, create interactive relationships and provide their spiritual and social experiences for others understanding and usage (Mansouri, 2001). Therefore, there is a lot of difference between city space and public space. City space is the physique of space which states being urban. Public space is opposite of private space; it means it doesn't belong to any particular person; being public against being private. Public space is an urban space but the opposite isn't necessarily true (Lavasani, 2014).

In the urban perspective literature, «Public Space» is a common expression which is often translated to

«Fazaye Jam-iy» «in Farsi, although the original translation is» «General space». General space is a concept which was created in 1980's, specially in Europe as a solution for urban and social crisis of that time which included neglecting of values, Isolationism of social groups and aggressive behaviors with the purpose of relieving social relationships and expanding the sense of belonging to a common collection in individuals. But public spaces have another feature in addition to being objective and subjective. Public space is a product of possessing the space by users and their activities. Possession of space is different to occupying it, because the people present in public spaces on the contrary to the users of general space which are separate groups of individuals, create human units that have the same and mutual spatial experience (Mansouri, 2015). Public space is a place for the flow of social and civil behaviors which is made from the economical, social, and cultural terms and relations existing in the heart of the urban society and therefore an inseparable part of the city's perspective. Public space is the physical manifestation of subjective and mental structure of the city's citizens and a full-length mirror of the politics, thoughts, ideas and culture of a nation, and it is considered as one of the most important elements in structure of the city's perspective in different eras throughout the history of a nation (Hojjati, 2014). Generally, a lot of factors play a role in foundation, expansion and prosperity of public spaces; The historical aspect of the space helps the memorability of it for the users. The usage aspect of the space makes it accessible and purposeful for the audience. Location of the space defines the conditions and ways of accessing for the audience and each of the other factors affect the audience's perception in a way. A lively public space may have one, several or all the factors of success.

## Liveliness of the Public space

Public space has numerous qualities; Liveliness is one of the qualities that helps the public space succeed.

Persian translation of this paper entitled:

«سرزندگی فضاهای جمعی، مدیون کارکرد تجاری»

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## Public Spaces Liveliness Indebted to Commercial Function Case Studies are the Cities of Marrakesh and Meknes\*

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### Abstract

Public space is a place for amusement and passing leisure time, accessible to all at all times, and a place to initiate social interactions. A lively urban space contains the presence of considerable number of people in most of the day; So people should be able to come voluntarily, stay, spend leisure time and socially interact with others. Contrary to Europe, public spaces in Moroccan cities have similarities with street fairs in Iranian cities. Field research about public spaces in Moroccan cities, arises these questions: what is thriving of Moroccan public spaces depended on? Is the importance of public spaces depended on physical factors, beauty of appearance, ease of access and the level of openness in area or the activities taking place there? Does removing the commercial function results in the death of the spaces? The study ahead, a product of observation and analysis based on field observations, attends to the major part of the commercial units in the definition of city public spaces and their liveliness. It seems that Moroccan social lifestyle has a major influence on the definition of city spaces including public spaces. Despite the presence of numerous tourists in Morocco, especially Europeans, natives have been adhere to values of their past and their public spaces has still preserved their traditional structure. The result of observing several of public spaces is that prosperity, success and liveliness of the public spaces in Morocco is mainly depended on activities (commercial) and not form. Confounding land-use in city space provides the possibility of wide range of simultaneously activities, and attracts more people. On one hand, the presence of an active crowd in a space results in strengthening the sense of security and on the other hand, it makes the space, a place with originality and identity which people can feel more belonging to. Eventually this comes to liveliness of the public spaces and more prosperity. It is important to pay attention to the course of forming and the activities of public spaces in the historical textures of Moroccan cities; because it is a pattern for reviving the present cases and also, designing and building contemporary ones of that nation and even similar historical textures like Iran. Recognition and utilization of native patterns, present in reproduction of lively collective arenas and preserving the identity of cities justifies the necessity of proceeding with the following study.

**Theory:** The success of Moroccan public space which forms with creation of openness in the city's shape, depends on the presence of commercial units, specially retail sales and results in active presence of people in those spaces. The present study looks to prove the theory that plurality of land-uses and activities in public spaces, especially commercial function and buy-sell activity, results in liveliness and prosperity of public spaces in historical textures of the cities.

**Keywords:** *Public space, Liveliness, Sense of belonging, confounding land-use, Commercial function.*