

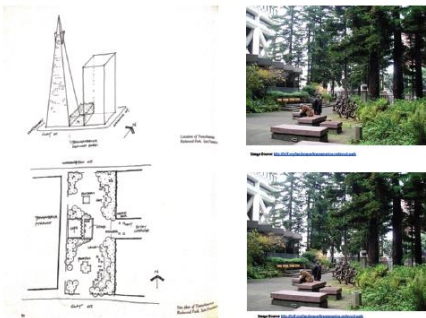
Methods and Procedures

The methodology section consists of three parts. Each part is related to others and they have a complementary function. The foundation of this methodology is based on the analytical approach. The first part of this section analyzes the precedent works. This section provides evidence for the researcher's future work. The second part identifies and categorizes the activities of youth in Iran. This also helped the researcher to figure out which kind of activities she has to encourage, promote and support in her design solution with the goal of creating social interaction. At last, the area under study was explored and many locations within this area were investigated in order to find candidate places for design recommendations. All of these topics are interconnected with each other and each section alone cannot provide complete information.

Analysis of the Precedent works

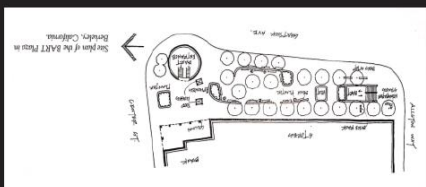
After the researcher decides on the location and the target group of people, the next step is to analyze the precedent works. Analyzing the precedent work provides a foundation of information for the researcher and also equips the designer with enough evidence to support his/her design solution. Five precedent works are analyzed in this study. the main focus of all of them is to provide an appropriate platform for the socializing issue. In addition, the scale of the area from their project are close to the scale of the area in my study. There is also one local project which is located in Tehran. The following is the outcome of this analysis.

Analyzing the Precedent works



Transamerica Redwood Park, San Francisco, CA, United States (Marcus and Francis 1997).

- The location is very similar to one of my selected sites.
- It is located near the street and also provides a passage for the pedestrian.
- It has some design features that encourage social interaction such as stage for volunteer performance, a café, seating opportunities.
- It is an attraction for young generation in the afternoon period time.
- It provides a good platform as a gathering area.



Berkeley BART Plaza, Berkeley, CA, United States (Marcus and Francis 1997)

- This project has some design features that encourage social interaction such as central sitting area focused inward. It is located near the street and also provides a passage for the pedestrian.
- This place is used by teenagers and young adults as a place to hang out.
- It provides a good platform as a gathering area and meeting place for young generation.
- Although this public space is a good place for youth to hang out, one of its unsuccessful features is its seating arrangement (except a central sitting area) that was not designed for groups.
- The category of its users is the same of the target population in my study.
- This project provides a good public urban space for supporting socialization among people which is very similar to my goal in my study.



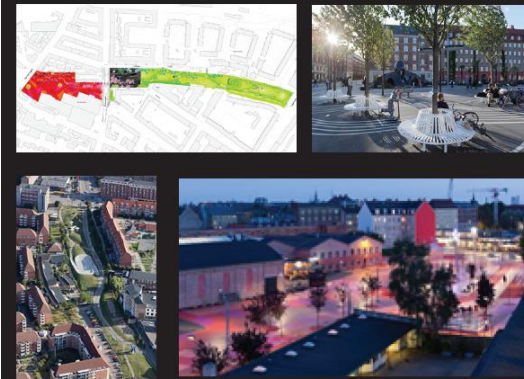
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Analyzing the Precedent works



Lonsdale Street Dandenong / BKK Architects, Dandenong VIC, Australia (ArchDaily 2013).

- There are a lot of similarities of the characteristics of the location of this project and the location of my study.
- Connections: Using one of the main streets as a connecting catalyst, fostering clear and legible street connections to each of the City's key public assets.
- Street Life: Creating a memorable boulevard, animated along its length and connected to a range to the wider city.
- Protecting Valued Urban Places: Identifying opportunities to organize the ongoing retention of cultural destinations and creating new opportunities for urban places and activities.



Superkilen / Topotek 1 + BIG Architects + Superflex (ArchDaily 2012).

- Covers a long length in the city.
- It emphasizes on three different categories of activities: sport/culture/market. Each of these activities can be an attraction for my project.
- Has three different zones with different design and application.
- A good attraction that gathers people from different cultures together.

Analyzing the Precedent works



Nature Bridge, Tehran, Iran (Iran 2014).

- There are a lot of similarities of the characteristics of the location of this project and the location of my study.
- One of the newest and most successful public spaces that attracts a wide range of people.
- The function and surrounding area is not the same as my project but it is a good example.
- It is designed as a stress free location.

Analysis of the Tehraninan youth activities

In order to come up with a design solution to redefine the public space of Valiasr street, numerous methods are being used in this study. Conducting a literature review is a required method for almost every research topic. In this study, most of the references are articles and journal papers. In my case, a thorough review of the literature was conducted on two different scales: 1. General studies about definitions such as public urban spaces, design of public space, the role of public space, the role of the street, social interaction and youth culture. 2. A more specific and narrowed down version, in order to find the definition of the mentioned terms particularly in Iran. This narrower literature review was conducted to find the local aspects of these terms such as social taboos and preferences of Iranian youth about public spaces.

Based on the literature, social activities of the youth in Tehran are usually related to the following categories:

- Gathering in coffee shops and restaurants.
- Hanging out in outdoor areas such as streets.
- Special kind of activity that is specifically belongs to Tehran is that young people use their cars to attracts the attention of others; in some major streets we can see a large number of cars are being driven back and forth during the evening.
- Cinemas and theaters attract young generation a lot.
- Photography might be a subcategory activity in other countries but in Iran there is a trend between the youth to use the DSLR cameras to take photos from different parts of the city.
- During summer and in the hot weather young people gather in specific areas to play water fight games. Similarly, during winter they gather in almost the same places to snow fight.
- With the increase of social awareness, the youth tend to go on tours to find out more about their own history and culture; these tours are held in both inside and outside the city.

Different webpages were used to find the related pictures to each category and then these categories were analyzed. The outcome of the analysis is shown below. Between all the available activities some of them are directly related to this project and they will be addressed for developing design solutions. Some other activities are not directly related to this project but it can be seen that they are not the most appropriate type of activities for the target generation and the proposed solutions of this project can be an alternative to these activities.

Gathering in coffee shops and restaurants

- Usually among friends to relax for a while and talk
- Also used for celebrating their birthday
- Sometimes, board games are played in these places

Hanging out in outdoor areas such as streets

- Usually among friends to relax for a while and walk
- A good hobby to get away from indoor places and to be in touch with the outside world
- Outdoor games are usually played in these places

Hobby with car

- Although it might not be the healthiest way to socialize with new people, it is the almost the only way
- It is often intruded by police officers
- Causes a lot of traffic

Cinemas and theaters

- A great place to raise their cultural values
- A good hobby to spend their spare time
- A great place to gather and see each other

Photography

- A new hobby for the youth to get out and spend their time in the society
- Photos are usually shared on social media to show people's daily life

Snow fight in winter & water fight in summer

- The good way to release energy and tension
- It is seasonal

Tours

- A good way to spend their weekends and holidays
- There is less control in these programs and they can be themselves
- Also a good place to interact with new people

With careful analysis of the youth activities, a basis will be provided for the author to come up with a design solution with enough evidence to support it.

Analysis of the location

Crowdsourcing

Another important method in the design of a public space is observation of how people are currently using existing spaces. Since the researcher of this study was unable to perform a direct observation of the chosen site, crowdsourcing was used as a replacement to this method. The name crowdsourcing consists of two words: crowd, which is referring to the people who participate in the initiative; and sourcing, which makes reference to the practices that aim at finding the intended results (Estellés-Arolas and González-Ladrón-de-Guevara 2012). Merriam-Webster (Merriam-Webster) (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/crowdsourcing>) (Merriam-Webster) defines crowdsourcing as “the practice of obtaining needed services, ideas, or content by soliciting contributions from a large group of people and especially from the online community rather than

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from traditional employees or suppliers”. There are many definitions for crowdsourcing but in this study we can define crowdsourcing as:” one way of accessing external knowledge” (Burger-Helmchen and Pénin 2010). There are also various sources for using this method. During the past few years, Instagram has become one of the most widely used social networks (Boy & Uitermark, 2016) and it has proven that in some scenarios, pictures and short videos can speak louder than words (Lee, Lee, Moon, & Sung, 2015). A study shows that the level of engagement for Instagram is 57% which means this amount of users check this website at least once a day, and 35% of users visit Instagram multiple time a day (Zolkepli, Hasno, & Kamarulzaman, 2015).

Method

Because of this high usage, Instagram was chosen as the tool for crowdsourcing, for this thesis. An Instagram account was created by the author with the name of “Glory of Valiasr”. See Figure 1, below. People who currently live in Tehran were invited to provide pictures or short videos of Valiasr street based on their point of view. At this initial point, they were not asked to take pictures of any specific location or attraction; this was done so that there wouldn’t be any bias while they take the pictures. The received images were posted on the Instagram page with the sender’s name.

There has been a very good participation from the Tehranian people. Currently, the collected images and videos are around 110 which shows the interest of people about the title.

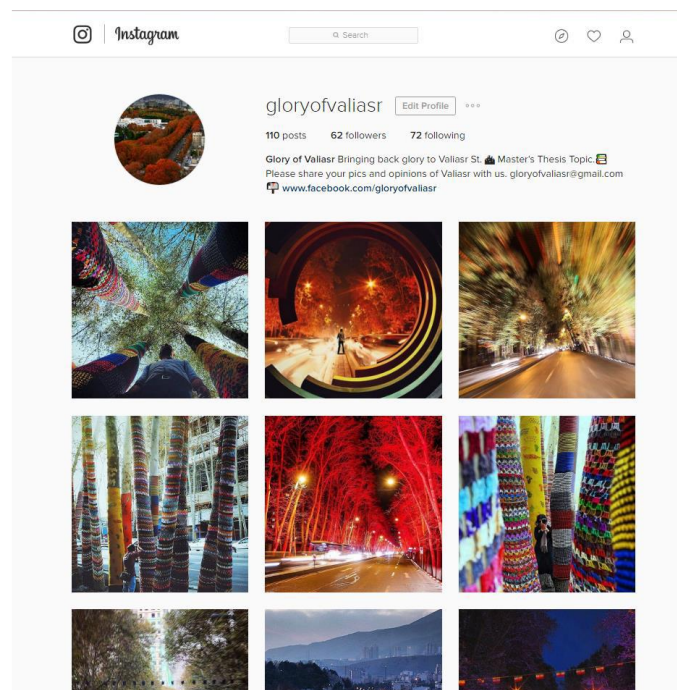


Figure. 1. The Instagram page: Glory of Valiasr

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Analysis of Images

Meanwhile, a content analysis of the obtained images/videos was used to determine common characteristics. The first step of this analysis was to identify sets of categories to describe the pictures; 8 different classes were obtained. The second step was to extract the main points of each category. This analysis was based on the author's opinion and people's comments when they shared their photos. Also, this crowdsourcing method by its nature provides an informal survey about the title and specifically the location and its advantages and disadvantages. The outcome of this analysis is brought in appendix 1.

Mapping of the Images

The third step is mapping the area under study and relating the right place of the submitted pictures on the map. The goal of this last step is to enable the author to find the desired locations for recommending design features. After the content analysis and categorization of photos in 8 types, the next step was to map them in the site plan of Valiasr street. In order to map the submitted images, the author sent the streets map to the all senders and asked them to mark the locations that they took their photos. The aim of this mapping is to figure out which specific locations have an opportunity for design solution and which places are an optimal place to support social exchange either between strangers or between friends for Tehranian youth. After marking the pictures inside of the map, it was shown that most of the photos belonged in the middle of the map. The outcome of this analysis is brought in appendix 2.

Urban Design Expert Observations

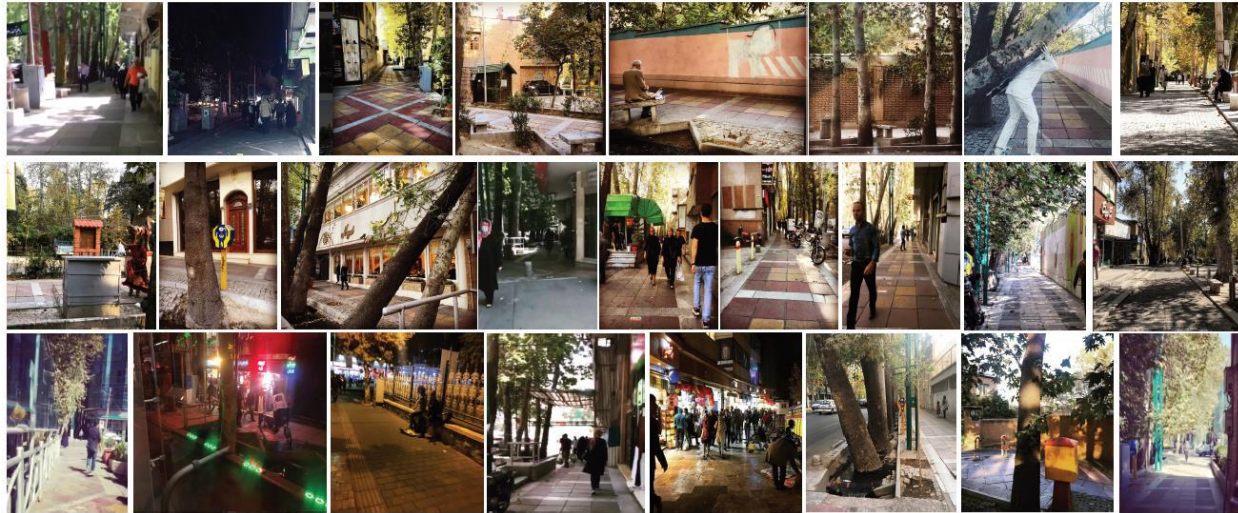
In addition to the information from crowdsourcing, expert people in the field of urban design were asked to do a more in depth observation of selected street locations on behalf of the author. The goal of these observations is twofold: the first goal was to get information about the urban design features without considering user behavior. The second goal was to gather information about the users' behavior based on the check list of "user's activity behaviors" which is provided by the author. The outcome of these observations will be documented and analyzed by the author once they are available.

The mentioned crowdsourcing method provided a platform to engage participants in this project. Since most of the contributors of the Instagram page consist of young people, they are suitable target population that can be interviewed later. Since they showed enthusiasm in providing pictures, it can also be expected that they cooperate if they are asked to fill out a survey. Both of the interview and the survey will provide more in depth and to the point information for the author.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Content Analysis of the Images

Content analysis of categorized photos



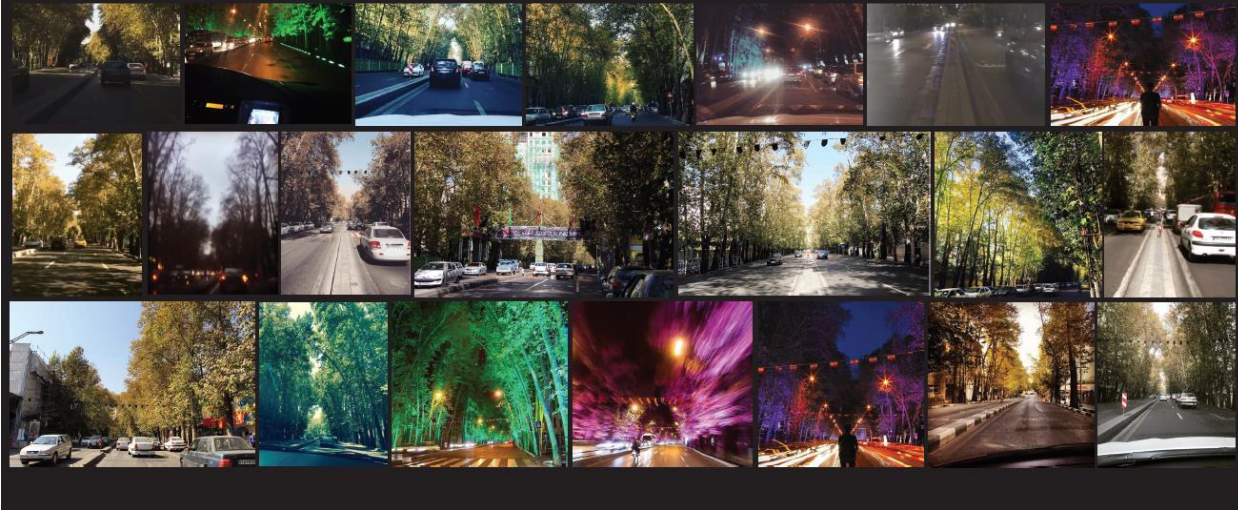
Title: Sidewalk of Valiasr



The percentage of photos from sidewalk

Based on the submitted photos, around 28 pictures (out of 110) are submitted about the sidewalk issue of this street. There are some main point that can be concluded from the content of this categorized images:

- The shading of trees on the sidewalk, make it an optimal environment when people are walking along this.
- The type of concrete paving slabs are indicated in 80% of the images. More than 45% of the people who snet these images, are thinking the material, color and design of this paving are not appropriate and beautiful for this street.
- The photos show the pedestrian sidewalks are not equipped very well by furniture for seating, gathering, or standing.
- The arrangement of existing furniture is not design very well to encourage pedestrians for using them.
- Existing of water stream along the sidewalk is one of the attractive point of this sidewalk for pedestrians.
- According to the submitted pictures, in around 70% of pictures the number of pedestrian are very low that implies an important issue of this street's sidewalk.
- Existing of street performance is a good piont of this sidewalk to gather people and compel them to stop.
- The number of pedestrians during the day is totally different with their number during the night. At night people tend to be outside of their home more than during the day.
- Based on the images, the number of attractions of sidewalk is not enough attractive for people to pause and spend their time over there.



Title: Arched tree lined Valiasr

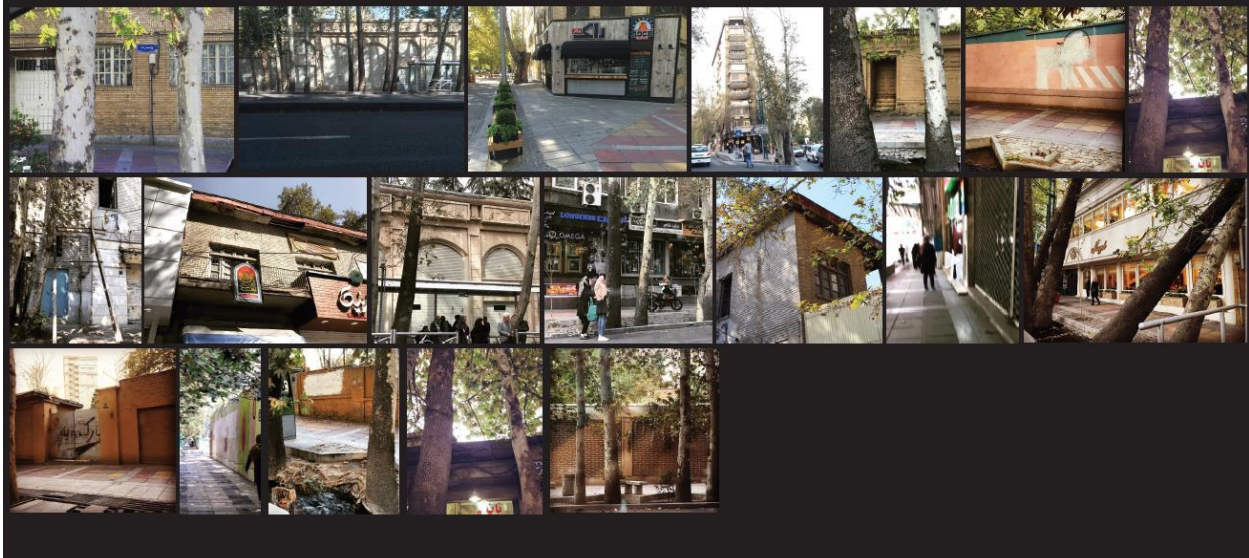


The percentage of photos from the middle of the street

Based on the submitted photos, around 26 pictures (out of 110) are from the middle of the street. This space of valiasr street is not a sidewalk for pedestrians. There is just a line of curbe which divides two parts of the street. There are some main piont that can be concluded from the content of this categorized imgaes.

- One of the noticeable things that is very interesting, isthe the indication of arched tree lined street.
- More than 70% of this category of photos are shown the point of arched tree lined of the street clearly.
- The middle of the street are not equipped for pedestrians to walk or sit.
- Around 27% of photos are taken by people who are pedestrians and the others are taken by people who are in their car.
- Most of these photo are indicating the skyline of the street.
- The pictures that are taken at night, are colorful because of the colorful lights which were applied in the bottom of the trees.
- The images that are taken at night, are shown that this street is bright at night-time. Therefore, it will provide the opportunity of a space for having the nightlife.
- In the some the taken photos, the direction of the camera lens, is upward.

Content analysis of categorized photos



Title: Facade in Valiasr



The percentage of photos of facade in Valiasr street

Based on the submitted photos, around 19 pictures (out of 110) are from the facade in Valiasr street. There are some interesting points that can be analyzed from the content of this categorized images.

- The old urban texture of Tehran facade that mostly consists of bricks, was a noticeable point for people to take a photo. This material of facade is nostalgic to them.

- Some of the old restaurants and stores facade are nostalgic for people.

- There are some ruined and damaged facades.

- Some of the facade pictures are showing an undesirable elevation which shows poor design.

- There are a lot of construction equipments hindering the flow of passage in the sidewalks.

- The used color on two of the facades is not suitable for sidewalk.

Content analysis of categorized photos



Title: Sky view of Valiasr



The percentage of photos of sky view of Valiasr

Based on the submitted photos, around 6 pictures (out of 110) are the sky view of Valiasr street. There are some points that can be concluded from the content of this categorized images.

- One the pictures emphasizes on mountain view.

- The construction equipments are blocking hindering the sky view.



Title: Stream of water in Valiasr



The percentage of photos of sky view of Valiasr

Based on the submitted photos, around 8 pictures (out of 110) are the stream of water in Valiasr. There are some points that can be concluded from the content of this categorized images.

- The sound of stream of water is pleasant for pedestrians and people seating nearby.

- The overall maintenance of the stream of water is not good: There is garbage in the stream and tiles and curb are broken.

- The flower kiosks are an attraction for people.

- The colorful lighting beneath the flowing water during the night is attractive.

Content analysis of categorized photos



Title: Maple trees of Valiasr



The percentage of photos from the trees of Valiasr

Based on the submitted photos, around 9 pictures (out of 110) are from the trees of the street. One of the most significant features of this street is its special trees. There are some main points that can be concluded from the content of this categorized images.

- Those 4 of the pictures of tree's cloth indicate how much taking care and of them and remaining them are important for this street.
- Taking the picture of the trees particularly by people, is implying that they have positive feelings about trees.

- The tallness of trees is one of the key elements of Valiasr Street.
- In somehow, the trees of Valiasr street is an identity of the street.



Title: Artistic monument in sidewalk of Valiasr



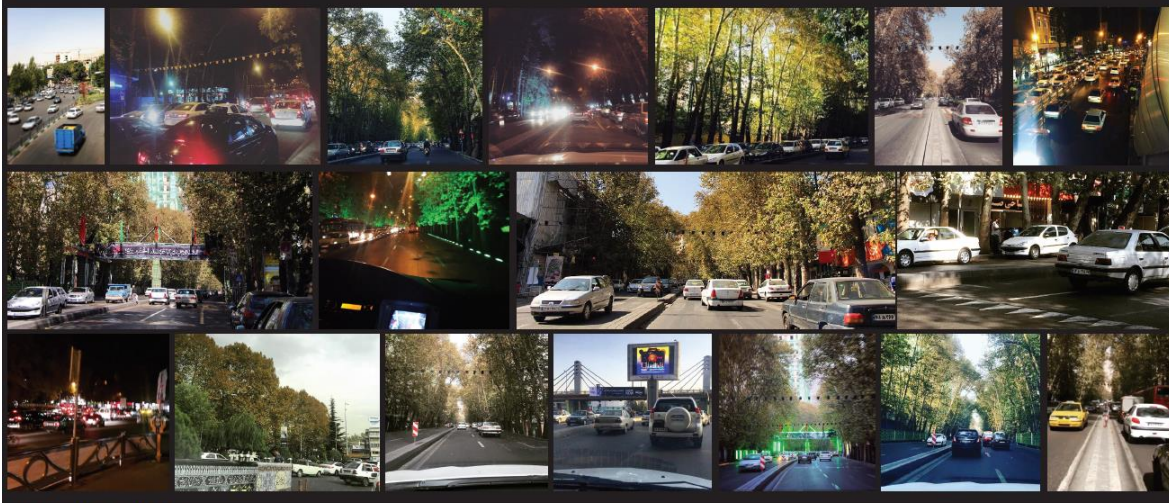
The percentage of photos artistic monuments of Valiasr street

Based on the submitted photos, around 4 pictures (out of 110) are from the artistic monuments in sidewalk of Valiasr street. There are some main points that can be concluded from the content of this categorized images.

- Based on the comments, some of them are really interesting and meaningful.
- According to the comments, some them are not appropriate for locating alongside of this street.

- The locations of some of these monuments do not seem good because people can not notice them very well.
- Based on the comments, people love to see artistic work alongside of this street and they think it is good to have more.

Content analysis of categorized photos



Title: Traffic in Valiasr



The percentage of photos from the Traffic in Valiasr

Based on the submitted photos, around 18 pictures (out of 110) are from the Traffic in Valiasr. Due to be one of the most important nodes of the city, there is usually heavy traffic. also, on weekends, the amount of traffic is considerably heavier than other days. There are some main points that can be concluded from the content of this categorized images.

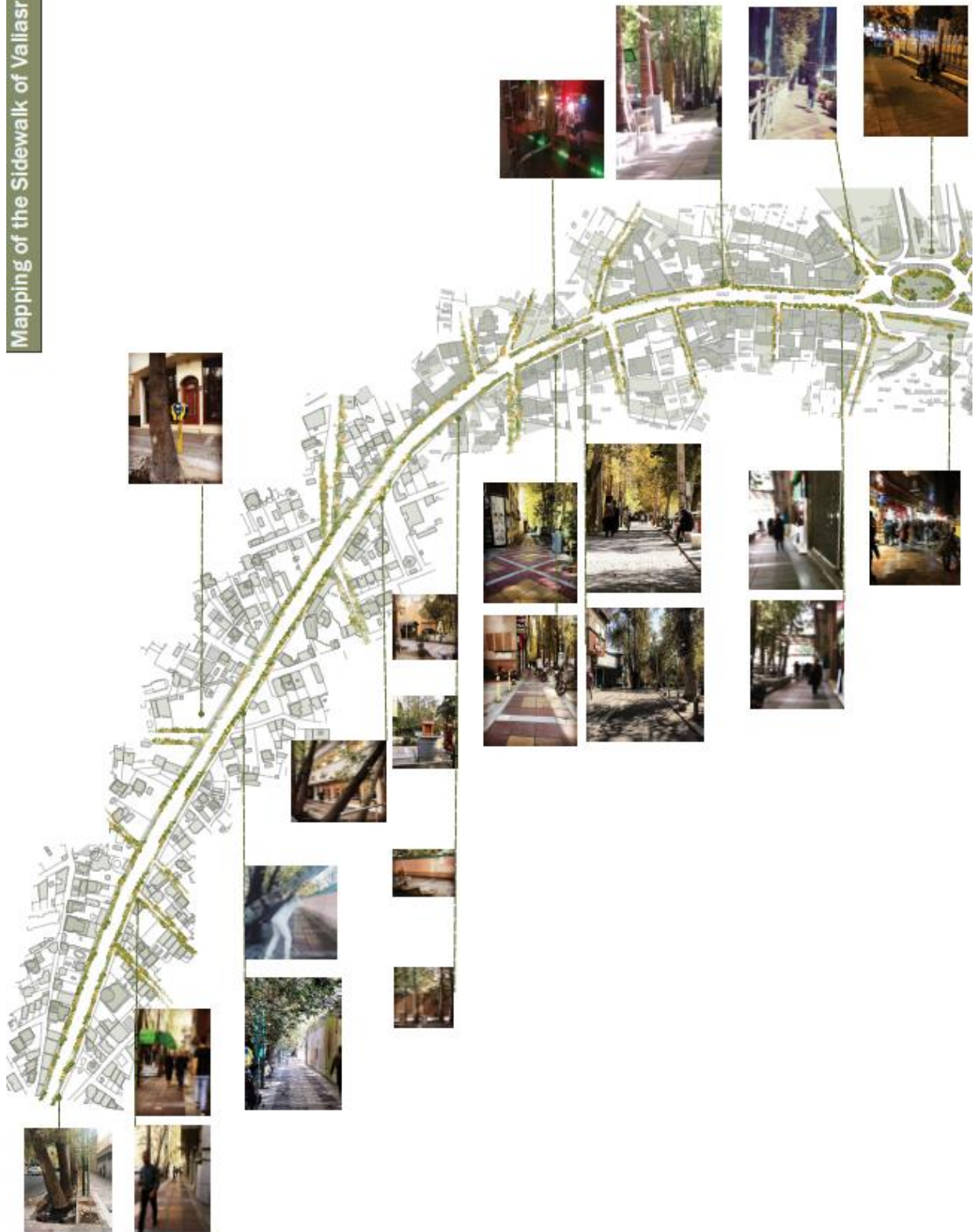
- Based on the received comments from the photos, the existence of heavy traffic is one of the significant flaws of this street.
- The rush hour of the traffic is usually started from 5 pm (end of the work hour) to 10 pm.

- One of the entertainment activity for young generation is drive around their cars and socialize with other young drivers in Valiasr street.
- Throughout the street, there is no parking space along the street.

- The arched treelined view of the street is easier to notice when you are driving.
- Most of the photos were taken after 5 pm . Also, the pictures of night were usually taken during the weekend.

This categorization is a way to analyze what are the major aspects of a public space that catches people's attention.

Mapping of the Sidewalk of Valliasr

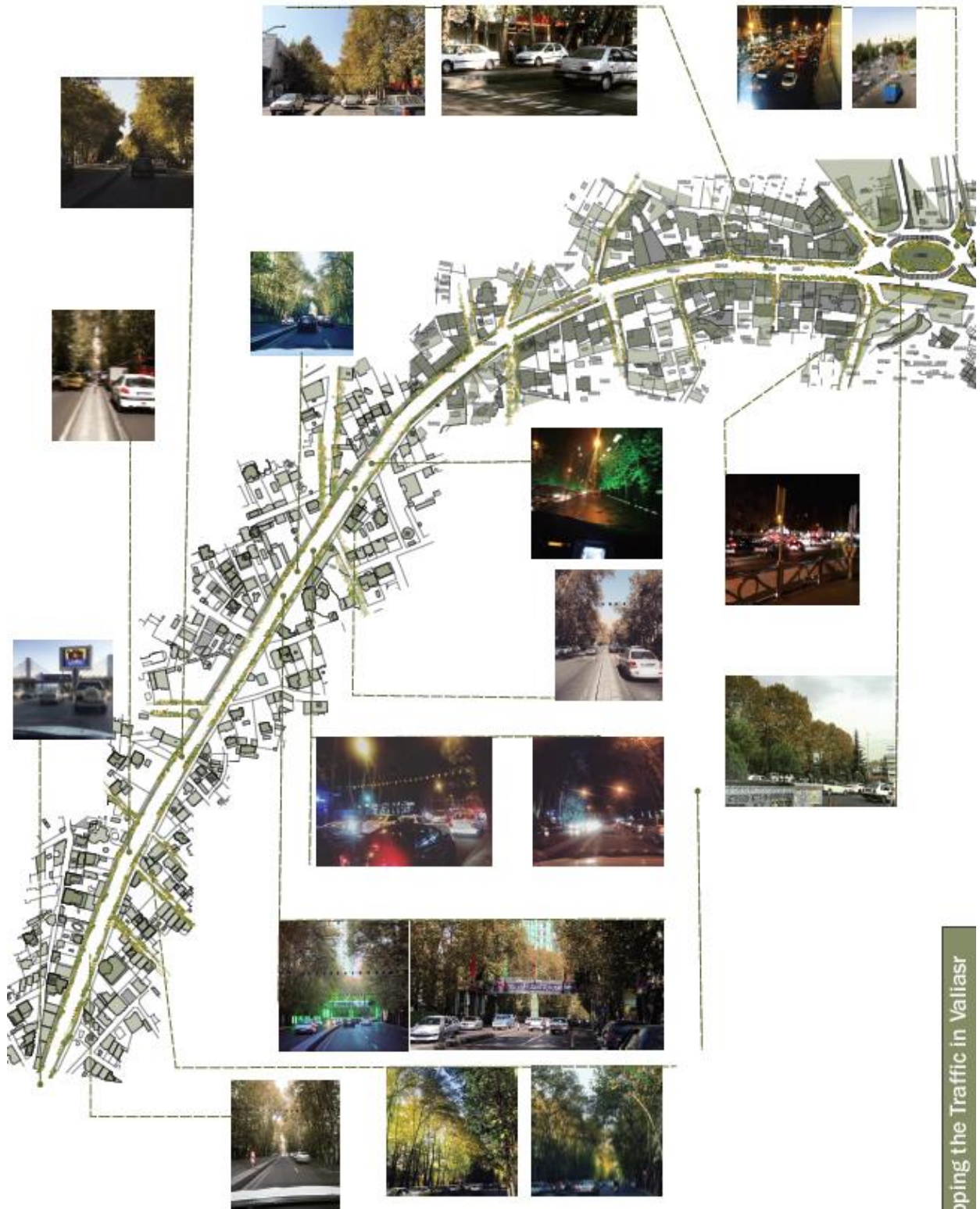




Mapping of the Arched Treelined Valliasr

Mapping of Facade in Valiasr

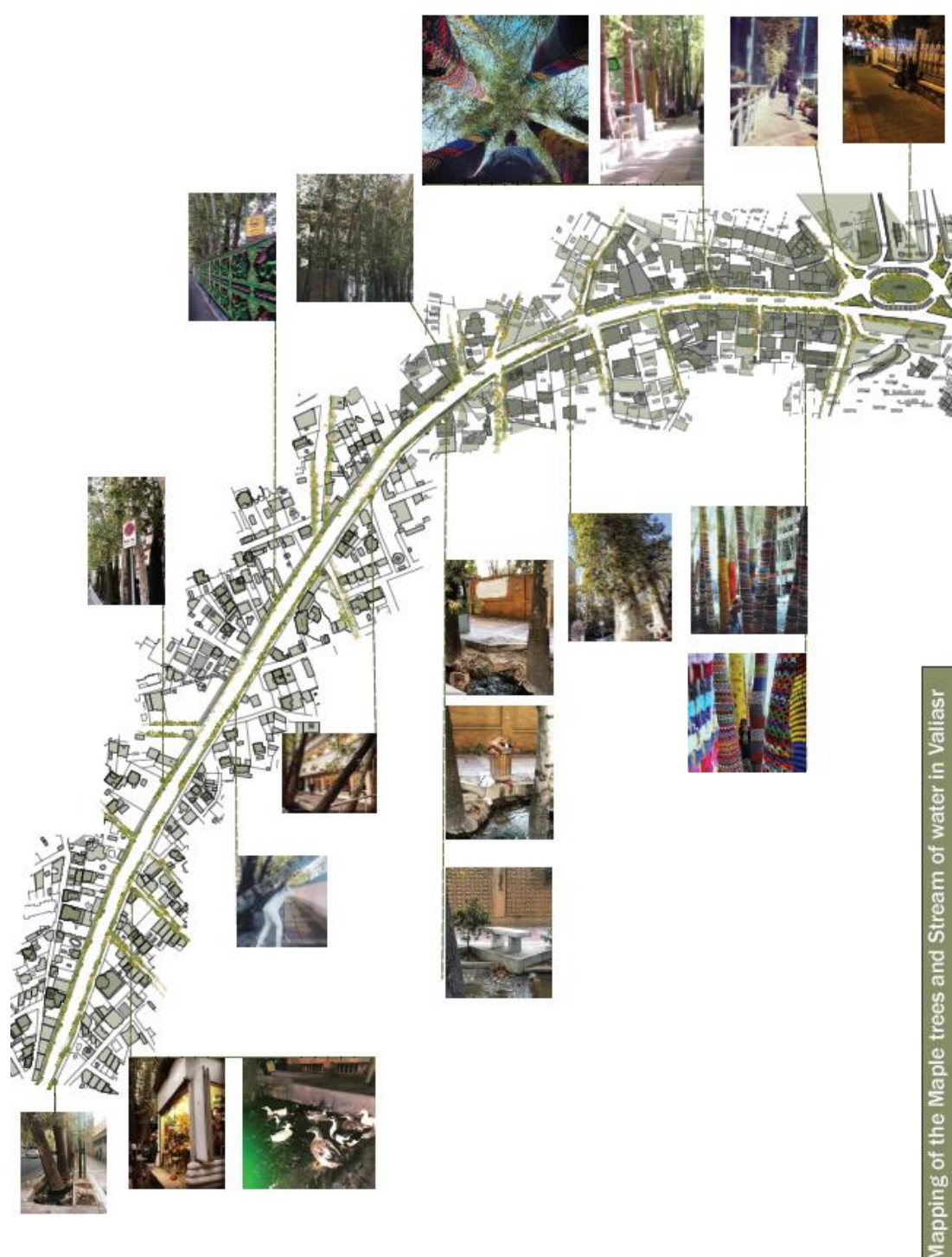




Mapping the Traffic in Valiasr

Mapping of Sky view and Artistic monument in sidewalk of Valliasr





The service of this mapping was to identify which parts of this street has the most potential to suggest a design solution.

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