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A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR IMPROVING THE URBAN SCENE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN CITIES

Case Study: Visual Analysis of One of the Commercial Axes in Asyut City

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ABSTRACT:

The urban scene in the city expresses the overall environmental and spatial configuration that interacts within human activity. It is a reflection of the characteristics of the city in all its economic, social, environmental and cultural dimensions. It also has a major role in shaping urban identity, promoting local culture, and supporting sustainable development goals for urban areas. The research problem lies in the need to formulate a framework that emphasizes the importance of improving the urban scene in achieving sustainable development. The research showed that there is a mutual and integrated relationship between the elements of the urban scene and the elements of sustainable development represented in four main dimensions: the urban dimension, the cultural dimension, the social dimension, and the economic dimension. These dimensions constituted the basic structure for formulating the proposed framework for improving the urban scene as an entry point for sustainable development. The proposed framework emphasized the importance of creating high-quality urban environments that enjoy cultural and civilizational value and contribute to achieving economic returns that support the process of sustainable development.

The article deals with the issue of visual pollution of the commercial urban scene, which negatively affected the urban environment of the study area, which represents the problem of the research. Therefore, the article is aimed to build a knowledge base for the phenomenon of visual pollution of the commercial urban scene, which is represented in the facades of buildings and their proportions, billboards, and the lack of aesthetic and visual elements.

KEYWORDS: Urban scene, Sustainable development, Visual pollution, Commercial streets

إطار نظري لتحسين المشهد الحضري كمدخل للتنمية المستدامة في المدن

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ملخص البحث:

يُعبّر المشهد الحضري في المدينة عن مجمل التكوين البيئي والمكاني الذي يتفاعل ضمن النشاط الانساني، وهو بمثابة انعكاس لخصائص المدينة بكافة أبعادها الاقتصادية، والاجتماعية، والبيئية، والثقافية. كما أن له دور رئيسي في صياغة الهوية العمرانية، وتعزيز الثقافة المحلية، ودعم أهداف التنمية المستدامة للمناطق الحضرية. واستنادا الى المراجعة والتحليل المتعمق للأدبيات والاطر النظرية، تطرح الورقة البحثية تساؤل حول ماهية الابعاد التي تساهم في تحسين المشهد الحضري ودورها في تحقيق التنمية المستدامة. وتكمن إشكالية البحث في الحاجة إلى صياغة إطار يؤكد على أهمية تحسين المشهد الحضري في تحقيق التنمية المستدامة. ولقد أظهرت نتائج البحث أن هناك علاقة متبادلة ومتكاملة بين عناصر المشهد الحضري ومفومات التنمية المستدامة والمتمثلة في أربعة أبعاد رئيسية، وهي البعد العمراني، والبعد الثقافي، والبعد الاجتماعي، والبعد الاقتصادي. لقد شكلت هذه الابعاد البنية الأساسية لصياغة الاطار المقترح لتحسين المشهد الحضري كمدخل للتنمية المستدامة. أكد الاطار المقترح على أهمية خلق بيئات عمرانية ذات جودة عالية تتمتع بالقيمة الثقافية والحضرية وتساهم في تحقيق عوائد اقتصادية تدعم عملية التنمية المستدامة.

يتناول البحث موضوع التلوث البصري للمشهد الحضري التجاري والذي يؤثر سلبا على البيئة الحضرية لمنطقة الدراسة، وهو ما يمثل مشكلة البحث، لذا يهدف البحث الى بناء قاعدة معرفية لظاهرة التلوث البصري للمشهد الحضري التجاري،

وكانت اهم النتائج التي توصل اليها البحث معاناة المشهد الحضري التجاري من تشويه بصري متمثل في واجهات المباني وتناسباتها ولوحات الاعلانات والافتقار الى العناصر الجمالية والبصرية .

الكلمات الدالة: المشهد الحضري – التنمية المستدامة – التلوث البصري – الشوارع التجارية.

INTRODUCTION:

The urban scene of the city is a very complex urban form, its components overlap and intertwine, and the visual formal characteristics of these components play a great impact in judging the built environment, because of their impact on the sensory and visual responses of the recipient. When these values, or some of them, are absent, the urban scene of the city becomes distorted (Al-Fatean, Z.H. 2005).

1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Egypt is witnessing at the present time a great architectural, urban and planning renaissance, and through the future vision of city planning in the vision of Egypt 2030, and by imagining that the city of Asyut will become one of the most important commercial and logistical cities South to Cairo, due to its location in the middle of Egypt. Asyut is considered a center for connecting longitudinal and transverse commercial axes. It is a hub for the trade movement coming from north to south, and from the Red Sea in the east, and from the New Valley in the west (Mohammadi, L.S. 2022).

Hence, a study should be carried out on one of the important commercial streets in the city of Asyut, which has developed significantly in recent years, and an attempt must be made to propose an organizational planning idea to attract people to the central Asyut region after its development and to transfer governmental institutions out of there.

However, the research problem lies in the need to try to propose modern and advanced planning solutions to raise the efficiency of commercial streets and their surrounding areas for the sake of advancement in civilization and humanity, through the realization of humanitarian considerations as an indicator of sustainable design.

2. RESEARCH AIMS

The research aims to study the urban scene and formulate a general framework for how to develop it. Through this framework, a vision can be formulated for developing Nemais Street in Asyut and advance it civilly and humanly, as Egypt is witnessing a wide architectural and urban renaissance, through several points, namely:

- Raising the level of quality of life in the area under study.
- Through the study, we are trying to achieve the utilitarian, economic and aesthetic dimension in the region (under study), lies in reviving it in a sustainable, urban and contemporary planning form.
- Developing and improving the area and the surrounding streets in terms of coordinating and improving effective and safe pedestrian paths, and planning paths for cycling.
- Attracting tourists and creating a new recreational tourism area

- Improving the visual image of buildings.
- Escaping the feeling of boredom by staying away from repetitive stereotyped planning.
- Adding recreational services and open spaces as an outlet and making use of the existing spaces for that.
- Preserving the originality and nobility of the street, consolidating its value, rediscovering it, and discovering its history and architectural identity
- Consolidating the architectural identity and architectural styles of the ancient buildings on the street and respecting its heritage to enhance cohesion and communication between members of the community and maximizing the value of the area under study through its development and attracting local and international tourism to it.
- Maximizing the economic, social and health benefit and return for the region's residents and visitors

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research depends on the field study by visiting the area and monitoring the current situation there and documenting the style of the buildings on the streets and the squares, in an attempt to achieve the standards of the urban scene in the development of the Nemais Street area by extrapolating the design foundations of this planning style and trying to reflect it on the area under study. In order to achieve this, the following curricula should be considered (Figure 1): First - the reference method to show the necessary scientific material to show the importance of the commercial street and the urbanization of the distinguished area, second - the analytical method in order to analyze the scientific material as well as its conclusions, and third - the comparative approach, by making a comparison at the end of the research between the current street situation and another street, suggesting the use of the same idea and applying it in Nemais Street, and then deducing the results from that comparison.

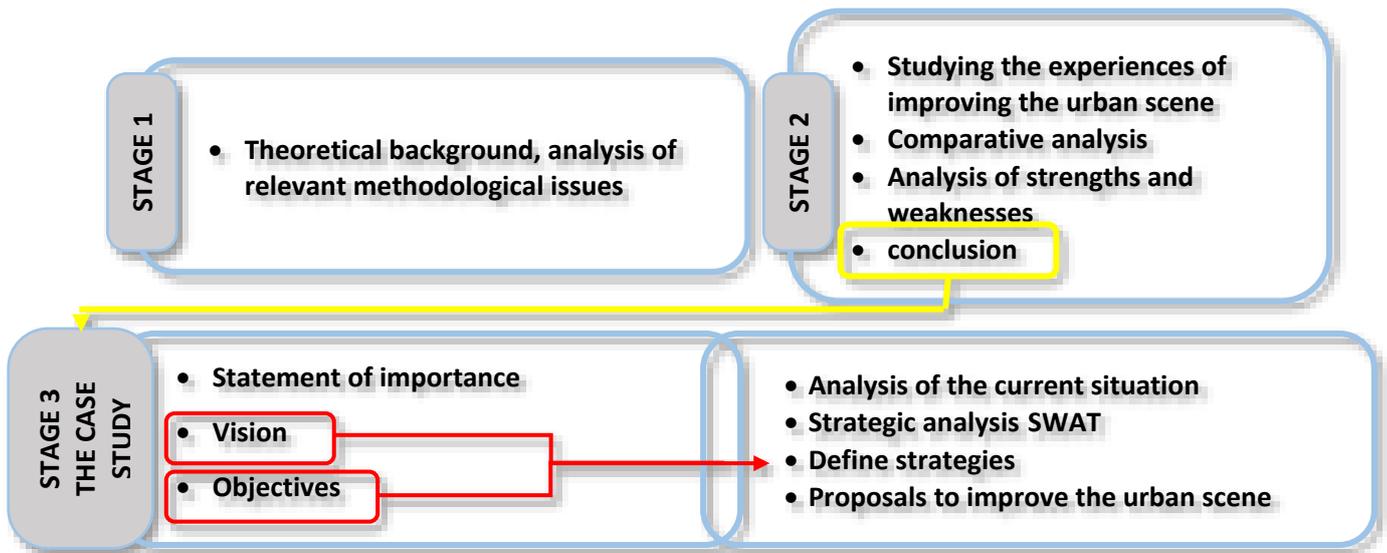


Figure 2 Research Methodology (source: author)

4. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The urban scene bears witness to the development of the culture of society over successive periods of time, where the heritage vocabulary is inherent to the historical regions. Hence the importance of improving the urban scene to preserve the cultural identity and raise the level of community awareness of cultural and historical values, and to achieve compatibility between the modern and the old, whether at the level of the whole or on the part, to achieve economic returns for the city as well as to promote cultural and social activities expressing heritage and originality to the whole and society (Polat, A. 2015).

4-1. Urban Scene Concept

Fairclough indicated that there is a relationship between group elements that must be taken into account when formulating a comprehensive definition of the urban scene (Fairclough, G. 2016). He stressed, "It is in the independent building that we can discover the beauty of this architecture, but in the physical elements such as buildings, trees and water, we can understand the total art beauty of the relationship between these elements to give a single harmonious scene. Therefore, the overall organization of the urban scene and the generation of its sensing is not limited only to the architectural elements of the buildings, but rather is linked to the holistic view of all elements of the urban environment (Polat, A. 2015).

The formation of these elements and the arrangement of their visual relationships within the physical framework that interacts with moving elements such as activities, movement, sounds, crowding, and cultural identity form the urban landscape of the city as a whole (Spreiregen, P. D. 1965). The urban scene bears witness to the development of society's culture over successive periods of time. Hence, the importance of improving the urban landscape to preserve the cultural identity, to raise the level of community awareness of cultural values, and to achieve compatibility between the new and the old,

whether on a macro or a micro level, to achieve economic returns for the city, as well as to promote cultural and social activities that express heritage and originality (Polat, A. 2015).

4-2. Definition of Urban Scene

Research and studies indicate that there are various definitions that differ in essence by expressing the concept of the urban landscape, but their difference is in giving a comprehensive picture of the elements and components of that landscape (Al-Fatean, Z.H. 2005). The urban scene represents the spatial arrangement and the visual appearance of the built and green formations, when viewed from outer space or the total visual display, in which we collect the surrounding architectural components together, denotes something more than that (Shari, N.N. 2008) It often shows the lifestyle of the people who use it or make it. The way the elements are organized and related to each other within an urban or semi-urban context defines the aesthetic dimension (Al-Nuaimi, G.G. 2006).

The urban scene represents the integrated vision of the overall visual and sensory effects of the components of the city, which consists of the method of mass and spatial interconnections, which differ from one environment to another according to the nature of society (Kinoshita, Y. 2004). Buildings and spaces and between buildings together to include the city as a whole, that is, what the human eye sees in the city and senses perceive and interact with in the urban environment (Tucker, C. 2010). Through its morphological formations and physical features, which are a reflection of its heritage resulting from its natural, cultural, ideological and technical development throughout history, and that the five elements (sectors, nodes, landmarks, edges, and paths) are linked to each other by relationships, so that the physical elements and their structural characteristics work in giving the place a personality, i.e. identity. There are two basic criteria for the urban scene: the first is the sense of place, and the second is the sense of unity, in which each region leads to another, not as separate and unconnected parts (Kinoshita, Y. 2004).

4-3. Commercial Urban Scene

The commercial street is one of the most important visual elements in the context of the urban environment, through which the viewer moves. Elements of the urban environment are organized around and along it. The integration of these elements and their connection with each other constitutes an integrated body that fills the human being with vitality and activity (Al-Nuaimi, G.G. 2006).

The commercial urban scene represents the space formation and reflects the lifestyle of the people who make it or who use it. That includes the visual appearance of the built and natural formations that appears in the city, which are seen by the eye from the outer spaces. The constituent elements of the urban scene are the basic units through which visual enrichment can be achieved and their properties and relationships between them can be controlled (Al-Nuaimi, G.G. 2006).

4-4. Urban Scene Quality Standards

The urban scene is a mutual product that is one of its distinct visual elements that reflect the social, economic and cultural patterns of society, and interact with the observer's perceptual and emotional psychological processes. The method through which this effect is interpreted on humans, which is transformed into behavior and evaluated, is known as the visual quality of the urban scene, which was formed as a result of the process of visual perception (Polat. 2015). It is also known as the aesthetic perfection or aesthetic perfection of the scene, which is formed as a result of people's perception and judgment by them (Hussein, O.I. 2017), and depends on four main criteria through which the visual quality of the urban scene is achieved:

- Legibility and imageability
- Accessibility
- Visual Integration
- Place Identity

4-4-1. Legibility and imageability

The term legibility refers to the distinctive character that contributes to the ease of perception and the ability to understand (Polat. 2015), while imageability (Lynch. 1960) refers to the quality of the material elements perceived by the recipient. The quality of the urban landscape is achieved, and then the identity and distinctive features are preserved, which is achieved through the following:

- Clarity and harmony of the elements of the urban environment that make up the mental image to confirm its clarity.
- Clarity of the beginnings and ends of the paths of movement.
- Harmonization of the architectural character by coordinating the details of the facades and the harmony of building materials.
- The emergence of landmarks in the city and the ease of recognizing them.

4-4-2. Accessibility

Ease of movement in the urban environment and access to all its parts contributes to the formation of a strong mental image of the place, and then understanding and interacting with it. Accessibility can be achieved through the following (Khalil. 2016), (Hussein. 2017):

- Improving pedestrian roads to accommodate a larger number of pedestrians to facilitate movement, and adding other complementary elements such as trees and street furniture.
- Establishing a network of interconnected streets and lanes and choosing the appropriate street network that provides a clear and easy division of the block pattern.
- Linking the area to the public transport network and removing any physical barriers that isolate the area and impair access.

4-4-3. The place identity

Identity is an essential component because it expresses the society's prevailing culture and customs, and is responsible for generating a sense of belonging and connection with it. The identity of the place is closely related to the existence of a real sense of it, which is affected by the composition and characteristics of the physical components of the built environment that people see and interpret (Kaymaz. 2013). Therefore, urban environments contribute to the awareness of the identity of the place, and identity can be distinguished through the urban character and architectural styles used, in addition to the quality of activities and services. The improvement of the urban landscape can achieve the distinctive identity of the place through the method of combining modern and historical architecture, taking into account the distinctive character of architectural elements, and combining innovative design And urban heritage This can be achieved through compatibility in architectural elements and building materials, while simulating the character of local construction in a way that preserves the history and culture of the place (Kaymaz. 2013).

4-4-4. Visual integration

Visual integration is the organization of the components of the urban environment in the historical areas that crystallize the urban and sensory image of the relationships between the visual characteristics, so that those areas maintain their identity and distinctive urban character. This integration can be achieved by ensuring the continuity of the relationship of the components of the urban environment and its users, and linking between the physical and material elements to reach a functional and physical combination that is achieved by the urban environment (Kaissi-Al & Askary-Al 2016). Cullen (1961) indicated that there are two levels to achieve the visual integration of the urban landscape, one of which is at the level of the whole by achieving visual integration at the level of the general formation (Table 1), and the other at the level of the part by achieving the visual integration of the architectural elements.

Table (1): The achieving levels of the visual integration in the urban scene

Visual properties		Visual integration
Relationships at the whole level (General formation)		
Visual properties at the whole level	Building line & Sky line	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizing and standardizing the building line to achieve continuity. • Organizing setback distance for buildings. • Organizing the buildings heights.
	Scene sequence	Achieving the visual sequence that creates a scene of excitement and suspense.
	Containment	The relationship between building height and road width.
	Unity of building	Unifying the width of the buildings increases the buildings harmony.
Architecture details of the buildings		
Visual	The buildings architecture style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unifying the design style of building. • Simulation of local architectural features.

Visual properties		Visual integration
	Details & materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Color harmony and continuity. • Using the prevailing local building materials.
	Elevations openings	Repeating openings with the same proportions and dimensions
	Blocks boundaries	Organizing the edge of the buildings and creating a scene of unified shape

Source (Al-Abbad, N. 2022)

5. PREVIOUS STUDIES:

Studies dealing with aesthetic and visual elements in cities are rare. In this section, we will benefit from some previous studies, in terms of the theoretical framework and methodology used, as well as comparing some results.

5-1. Renovation of the Old Center of the French City of Acigné:

The municipality of Acigné is located 10 km east of the French city of Rennes (figure 2), rising 35 m above sea level on an area of 5.29 km², as it is called Les Acignolais (Audiar. 2007).

The process of developing the old center of the city of Acigné covered an area of 14.4 hectares along the avenue Calais and the avenue Des Forgerons, passing through the church, and this process included 6 allocations. A total of 290 housing units of various types (collective, semi-collective and individual) were completed, while preserving the architectural characteristics and style of the old buildings in the center, in addition to 4 commercial cells, in addition to the preparation of squares, gardens, roads and sidewalks. (Audiar. 2007).

The city center is well-equipped (figure 3), it contains a commercial center, a cinema hall, a public and private school, shops. Four additional commercial units have also been programmed in front of the municipality (within the framework of the construction program). This urban development process included the demolition of old, outdated buildings (barns, old houses, warehouses, etc.) (Audiar. 2007). This process strengthened the urban character of the city center, as it provides both collective, semi-group and individual housing, in close proximity to various services and shops, this significantly improved the living conditions of the population. This project has already helped to rehabilitate roads such as Menuisiers des La Rue, and many pedestrian alleys,

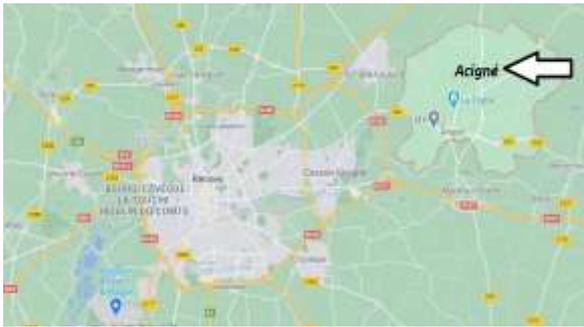


Figure 2: the city of Acigne (source: Allain, C.2015)



Figure 3: Land use development of the city center of Acigne (source: Audiar. 2007)

passages, in addition to small public places such as squares, squares, and gardens (Audiar. 2007).

5-2. Broadway Plaza, Washington, Usa

The study aimed to close the Broadway Plaza area (Tacoma, Washington) to automatic traffic and is designated for pedestrians only (DETR. 1998). Among the elements of furnishings necessary for the group, such as newspaper kiosks, telephone booths, garbage cans, flower pots. The project for the development of the area was presented to the public immediately upon completion of its design, while leaving the opportunity for the public to express an opinion about the proposed development as they are expected to know more about the nature of the area than the designer himself (Kimley-Horn. 2023). Most of the time, this led to the decision to close the street completely and turn it into a full mall (figure 4).

The area included many furniture elements such as umbrellas, fountains, lighting units, and all the important elements for pedestrians while walking in the area. With the



Figure 4: Broadway Plaza (source: Horn, K. 2023)

development of the area, it became a favorite place for holding celebrations, art exhibitions and musical performances. The local authorities sensed a boom in commercial activity after the completion of the development process, which prompted the government to develop the rest of the area while allowing automatic traffic to penetrate it.

5-3. The 3rd Street Promenade, Santa Monica City, USA:

It is a commercial and administrative street that mediates the city of Santa Monica in the USA, which turns into a pedestrian street every weekend and its visitors enjoy the recreational places in it, through the environment that has been architecturally determined, in order to attract people and be a tourist attraction (DETR. 1998). There are two green rivers on both sides of the street (figure 5), and a clear contrast between the pedestrians sidewalk, the bike path, seating places of the cafeterias in the buildings, and the car lane on weekdays. We can also notice the use of various site coordination elements such as water fountains, seats in the middle of the street, and the use of colored paving as a kind of breaking monotony in the street. The axis of the road does not take a completely straight line, but rather takes some zigzags that are caused by the important site coordination elements (DETR. 1998).



Figure 5: The 3rd Street Promenade, Santa Monica City. Source: (DETR. 1998)

5-4. Al-Husseini Street in Minya

The area has been developed as it has become designated for pedestrians only, and automobile traffic has been completely prevented from entering the area (Mustafa, F. & Mustafa, R. 2022). The area has been provided with the necessary elements such as wooden benches, flower pots, trees, guiding signs and rubbish bins. The development process went through to close the street, complete the existing infrastructure networks in the area, add rainwater drainage networks, close the entrances to the area with flower beds and trees as a barrier to prevent cars from penetrating the area, and add landscaping elements. Providing the pleasure of hiking and shopping has been taken into account through choosing the following urban design elements: (Mustafa, F. & Mustafa, R. 2022).

- Reducing the width of the lane designated for automobile traffic while increasing the width of the sidewalk to meet the pedestrian needs (figure 6), which is the main objective of developing the area.
- The area is preferentially a place for pedestrians, as some of them enjoy their free time sitting in the area.
- The existence of safe urban spaces of a commercial nature, and this in itself is one of the goals of downtown development.
- Paying attention to achieving visual attractions that guide pedestrians as they walk to distinguish the direction.
- Attention to provide a dedicated lane for emergency vehicles with sufficient width.
- The use of attractive colors for flooring or flower pots.

- Completing the infrastructure network for the region before starting the implementation of the proposed development (figure 7).

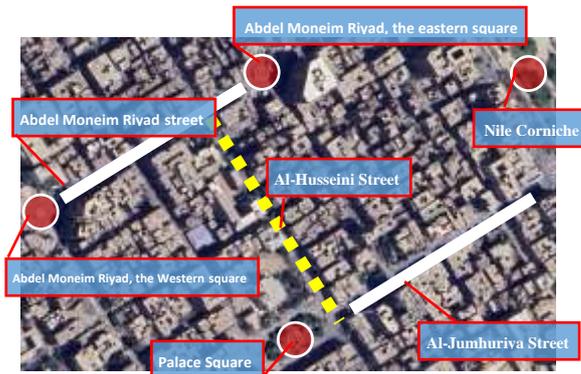


Figure 7: Al-Husseini Street in El Minya (source author)



Figure 6: Al-Husseini Street in El Minya source: (Ibrahim. 1998)

6. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS:

For the purpose of objective comparison between the experiences of developing the commercial city center in the previously presented cases, four criteria were identified for comparison, that cover most of the urban aspects related to commercial centers. These criteria are the same criteria that will be used later to analyze the research case study (the availability of activities, accessibility, current use, the relationship with the urban environment and the impact on the urban scene) and they are explained thoroughly in the following section.

6-1. Availability of Activities

The four cases differed in terms of the availability of activities within the central spaces of the city, whether these activities were commercial, recreational, administrative, and other activities.

When studying the center of the French city of Acigné, we find that the demolition and rebuilding approach was adopted, and this gave the process of developing the city center an ease in its reconstruction. Planning the area and providing the necessary urban spaces, gathering places for residents, pedestrian lanes, cars lanes, commercial places and other activities, but on the other hand, the cost of development was extremely expensive and lasted for many years.

As for Broadway Plaza, it is originally a commercial and administrative area. The development project aims to close the car lanes to become dedicated for pedestrians only, while creating spaces for recreational activities and providing shaded lanes to maintain appropriate temperatures for pedestrians.

As for Santa Monica City, it is originally a commercial and administrative area. Turns into a pedestrian street every weekend. There are a clear contrast between the pedestrians sidewalk, the bike path, seating places of the cafeterias in the buildings, and the car lane on weekdays.

Al-Husseini Street in Al-Mina is one of the oldest streets in the city and is considered one of the arteries of the commercial city. The street development project came with the aim of reviving some humanitarian considerations and turning it into a pedestrian path, seating and entertainment areas, in addition to places designated for commercial and administrative activities.

6-2. Accessibility

The commercial center of the city is considered to be the beating heart of the city and its center. In the four aforementioned cases, it can be said that they can be easily accessed because all of them are located in the city center, and, therefore, they are considered the most accessible and influential arteries for each of the cities.

6-3. Current Use:

The current use of spaces, in the four studied cases, did not differ much from what they used to be in the past, as they were originally commercial and administrative centers for the city markets. This means that nothing has changed except the general appearance of the city center areas.

6-4. The Relationship With The Urban Environment And The Impact On The Urban Scene

The relationship of the four study cases differed with their surroundings. In the first case, the buildings were old houses, barns, and warehouses that were demolished and converted into buildings with commercial, administrative, and recreational activities, which gave the opportunity to re-plan the urban spaces in the region.

As for the second and third cases, it is originally a commercial and administrative area, and the car lane has been converted into a pedestrian lane with the development of many recreational activities.

In the Fourth case, this street is considered one of the residential and commercial streets in the city, with commercial activity, as the entire area is of a commercial nature due to its centrality in the city.

6-5. Conclusion

Through comparative analysis, it is possible to analyze the most important strengths and weaknesses of each case (Table 2), through which several important axes can be concluded that can be taken as reference bases that must be taken into account for the management of commercial centers in an urban manner.

Table 2. The strength and weakness points for the study cases.

The City	The strength points	The weakness points
The old center of Acigne	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides both collective, semi-group and individual housing, in close proximity to various services and shops. - Rehabilitate roads, many pedestrian alleys, passages and small public places. - Interfering with the urban fabric by demolishing and rebuilding while preserving the identity of the old fabric. - The development program provides housing, trade and services and creates job harmony among them. - Population participation in the various development processes, whether through works or proposals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development operations are generally expensive due to the expansion of the field and the purchase of land. - The long period of time for study and achievement. - The real estate settlement process for lands was long.
Broadway Plaza	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regulating automated and pedestrian traffic. - Population participation in the various development processes, whether through works or proposals. - With the availability of various forms of furniture on the street, it has become a favorite place for holding celebrations and exhibitions for many people. - Growth in commercial activity in the region after the development project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Non-Organizing the furniture on the road in an adequate manner led to a large number of crowds in the area. - Building heights lead to poor visual image.
The 3rd Street Promenade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The variety of commercial and recreational activities makes the street a tourist attraction. - Organizing traffic between pedestrians, cars, seating areas, bicycle areas, cafeterias and restaurants. - The entire area is a commercial, administrative, recreational and tourist area. - The use of different colored tiles in texture and the axis of the road takes some zigzags, all of this gives a sense of breaking boredom and monotony. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There are many traffic jams at many times. - Determining the weekend only for pedestrians and the rest of the days for cars reduces the value of the area and its tourism and entertainment importance
Al-Husseini Street in Minya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regulating automated and pedestrian traffic. - Improving the general shape of the area and applying scientific principles in planning commercial areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encroachments and indiscriminate use of public spaces. - The low cultural level of the population led to the spread of randomness and transgression

source: author

7. A CASE STUDY OF AL-NAMEES STREET IN ASYUT

Asyut Governorate is one of the governorates of South Egypt (figure 8), located north to Sohag Governorate and south to EL Minya Governorate. Its capital is the city of Asyut, which is located in the middle of the governorate. Its name is derived from the ancient Egyptian word "Siot", meaning the guard (Wisa, Fahmy, 1996). It is considered the commercial capital of South Egypt (figure 9).



Figure 8: Location of Asyut city in Egypt (source author)

7-1. Al- Nemais Street, Asyut City

Abd Al-Rahman Al-Namees (1849 - 1923 AD) was the mayor of the city of Asyut for 57 years (State information service, 2023). He held several positions, and he was a member of the committee of elders and the local council (State information service, 2023).

Al- Nemais Street has become one of the most famous commercial streets in the city of Asyut during the last ten years (figure 10), as the street witnessed an encroachment of large shops from the old market area and the city center. Consequently, the street has become a destination for everyone who wants to buy or sell, and many of the names of the shops changed over the years to become more attractive to visitors and customers, and as a consequence, the street has become one of the busiest streets in Asyut City (Wisa, F. 1996).



Figure 9: Asyut city in Egypt source: Asyut Governorate. 2023

7-2. The Current Urban Scene Of Nemais Street

The urban scene of the streets is a spatial concept that gives a sense of belonging and suitability for various activities, and this justifies the importance of the space that meets each of the functional and aesthetic needs. The sense of the urban scene is formed when the perceptual relationship between the human being and the surrounding built environment is achieved, so we find that a good urban design for the city, neighborhood, or region gives the human feeling of comfort in interacting with the surroundings in an integrated and continuous manner.



Figure 10: Nemais Street, Asyut city source: author

Through this vision, for the development of Al Nemais Street, it is necessary to provide an urban scene suitable for the interactive interrelationship between man and the surrounding built environment, and to achieve a level of important psychological needs in the street, such as safety and privacy.

Hence, it was necessary for us to make a field visit to Al- Nemais Street and document the state of its buildings. The general shape of the buildings in the street under study was divided into two categories. The first category is the old residential buildings, which are characterized by the absence of any external finishing materials, and they have an average height of 5 or 6 floors (figure 11). The second type is modern residential buildings, which is characterized by distinctive architectural designs and distinctive finishing materials (figure 12), and they have an average height of 12 floors.

The proposed theoretical framework for improving the urban landscape of Al- Nemais Street in Asyut includes the following stages: a statement of importance, vision and objectives, analysis of the street current situation, SWOT strategic analysis and coming up with proposals.



Figure 11: Nemais Street, Asyut city source: author

7-3. Statement of Importance, Vision and Objectives

7-3-1. Statement of Importance

Nemais Street area in Asyut is of a great importance due to the fact that it is located at the center of the city and it hosts the central commercial area, linking the most important main axes in the city. It is also important to point out the fact that it is one of the reputable residential areas, with commercial nature and administrative buildings. There is also a random spread of private offices and clinics along the street, which gives the street a great importance, and this is evident in the density of visitors to the street on a daily basis.



Figure 12: Nemais Street, Asyut
city source: author

7-3-2. Vision and Objectives

Nemais Street can be developed and renewed in its urban scene to be one of the most important resources of the city and one of the best places for gatherings and entertainment. Therefore, the following goals are set in order to renovate the urban scene of the street.

- Taking care of the formal, functional and recreational aspects of the street.
- Linking the main arterial axes in the city to each other.
- Investing in the commercial and recreational importance of the region by taking the increasing the number of visitors into consideration.
- Creating urban spaces to entertain visitors of the region and the whole city.

7-4. Analysis of the Street Current Situation

The current situation of the street is analyzed based on the same criteria that were previously used in analyzing the experiences of cities in the context of the theoretical background of the research, namely: the availability of activities, accessibility, current use, relationship with the urban environment and the impact on the urban scene.

- **Availability of activities:** The Nemais street area is considered one of the most important commercial areas in the city, as hundreds of visitors flock to it daily with the purpose of buying and selling. Recreational activities are also available in the area through many restaurants and cafes, while administrative activities appear in the area through administrative offices for lawyers, accountants, and medical clinics, needless to say that the area is originally a residential area.
- **Accessibility:** Al- Nemais Street is considered one of the most important main axes in the city of Asyut. Therefore, it is one of the central streets that is easily accessible from any area in the city. The pattern of street network planning affects the determination –of accessibility, as the connected network has higher accessibility (figure 13), while the unconnected street network impedes the continuity of movement between places and thus there is poor accessibility between them (Khalil. 2016). However, there is a degree of flexibility and permeability in the urban blocks,

which is considered an indicator of the urban environment, where the size and pattern of the urban blocks can determine the extent of ease of access from one point to another, as it is the small blocks that are more permeable (Hassan. 2014).

- **Current use:** As previously mentioned in the activities section, the area is full of commercial, administrative and recreational activities, in addition to the residential side.



Figure 13: The effect of block pattern on the permeability of the built environment source: Vanderhaegen, S. & Canters, F. 2017

- **The relationship with the urban environment and the impact on the urban scene:** The pattern of urban spaces affects the composition of the urban fabric i.e., a void is formed from the spaces between buildings, in the form of paths such as streets, pedestrian paths, or open spaces such as squares. The patterns of spaces vary according to the degree of privacy they provide (Shatha. 2018). The different patterns of spaces affect the permeability of the environment, and play a clear role in shaping the urban fabric. As for the area under study, it is one of the areas with a pattern of blocks of medium permeability, and this affects the relationship of the street with the surrounding streets and its connection to the urban environment.

Through our study of the current situation of the study area on Al- Nemaïs Street in Asyut, we conclude that the urban landscape of the region is weak due to the difference in the visual composition of the region. The area miss interdependence and communication between buildings

7-5. Swot Strategic Analysis

Based on the analysis of the current situation of the street, it was possible to identify the strengths and weaknesses, as well as the available opportunities and potential threats (SWOT) in order to come up with strategies through which the objective of the research can be achieved, which is to improve the urban landscape of the street and revitalize the urban area. The following table shows the analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, as well as the conclusion of the themes of the relevant strategies. (Table 3).

Table 3. The SWOT strategic analysis for Al Nemais Street

<p>Points of strength and weakness</p> <p>Available opportunities/ potential threats</p>	<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The great importance of the –region commercially and administratively. - Visitor density increasing daily. - The multiplicity and diversity of activities. <p>Ease of access and permeability of the urban fabric.</p>	<p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deterioration of the visual configuration of the street. - Visual pollution due to disproportionate architectural formations. - Traffic congestion due to the intertwining of pedestrians and cars. <p>Spreading waste in separate places. Loss of green areas and shaded areas.</p>
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The city of Asyut is one of the rapidly developing cities, especially in terms of infrastructure and addressing population-related problems. - The centrality of the region and its importance and the presence of many cultural, social, religious and other activities - The state's increasing interest in urban sustainability and the humanization of urban scene - Regulating traffic in the city helps in facilitating easy access to all parts of the city. 	<p>Strategies axes that use opportunities to enhance strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Axis (1) The strategy of axial traffic modifications to control vehicle movement and avoid intersection with pedestrian movement. - Axis (2) strategy to improve the visual composition of the architectural facades of buildings on the street. - Axis (3) a strategy to enhance awareness of the urban preservation of the region and the need for residents to participate in improving the landscape there. 	<p>Strategies axes that use opportunities to overcome weaknesses</p> <p>Axis (1) is a strategy to increase social and recreational activities to improve the visual landscape of the region.</p>
<p>Threats</p> <p>Wrong development processes reduce the value of the area both urbanely and humanely.</p> <p>Lack of public awareness of the value and importance of urban improvement and development.</p> <p>Weak financial resources allocated for urban development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of optimal use, which may result in further deterioration. 	<p>Strategies axes that use strengths to fend off threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Axis (1) The effective participation strategy for the residents of the region in the development process. - Axis (2) is a strategy to provide activities that add to the material resources of the city and help in the urban preservation of the region. 	<p>Strategies axes to overcome weaknesses and ward off threats</p> <p>Axis (1) is a strategy to link the development of the region with its neighboring areas and the extent of its impact on the population culturally and socially.</p>

source: author

7-6. A Framework For Proposals To Develop The Region

Within the framework of the proposals that were identified through the previous matrix, the research comes up with several proposals to improve the urban scene of the street in a sustainable manner. Which is next:

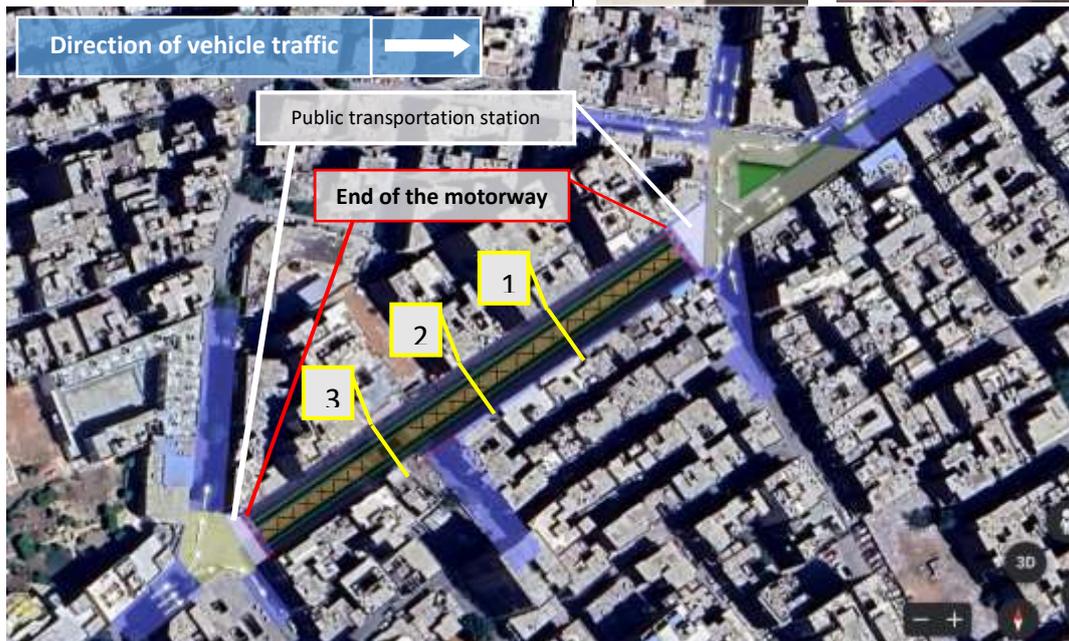
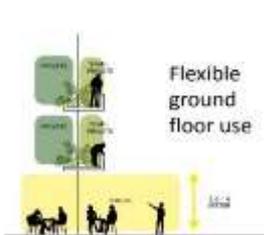
- A proposal to convert the street (the study area) into a pedestrian street bordered on both sides by green rivers, in which trees are arranged so as to give a visual distinction to the entrances of the side buildings and provide a comfortable environment for pedestrians (Figure 14).
- It is proposed to establish a green axis on both sides of the street or in the middle in order to support pedestrian activities and separate walking and cycling along the street.
- Providing the entire street with plants and landscaping, with the provision of mainly shaded trees that provide a visual barrier from the buildings, which provides a

comfortable climate and environment for pedestrians, and gives visual distinction to the entrances to the site.

- Shading pedestrian paths so that they are half shaded, especially to avoid high temperatures in the summer, by using tents or colored umbrellas, for example, similar to some international pedestrian streets in Dubai and Paris (figure 14).
- Suggesting a unified and architecturally distinctive shape for the buildings of this street to have a special character and a distinctive architectural identity, where the design of each entrance of the street buildings must be distinctive, in order to maintain the coordination of the street and support it visually.
- Proposing the concept of the plaza or square, which is one of the oldest planning elements. It is worth mentioning that this concept has recently become one of the tourist elements and attractions, through making urban spaces, that achieve social communication, and that distinguish each city from others. Public squares are considered main places of communication due to their central location in the middle of the street under study, and the square or plaza is the end of most of the pedestrian paths that pass within the site. The public squares must contain trees and various shading elements sufficient to achieve comfort and a good climate for visitors.

1- Flexibility in the activities of the ground floor, taking into account the spaces designated for sidewalk, street life zone and the bicycle track.

2- Utilize the middle part of the road for social activities, seating and sharing areas.



3- Designing the central area as a central arena for celebrations



4- The use of appropriate furniture elements and flooring, with the use of trees and shading elements to mitigate the high temperature



Figure 14: proposals to develop the region (source author)

8. RESULTS

The research paper dealt with the formulation of the general theoretical framework for the concept of the urban scene development. The study also confirmed the existence of common dimensions between them, as the improvement of the urban scene focuses on all aspects of the environment (urban, natural, cultural, social, and economic). Therefore, improving the urban scene is a strong supporter of sustainable development, and increases the attractiveness of the place. The research paper reached the following results:

- Through the study, we can conclude that achieving the utilitarian, economic and aesthetic dimension in the region (under study), lies in reviving it in a sustainable, urban and contemporary planning form.
- Developing high-quality pedestrian paths without obstacles that achieve ease of movement for all.
- Providing various, short and directly connected pedestrian and bicycle lanes to facilitate access to services and shops.
- Reducing dependence on private cars, while defining special paths for pedestrians and bicycles
- Optimal achievement of site coordination elements, including plants, and aesthetic building facades, through which pedestrian paths and squares may turn into vibrant open vital areas, including hardscape elements, softscape plants, signages, and lighting.
- The main landmarks and buildings must be consistent with the pedestrian paths mainly to bring about complete balance of the transportation system.
- Preserving the architectural identity of the buildings in the region and their facades and functions is one of the most important factors influencing the quality of developing the region and making it an attractive region after the transfer of public, administrative and governmental entities to the new outskirts extension of Asyut.
- The urban scene has clear dimensions, and the focus on developing these dimensions is positively related to the elements and quality of the urban scene.

- Projects to improve the urban scene contain a holistic principle that is not limited to the visual or material aspect, but rather the awareness of the values related to the place, including the cultural, social, and accessibility dimensions, and its integration with the urban environment in a way that contributes to its commercial and touristic investment.
- Projects to improve the urban scene in cities maintain the integration of the balanced relationship between the physical elements and the social, economic and cultural dimensions.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

There are many parties involved that have a role in the process of improving the urban scene, such as the city dweller, specialists in the fields of urban and architectural design, and the competent authorities responsible for drafting requirements, and they have the powers to issue decisions and regulations. Based on the results of the carried-out research. The author's recommendations can be formulated as follows:

- Developing a strategic plan to support sustainable development from complementary grounds that seek to improve the urban scene of those areas in parallel with supporting the tourism potential in the region as a whole, in a manner that preserves the unification and integration of efforts within the same framework.
- Enacting a number of requirements and issuing a building code for commercial and recreational areas that specifies the permissible heights, the building materials used, and the patterns and sizes of openings, in order to control the physical form of the urban environment, and to ensure that new elements are not introduced in a way that causes distortions in the urban scene. The code should also include requirements for commercial store banners, whose colors and sizes allow to achieve harmony in the general appearance of the place.
- Assigning a specific supervisory authority from the competent authorities to effectively supervise the implementation and confirm compliance with the requirements and adherence to architectural styles and types of external finishes such as colors and building materials.
- Providing the necessary facilities for those who wish to invest by giving permits, incentives and soft loans.
- Involving the local community, community organizations, and academics in consultation and decision-making, and involving them in the development processes through volunteer work and research contributions.
- Working on formulating many plans and research projects in Egyptian universities to delve deeper into studying the urban scene, its most important components, and how to work on developing it in Egyptian cities, regardless of their circumstances and planning methods.
- Future research can work on transforming the framework that has been formulated into a ruler to measure the degree of achievement of urban landscape indicators in cities. Information technology and artificial intelligence can also be introduced in creating a computer program to measure the extent of achieving urban landscape indicators that are commensurate with the sustainable development of cities.

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