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# Theoretical Structure of Apparent and Latent in the Urban Townscape: Subject Review

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**Abstract.** Cities have an urban townscape with urban and social characteristics that define and highlight the personality and identity of each city. Based on the reading and analysis of some previous studies, this research aims to provide a platform for building a knowledge base on the concept of the urban townscape, which is a critical aspect of the urban environment, highlighting the dynamism of apparent and latent systems as well as upgrading the urban townscape in those cities to achieve compatibility between the whole and the part and to move from separation to integration in the urban townscape. The study adopts a qualitative approach due to its exploratory nature. Previous studies dealt with the concept of the townscape in the urban environment.

**Keywords:** Urban townscape, urban environment, Apparent, Latent.

## INTRODUCTION

The city is an integrated system of material and non-material components that needs to be understood and realized through the theory of the urban townscape, which is one of the latest disciplines of environmental sciences that presents new ideas concerning humans and the environment, as the concept of urban townscape appeared as a term for the first time in the study of Thomas Sharpe 1984. It was evident in the works of (John Nash) at the beginning of the nineteenth century and the results of (Camillo Sitte) at the end of the nineteenth century. Several writers have also contributed to the subject of the urban townscape, such as Gibberd 1953, Worskett 1969, and Tugnutt & Robertson 1987, but the modern concept of the urban townscape is closely linked to Gordon Cullen in his writings in the mid to late fifties, which publish in his book Townscape1961. ) and published in a modified form (The Concise Townscape1971) [1].

After the book (Townscape), the concept of the urban townscape began to appear in urban and architectural literature. It became the focus of designers' attention in organizing the city's physical environment to form a comprehensive image of the city represented by the urban townscape. [2] Research problem: the lack of cognitive clarity of urban townscape indicators and their relationship to the apparent and latent system.

The research aim is to review some previous studies and reach urban townscape indicators, as the concept of this research emerged from how compatibility between the whole and the part and the transition from separation to integration in the urban townscape via the relationship between apparent and latent systems and their impact on the city's urban townscape.

To achieve the goal of the research; the following steps adopts:

**First:** Defining the concept of townscape in language and terminology, definitions of urban townscape specialists, and the most important of their proposals.

**Second:** Study and analysis of previous literature: Determining the physical and intangible components of the townscape in the urban environment and their contribution to highlighting the future urban townscape, its features, and factors affecting it, as well as addressing the mechanisms of intervention on the components of the urban townscape, leading to the most critical indicators extracted.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW OF THE URBAN TOWNSCAPE**

The concept of urban townscape will be addressed and analyzed in some previous studies according to the following:

### **LINGUISTIC DEFINITION OF THE CONCEPT OF URBAN TOWNSCAPE**

In English, the concept of "townscape" has come to mean "townscape." The term urban townscape indicates several terms in the English language in the previous literature, the most important of which are urban townscape, townscape, cityscape, and urban townscape. English dictionaries refer to it with convergent concepts, as it comes in the sense of the area in which the city locates and the way it looks, or it is an image that shows part of the city. Or all of it, or the historical cityscape. [4]

### **IDIOMATIC DEFINITION OF THE CONCEPT OF URBAN TOWNSCAPE**

Definitions of the townscape appeared in several areas, including:

- A. The townscape in geography is a group of semantics that characterize a geographical unit at the natural or human level. And it is originally a descriptive concept that was comprehensive in the past and took on a unified meaning that includes a set of lines resulting from physical geography and from the cumulative relations of civilizations that sequentially created its basic framework and became synonymous with the word environment in the processes of sensory perception.[5]
- B. The townscape in literature, music, and painting has intellectual and aesthetic content and represents a visual tool often found in stories. [6]
- C. The townscape in the theater is the physical space in which events occur before the eyes of the spectators. [7]
- D. Townscape in cinema is a dramatic unit called continuity in time and space. [8]

### **THE TOWNSCAPE IN URBAN PLANNING AND DESIGN**

- A. The urban townscape denotes the perceptual coherence of parts of the city through the vibrancy and feel of the place.[9]
- B. The urban townscape is everything that the eye sees and realizes by the human senses. It interacts with it in the urban environment through human experience and a sense of unity and place through several concepts such as integration, homogeneity, and visual and sensory organization. [10]
- C. The urban townscape is the overall image that people perceive about the fundamental components of the city, represented by its buildings, spaces, experiences, smells, and memories, which are imprinted on their minds and affect individuals in different proportions depending on their inclinations and tendencies.[11]
- D. The urban townscape is the aesthetic character of a place and how the site presents experiences, meanings, and drama enjoyed by the recipients. The concept of the townscape does not mean the physical components alone but instead includes the human and material structures and activities that are affected by social, cultural, and economic factors. [12]
- E. The urban townscape is an image that reflects the social and cultural environment of the city. It is a physical space consisting of materials and forms that lead to creating an integrated creative space. In this space, the urban townscape, as a comprehensive art in its nature, is linked to other art forms, and therefore the different forms of art play an essential role in shaping the urban townscape. [13]

## GLOBAL AND LOCAL PROPOSITIONS THAT DEALT WITH THE URBAN TOWNSCAPE

- A. As Kevin Lynch pointed out, the urban townscape is the city's visible image and the thing perceived over long periods, so it is a temporal art, and the perception of anything is through its relationship with the ocean and from the sequence of events related to it and the memory of the past and its experiences. Full of meanings and memories related to that city, identify five essential components of the city's townscape (lanes, edges, sectors, nodes, signs, or signs) and how these elements interact with each other and complement each other to form the urban environment. As for the components of the mental image, they are (structure, identity, and meaning) and they obtain through the continuity of facades, details, floors, skyline, material, texture, and color, which leads to the definition of what is called the ability of the image to absorb the urban townscape and the manufacture of mental images.[14]
- B. Gordon Cullen pointed out that the urban townscape is the art of relationships that brings the components of the city's physical environment together to paint a distinctive and harmonious character of the townscape. He mentioned that the art of visual cohesion organizes those components, represented by buildings, spaces, and streets. [1], as he sees, the townscape is a complex content of structural structures, areas, and connecting roads, which the recipient perceives based on the dynamic sensory experience of seeing the city in sequential and sequential townscapes. Classify the townscape elements into the following:
- Features: It includes key points, punctuation, accidental events, framed townscapes, closed townscapes, and skylines.
  - Change path properties: yaw, undulation, narrowing, procession townscape, backward and forwards.
  - Changing the floor level: He said it is crucial because it connects the parts of the townscape and how people move and see things in the city.

He focused on the importance of studying the place and its urban context, which includes colors, structure, style, and scale. He also pointed out that the factors that affect the townscape are of two types: physical characteristics and human or civilized factors that integrate to achieve visual unity, and that there are two levels of relationships to achieve visible unity:

- The first level includes relationships at the level of a unified whole.
  - The second level is the relationships between the parts within the exact figure or the part relationship with the adjacent regions.[15]
- C. Amos Rapoport pointed out that the urban townscape is the interrelationship between the urban environment and the recipient over time and pointed out that the mental image of the urban environment is not only visible or tangible but is affected by feelings, and culture, science, and learning. And he showed the importance of the elements of movement and time and the effect of speed in drawing the mental image by giving the example of the townscape seen by a person sitting inside a moving car at a specific rate and its difference from the same townscape when the person sees him walking, thus showing that the mental image depends on the urban form, the speed of movement, and the method of movement. [16]
- D. According to (Peter Smith)The urban townscape is divided into four elements: line, shape, color, texture, and light, and stresses the importance of the line as a basic vocabulary that affects the recipient of the townscape, as it gives aesthetic qualities through its vertical, horizontal, or diagonal qualities. As for light, color, and texture, these elements work together to provide the first impression of the urban townscape. He pointed out the importance of the receiver's role in understanding the language and the signals sent from the urban environment and realizing the meaning behind the physical elements through the signals generated. [17]
- E. Bill Hillier pointed out that the structure of the urban townscape and its relationship to the social environment is vital in highlighting the concept of the urban townscape, the relationships that combine internal and external spaces, and the characteristics that distinguish these spaces from others in the urban environment. His theory was called the rules of space installation. Space Syntax relied on basic principles as accurate standard indicators in the analysis process to reach the morphological characteristics of cities and urban areas. He also pointed out the importance of the kinetic axes that help read urban structures and extrapolate their properties, and he did not show any interest in studying the physical elements and considered their secondary characteristics. [18]

- F. According to Terry Nichols Clark, the townscape divide into several levels represented by (the global townscape, the regional townscape, and the local townscape) linked to each other by a hierarchy based on the spatial symbolic value and the factors of attraction and perceptual experience of the recipient (individual values and behaviors). The research focused on the most critical factors affecting the formation of those images represented by social, economic, cultural, and political elements in a way that transfers the townscape from its local context to its global context in a way that defines the image of that city.[12]
- G. Erik Learned-Miller pointed out the role of moving elements in generating multiple images of the urban townscape, as he focused on the pictorial movement in the townscape (digitization) through the appearance of objects and their relative motion that can divide into displacements and which stimulates the recipient to understand and realize the underlying meaning and the indicated connotations and improve the tasks of an image. The urban townscape defines by the visual flow (perceptual flow) according to the available digital systems and the adoption of the Proxy Tasks program to predict that movement to understand the urban townscape and its components. [19]
- H. Awad said: The townscape or urban fabric make up of relationships between the parts and elements of the structure. To get a good image, the person who gets it must know these relationships. The study showed that these relationships between the features of the townscape and urban fabric are in a state of permanent growth and continuous dynamic change, giving a plurality of meaning and complexity to the relationships. For the townscape to be in a condition of permanent interaction for the recipients, it must contain a high social purpose, which means a state of mutual influence between the two structures. [20]
- I. Al-Kinani pointed out the importance of the visual and aesthetic characteristics in the city and how the recipient perceives them to achieve a distinct civilizational identity. He sees that the urban formations in the city consist of:
- Physical overlays (fixed elements) represent the material form of the urban townscape.
  - Visual activity (moving elements) represent events and activities consisting of the movement and voices of people, vehicles, and crowding, which define the place and determine its identity.

Focus on the most critical elements that contribute to the formation of the character of the urban townscape, which are land uses, block and street pattern, age, mass, scale and density of buildings, traffic lanes for vehicles, street proportion, and containment, skyline and roofing townscape, building materials character and boundaries, hierarchy and distribution of open spaces and relationships, For example. There are many different types of buildings and visual historical elements and their surroundings. There are also environmental features and outside areas. There are nodes where things meet and where they are oriented. There are also viewing angles, landmarks, and gates where people can enter. He also stressed the identity concept in the urban townscape, which represents the human relationship with the place and how to perceive it through the interpreting process of the mind, interpreting it and understanding its multiple images of it, as the idea of the city links to the beliefs, events, and history of that city, and memories attached to the collective memory. As well as the nature of human behavior and control it by providing for its needs. The aesthetic in the architectural and urban formations, which together constitute the environment in which he lives, as spatial beauty, is the new use of the method of construction and employment and the best arrangement of the vocabulary of formation and visual architectural and urban formation, achieving the foundations and principles of formative and formative expression, fulfilling the individual's psychological and environmental requirements. [21]

- J. Samar Kazem indicated that the urban townscape is part of the general structure of the urban system represented by (urban places, urban community, and urban townscape). And indicating the components of the urban townscape (building blocks, community nodes, open urban spaces, connecting movement paths) and the levels of intervention on those Components (Urban Tactics, Urban Stimulation, Sustainable Empowerment). [22]
- K. Saif Muhammad Taher pointed out that the speed of perception of the urban townscape depends on the recipient's memory and the timely Communication of his memories, which helps draw an integrated image of the city that gives it its personality and identity. The study emphasized the importance of the design and organizational determinants that govern the elements of the urban townscape and the organizations' impact on the recipient's perception and sense of belonging to the place. He referred to the concept of visual sequence and its role in perceiving semantic meanings by the recipient and that the visual sequence of buildings, spaces, and graphic elements is a significant part of realizing the visible form of the city and its mental image. [23]

1. Malak Jamal Hamza referred to the concept of the energy of a place and its impact on the urban townscape through human interaction with the site and how to deal with spatial values and their importance in creating community interaction and adopting his mental image, represented by dramatizing the urban experience (events, symbols) and its connection to the collective memory that is achieved Communication through time. And the study referred to the physical components of the urban townscape (buildings, places) and non-material (experiences, memories, life dramas, and events) to achieve visual, sensory, and communicative pleasure for the community. [24]

The vocabulary of the urban townscape extracted from previous studies and as shown in Tables (1, 2, 3, 4)

**TABLE 1.** Components of the urban townscape

<b>apparent</b>	Buildings and places	building blocks	Signs
		open spaces	interactive nodes
<b>latent</b>	Experiences, memories, drama of life and events		Structure
			identity
			the meaning

**TABLE 2.** Dimension affecting the urban townscape

<b>visual dimension</b>	relay and directivity
	Configuration and formation
	Significance and meaning
<b>time and spatial dimension</b>	Continuity of the past and preservation of the future
	The event is drawing the mental image
	space energy
	spatial affiliation
<b>perceptual dimension</b>	Mental image
	The feeling of familiarity and security
	Understanding and perceiving meanings
	individual and collective memory
	event drama
<b>social dimension</b>	Social interaction

**TABLE 3.** Characteristics of the urban townscape

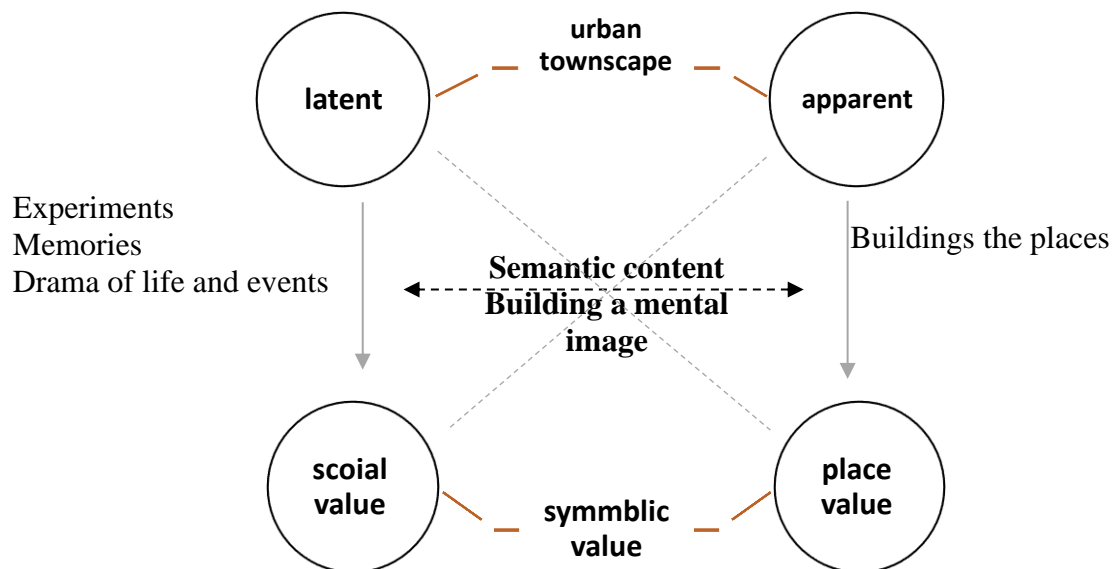
<b>optical properties</b>	Commission
	the color
	the light
	skyline
<b>Aesthetic properties</b>	Clarity
	Simplicity
	Organization
	continuity
<b>Functional properties</b>	The relationship of spaces to each other

**TABLE 4.** Urban intervention levels

<b>Urban Intervention Levels</b>	urban tactics
	urban stimulus
	sustainable empowerment
	urban flow

### CONCLUSION

Reading the previous literature, it concludes that the urban townscape is the semantic content in the urban environment, which includes both the apparent (buildings, places). And the latent (experiences, memories, life drama, and events) in a specific time and location are subject to contemplation and interpretation due to the societal value system and its relationship with spatial symbolic values and their realization, which contribute to building the image of the future urban townscape through the levels of urban intervention (urban tactics, urban stimulation, sustainable empowerment, and urban flow). The study recommends activating the possibility of predicting the future urban townscape in the city and raising the spatial value by achieving compatibility between the assets in urban contexts and highlighting the underlying values through the adoption of urban intervention mechanisms in a manner that secures the upgrading of the contemporary urban townscape. (Fig. 1)



**FIGURE 1.** Semantic content, Building a mental image.

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