

URBAN LIFE IS NOTHING IF NOT THEATRICAL: THE ROLE OF ART IN THE REGENERATION OF THE MEDINA OF TUNIS CITY

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ABSTRACT

Arts are the main human expression encouraging man to expose his practices, ideas, and fears. This in turn affects and shapes his environment, an environment which keeps evolving into cities. Nowadays, human expression through art is playing a major role in the development of the urban landscape by shifting the old-fashioned paradigms of the rigid and static urban structuring and development, especially with the new urban trends floating on the surface. The case study of the Medina of Tunis is a paradigmatic example that illustrates the bottom-up approach of social participation in urban life through art.

The research question asked here is to what extent has the artistic practices been influencing the urban development of the city's user experience? Can this be regarded as a necessary tool for the regeneration of the historical urban landscape?

First, a general overview of urban development and the influence of the artistic practices have been presented. Issues such as urban transformation are highlighted. The second part exposes specific examples of artistic manifestations influencing public spaces and urban life in the studied example of the Medina of Tunis. The next step is about elaborating the main examples in their context in the form of case studies. The analysis of these case studies directs towards the outcomes and conclusions regarding the impact of artistic practices in changing the way a city is perceived, used and designed.