The Qualitative Analysis of Yazd Tourist Routs
with Emphasizing on
Arrival Hierarchy

Mohsen Rafieian

Assistance Professor, Department of Urbanism, Yazd University, Iran.

Abstract | In tourism planning, it is important to consider how the tourist is traveling to or back from the target location. What is important in making and completing tourism routes, is the orders or arrangements made for tourist arrivals, that here is called 'arrival hierarchy'. These routes are considered at various levels: (a) Entering the city/sites through the urban entrance routes such as the passenger terminals, airports and stations; (b) Passing through the urban routes and reaching at the accommodation/resorts; and finally (c) Visiting the tourist attractions of target destinations. The tourism studies have mostly focused on the third aspect of this travel arrangement, and less attention has paid to the first two items. Considering the historical context of Yazd city on the World Heritage List and having quite a lot of tourist attractions, many plans and programs have been proposed for tourism prosperity, while less attention has been paid to plans that focusing on the necessity of tourist arrivals, and the following evaluation of existing traveling routs and their key factors.

Therefore, the aim of this paper is to identify and analyze the possible arrangements/hierarchy make for tourist arrival in historical city of Yazd. The main research question arises here is that, what arrangements have been made for tourist arrival in city of Yazd? And what key factors do effect on this? To answer these questions this study used a qualitative and descriptive, applied research method.

First of all, the results show that the entry of tourists using road transport' is not appropriate compared to the rail and air transport, that is all because of lacking clear and defined urban boundaries. On the other hand, on road transport, the entry of 'mental and intuitive' receptions are stronger than rail and air transport, while, the 'physical entry' is the same in all three categories. The tourist routes are not only confined to the network of attractions, and two other important components related to it are, 'The [urban] entrance points and the connecting routs of these entrances to the tourist resorts. In other words, in a city like Yazd, which has drawn the attraction of many tourists by registering its own 'historical texture' on the UNESCO World Heritage List, the mere presence of significant attractions, historical context and appropriate tourism facilities are not enough, but rather, a network of arranged-based tourism routes or briefly 'Arrival Hierarchy' plays an important role in tourism industry.

Keywords | *Tourist Routes, Arrival Hierarchy, Qualitative Analysis, Yazd City, 'Perceptual, Visual and Physical' Receptions/ Entries.*

Introduction | Today, tourism industry, have developed in recent years at the international level and is one of the most important economic supports of the world. Two important components of the tourism industry are: 1. The tourism attractions and 2. The tourism facilities & services (Li, Shi, Yang, & Ren, 2020). Today`s experience shows that wherever tourism is developed without any specific planning and strategy, multiple problems would be appeared after a while, that could be more than its benefits (Rashidi, Ghanbari & Karimi 2016; Latifi, 2005). The presence of tourist attractions in a region is essential for related activities, but it is not sufficient at all. An appropriate condition, includes facilities, amenities and infrastructures that can satisfy the needs of tourists to the required level including infrastructures, facilities and quality that are preferred by tourists to reach them to their destinations (Ripoll-Zarraga & Raya, 2020).These routes, as part of the journey are also useful for tourists to acquire experiences. Much of the tourist's perceptions and experiences about the target city are formed when he/

* +983531234545, mrafian@yazd.ac.ir

she is entering to it. This article studies the concept of the tourist's arrival hierarchy in the form of 'tourism routes', the perception of 'arrival' to the city and the 'railroad tracks, road transport & air routes' at the entrance of Yazd city. The limitations will be discussed while reviewing these orders.

The Tourist Traveling Routes

Tourism, is an industry has formed based on movement and relies on two factors of travel and accommodation/resort (Memarzadeh, Masood, & Ahangarian, 2015). Today, studying on tourism activities and designing the tourist routes in space and place, is one of the key important issues (Chu, Lin & Chang, 2012). The researchers and experts in field of geography, are interested to know which places do people choose to visit and how they do this; They are also seeking to understand what patterns of movement do the tourists exhibit in cities (Karimi & Mahboubfar, 2011).The urban tourism axis, is a rout that connect the city attractions together to make a convenient visiting network. Sometimes, this axis has just a connective role, and in other times the rout bears some attractive items for tourists. Considering the tourist physical characteristics and capabilities, their interests, locating the routs, and making the options for tourists are important factors in planning a successful traveling rout (Delbari & Davoodi, 2012). Therefore, setting a 'tourist navigation system' as a way with double or multiple aspects, would be helpful for urban eligibility and tourism guidance (Gregoriades & Dimitriou, 2020).The tourist routes as the most important element in connecting tourism infrastructures with the city attractions is responsible for identifying an urban identity to tourists (Memarzadeh, Masood &Ahangarian, 2015; Rahnamaie, Farhudi, Dietman & Ghadami, 2008). As a tourist arrives at target destination, he/she compares his/her previous knowledge with what he sees and perceives, and expands his understanding along the way.

The Tourist Routes as a Traveling Attraction

The tourism routes are considered as an approach arisen from the movement patterns of tourists. The implementing of tourism strategies by managers and private sectors in these spaces can make a significant effect on the sustainability of tourism in a city (Rezvani, 2007). Perhaps the hidden point of urban tourism lies in a planned and designed route for tourists, when they are following toward their destinations and also possibilities for receiving the services they need along these routes. Adopting and designing an arranged plan for tourism routes with the aim of getting experienced and meeting the related needs, could be considered as a complementary strategy for the other available tourism plans in historical tourist cities. The urban paths and routes are the main

factor and the most fundamental element in the mental structure of a city (Ziaee& Abbasi, 2018). They will appear in the minds of citizens as the lines that could connect different parts of a city together. In other words, the routs in real life will be appeared in the forms of streets, allays and etc. (Pakzad, 2007). When the tourism routs are introduced in urban spaces at a higher level than the architecture one, then new functions will be defined for these routes; it is because the tourist makes a pre-planned connection with them, and in fact, the rout would be considered as a tourist attraction (Qui & Zheng, 2017). Defining tourism routes is the first step to make an informed and purposeful allocation of facilities in the urban tourism space. These routes were only used as a means of transportation in the past, while today they are referred to as a motivating factor for tourists to visit different places (Papoli Yazdi & Saqai, 2013). The tourism routes are not only considered as a driving factor to get the tourist accessed to their destinations. It has other functions like: adding value to the route network elements, act mediating role between past, present and future and having a social role due to the presence of people in this network. Therefore, these routes could be regarded as a public arena by introducing numerous activities and presenting a civil life. In other words, they could be considered as a tourist attraction as well.

The Arrival Hierarchy of Tourists

Since an urban entrance represents the real identity and characteristic of a city, they are considered as the first places that most tourists deal with; the image of a city is mostly imagined at the time of arrival. These urban entrance points have lots of potential in tourist cities. These points, as the first interacting space with tourist, play an important role in introducing the main identity, history and nature of each city. Despite the successful and principled urbanization and architecture of ancient Iranian cities, today tourists are facing with limitations in functional structure of urban entrance points. Along with the urban development, the city entrance points have turned into highway roads for vehicles and their adjacent lands have also been changed to upsetting environments that aggravate the city visual disturbance. The entrance spaces today are those with lacking identity, full of visual disturbances, lack of readability and guiding map for tourists, lack of visual attractions and motivation for an observer, lack of specific structure to induce a sense of entry and finally a low environmental quality. One of the most important signs of any successful city is an identical and recognizable entrance point (Lew & McKercher, 2006). Especially in cities with tourism potential, the need for a proper and identifiable entrance point is one of the key factors for being success in attracting tourists.

The concept of entering to an urban area or cities is referred to the interaction between the three concepts of perceptual, visual and physical arrival (Fig.1.). In perceptual entry stage, a sense of entry must be prevailed over the tourist receptions as an audience. By continuing movement toward the city and by reinforcing the presence of urban visual cues, a tourist will get more aware of his entrance to the city and will find himself presented more noticeably to a new space and place. This stage of entry is called 'Visual entry'. The 'Physical entry' is triggered by the reinforcement of visual entry signs and by the arriving tourist to the city. These stages happen in the normal situation of entering a traveler to a city. In some cases, some of these stages have more vibrant role than others. Also in some entrance points and exit nodes or gateways some of these stages do not make sense. It should be noted that these level of entries represent a fluid and flexible features, with no definitive boundaries between them. In this paper the hierarchy of tourist arrival means, tourist arrivals have three defined levels: a) arriving to the city, b) arriving to the resort and accommodation places and c) arriving to the site and attractions, each of these levels consist of perceptual, visual, and physical stages.

In fact, the facilities and infrastructures of tourism routes are required to be addressed at the entry level through the city entrance route, by passing through the routs and reaching at the historical context and finally, by visiting the attractions that are listed at the World Heritage Site. This hierarchy include three circles: The first circle points out the place of tourists' arrival and their needs at the entrance location; The second circle includes the routes end to the tourist's accommodation and address their needs on the way; The third circle, encompasses the routs available between the tourist accommodation or resorts and the target attractions.

Research Method

The research method of this paper is a qualitative-descriptive analysis, based on personal interview and graphical maps. Data gathering and concept`s definition was conducted based on the documentary studies. To find out the tourist's arrival hierarchy in Yazd city, field observations and 24 semi-structured interviews were used to reach the saturation point by using qualitative content analysis. The graphical maps also applied to analyze the research finding; the research study followed by discussion and conclusion.

Introducing the Research Context

This study was carried out in the area of Yazd city, Iran. Yazd and especially its historical texture, has attracted many tourists after inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2017.The planning for tourism industry and especially for tourism destinations in Yazd is of great importance to preserve this valuable heritage and develop tourism (Yazd World Registration Office, 20 1 5). Yazd has got one international airport, a train station and two bus terminals (inside and outside the Yazd province) and three major motor gate ways from Tehran, Ke rman and Shiraz locations (Alamzadeh, Karimi, Qaedi& Qalebi, 2007) (Fig. 2)

Describing the Tourist's Arrival Hierarchy

The main entrances of Yazd city can be divided into three category of road, rail and air transportation. According to Table 1, the arrival hierarchy of tourist when using road corridors includes three entrances of Shiraz, Kerman and Tehran. The three routs of Yazd-Tehran (Faghih Khorasani Boulevard); Yazd-Shiraz (Janbaz Boulevard)
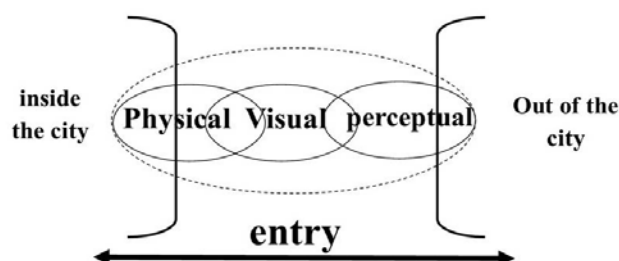

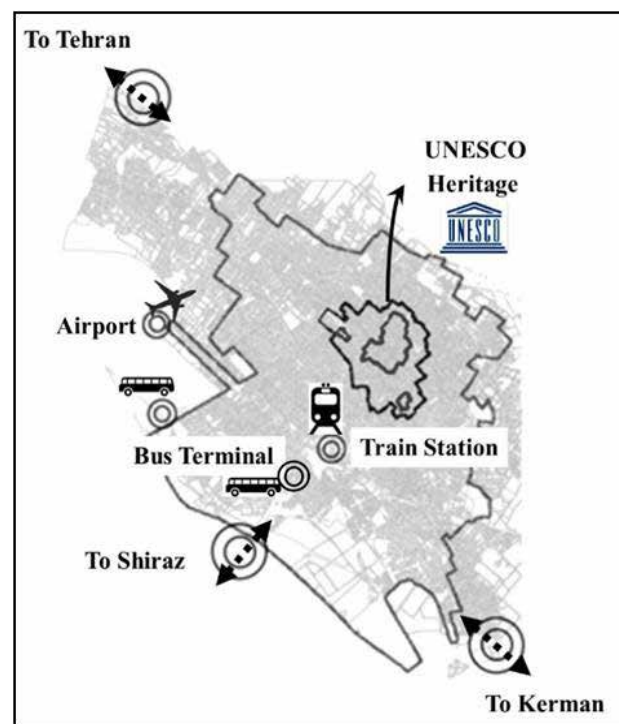Fig.1. The concept of entering an urban or a city area. Source: Author.

Fig.2. The map shows the location of Yazd city main entrance and the urban boundaries Source: author based on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Table1. The Arrival Hierarchy and the Type of Entry. Source: Author.

Hierarchy	Type of Entry		Perceptual Entry	Visual Entry	Physical Entry
Entering the city (First Level)	By Railroad		By train crews announcement, the tourist will be informed of arriving the city	Looking at the surrounding landscape and suburbs	Upon arriving at the train station
	By Air		By cabin crews announcement, the tourist will be informed of arriving the city		Upon arriving at the air port
	Road	Private	Viewing the road signs or reducing the speed and etc.		City entrance points/ Gateways
		Public	Viewing the road signs or reducing the speed and etc.		Terminals or city entrance points
From time of arriving until get to accommodation (Second Level) From accommodation site to attraction points (Third Level)	Streets and attraction routs		Viewing the tourists information boards	A distant view is not possible for all resort places. In some cases, visual entry is accompanied by physical one.While, in some other cases visual entryhappens at further distance compared to the physical entry.	Arriving at the accommodation/ resortsor tourist attraction points

and Yazd-Kerman (Shahid Dashti Boulevard) are shown in Fig 1.

If tourists come to the city by public transport, they would enter the city from Ghadi or Imam Ali bus terminal. In conditions that tourists are traveling by train or plane, the train station or airport is the first entry point. The second entry stage is started from the terminal, station or airport to resorts and accommodation places, and the third one is passing through the city network routs to get the tourists to the city attractions. Table 1 shows the arrival hierarchy and the type of entry to Yazd.

Analyzing the Interview Data

Within the interview process of open coding, the first 193 codes out of 24 interviews were formed based on the hierarchy features of the tourist arrivals. Then the basic classification of the data was done and the derived concepts from open coding fell into 5 categories as below: a) The city boundaries, b) The landscape, urban identity and physical design of the entrance points, c) The facilities and services located at the entrances, d) Environmental information, e) Urban internet and the tourist guide applications &software.

• The City Boundary

Determining the city boundaries for tourists who are exciting to enter it, is an important issue according to the participants' interview data. If the tourist willingness for reaching at the city is suppressed because of lacking a clear city boundary, a desired mental image or visual perception will not be imagined at the time of tourist arrival. Since the regional landscape in Yazd province has been destroyed due to the rapid and unplanned urban development and because of the continuous pass of the province 'North-South Corridor' through the cities of Aqda, Ardakan, Maybod, Rezvanshahr, Ashkezar, Zarch, Yazd, Mehriz; A specific boundary for each of these cities are not perceived clearly by tourists. Therefore, the tourist who entering Yazd City, are confused about the urban entrance, that could have a negative effect on shaping a pleasant experience of traveling to the city at arrival time. However, the tourists passing through the province are also not encouraged to stay in Yazd and enjoy the tourist attractions. The unclear city boundary is also frustrating and confusing for tourists arriving by public transport to Yazd, whether by train or bus, as they wouldn't notice of arriving at the city entrance point while looking at the outdoor landscapes, until they reach at the travel station or airport; This confusion is caused by imperfect reception arisen from the confused, unplanned and dispersed landscape of the region.

• Landscape, Urban identity and Physical design of City entrance points

A pleasant and relaxed landscape, a sense of familiarity with the city and its welcoming sense in arrival hierarchy is what the tourist expects. The identity and visual characteristic of the city entries at first level (see

Table 1) is disordered and disrupted at the skyline, rhythm, urban view and readability. Practically, the city entrances, especially on Kerman and Tehran routs, accommodate intrusive professions, industries and warehouses that does not show the functionality of a city entrance. However, the city entrance from Shiraz rout is different from the other two entrances, as the arrival hierarchy from the natural environment to an artifact urban space is relatively respected and some principles are considered on the mentioned rout. Aesthetically, the route is visually appropriate compared to other routes, but there is no sequencing, readability, and rhythm along the way. Functionally, due to the presence of Mountain Park and the heights around it, at the beginning of the path a hierarchy in changing landscape from a natural environment to the natural- artifact and then the solid artifact location are observed. Along this route, similar to the other entry points, there are no specific defining elements for entrance point as a landmark, as it merely includes a usual wide path that does not represent the city of Yazd with its particular historical and cultural background. Along with the two items of entrance roads and the intercity bus terminals, the train station and airport in Yazd do not offer an indication of the cultural and historical identity as registered at the World Heritage Site.

• **The Facilities and Services at City Entrance Points and the Tourist Attractions**
Upon the tourist arrival or while visiting the site or city attractions, they need primary health services and amenities to let them continue on their way and get them to their resorts and accommodation. These include gas station, emergency services, public toilets, prayer room, mother-and-child rooms and other similar facilities. According to the responses from interviewees, the train station, intercity bus terminals and airports were at proper level, in terms of hierarchy arrival. But the most tourists who were using their personal car were not satisfied with the facilities and services at the city entrance points. On the other hand, these amenities at tourist attractions were not responsive to visitor needs during the peak seasons.

• **The Urban Information System (UIS)**
The arrival hierarchy, whether perceptual or visual, mostly depends on the visual sense and observing the urban information boards/signs. The guide signs on the entry points and tourist routes lead them step-by-step upon their entry to the city until the moment they leave it, and it will provide them with useful information. On the other hand, the presence of some urban elements such as advertising boards in inappropriate locations or in different size and variable designs will cause visual disturbances and spatial irregularities; All of these affect the tourists' arrival hierarchy.

• **The Urban Internet, Tourist Guide Applications and Software**
Today, along with the global expansion of the internet access and the growing usage of smart phones among individuals, the tourist and other people who are involved in tourism industry are willing to hire more of the related application. As they can play a complementary role in creating tourist attractions along with the other traveling routes in [real worlds]. The virtual space facilitates the tourist's perceptual reception in city arrival hierarchy. Another point in providing this access for tourists is the availability of the internet as an essential need.

Discussion and Conclusion
In identifying the arrival hierarchy based on tourism routes, three types of 'perceptual, visual and physical entry' at three levels of 'entering to city' and 'from entrance points to resort places' and during traveling 'on routes between resort and tourist attractions' are considered. The results of this paper indicate that at first level for tourists who are using road transport, the entry points are not at appropriate level of hierarchy compared to rail and air transport, that is thought to be the consequence of an unclear urban boundary. On the other hand, in road transportation 'perceptual and visual entry' is stronger than rail and air transport, while 'physical entry' has the same condition in all three categories. The second and third level for all three entries, are related to the land transportation that is referred as tourist routes.

The tourist routes are not only confined to the network of attractions; the other two important components related to it are 'the entrance points and the routes connecting entrances to resort places'.

In other words, in a city with the characteristics of Yazd where many tourists are attracted upon registering its historical heritage on the World Heritage List, simply having significant attractions, proposing historical context and providing appropriate tourism facilities, would not be enough in today's tourism industry. Rather, a network of hierarchical tourism routes could play an important role in this case. In this regard, we should notice that the tourist's perceptual image is imagined from entry moment until they get to the historical context as a destination for most of them. So the hierarchy of tourist arrivals and the routs they pass through until get to the historical context, are of great important [in the field of tourism] that required to be considered carefully and improved. Furthermore, it is essential to define an appropriate path rout for the places where they are lacking so, by considering the appropriate conditions and definite criteria. Also, the required facilities and amenities on their way are also very important to be considered when planning these routes; They include proper allocation of facilities and services

at entrance points and attraction site, implementing an appropriate urban information system (UIS), making a physical design of entrances, organizing an accurate landscaping and urban identity, expanding the urban internet coverage and developing the tourist's guide applications and software.

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