Research Article

DISCOVERING THE IMMENSE POWER OF GENEALOGY IN EXAMINING URBAN DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE CITY OF MASHHAD, IRAN

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ABSTRACT

This study is focused on gaining a deeper understanding of the evolution of cities, with a specific emphasis on the city of Mashhad. It employs a genealogical approach, drawing on Foucault's theory, to examine the city's growth in relation to governance, space, and knowledge. The primary objective of the research is to address inquiries regarding the current dominant role played by Mashhad, how this role has developed over time, and which discourses have played a significant role in its formation. By utilizing power-related tools and knowledge products, the analysis demonstrates that cities' roles have been influenced by historical periods and disruptions, resulting in the establishment of new spatial connections through manifestations of power and knowledge. The urban space of Mashhad has been shaped by an interconnected network of knowledge and power.

Keywords: evolution of cities, city growth, urban development, architectural attributes.

INTRODUCTION

Genealogists in the academic field analyze historical records, conduct interviews, and employ genetic research to gain insights into the characteristics and relationships of cities. Their findings are documented in either graphical representations or narrative formats. Researchers are driven by the motivation to uncover a city's history, fostering a sense of belonging and safeguarding its identity for future generations. Presently, cities are inhabited by 55% of the global population, with projections indicating an increase to 68% by the year 2050. Cities possess distinctive cultural and architectural attributes, serve as hubs for development resources, and offer opportunities for innovation. Nevertheless, cities also confront challenges such as inequality, exorbitant housing costs, and environmental concerns. The formation of urban space is influenced by historical events and the unequal distribution of time, as well as social factors. It serves as a setting where previous patterns persist and potential opportunities for the future can arise (Balbim, R. 2016). The functional aspect of urban space entails that different elements have specific roles and functions within the environment, based on human necessities. These functions may encompass productivity, influence, identity, or sacredness. Recognizing the origins of power within cities and utilizing them to create urban areas that cater to present and future needs, while also safeguarding resources for future generations, constitutes a crucial aspect of urban planning and management approaches such as sustainable development.

The formation and role of cities are examined from a genealogy perspective in this text. It is explained that power influences cities and the relationships between various elements of power in a given space. Additionally, the text acknowledges that cities can impact policy-makers and decision-makers through their construction, function, population, elements, and spatial production. Different approaches to analyzing the role of cities have been presented by town planners, architects, and theorists. The importance of examining

the economic basis of cities is emphasized as it aids in comprehending their distinct position within the national economic system. However, political economy is not the sole determinant of a city's atmosphere; it is one among many factors. Therefore, spatial planning should consider power dynamics and political economy approaches to ensure successful programs. In terms of radical geography, different economic ideologies and political philosophies give rise to their own geographic spaces. Hence, when conducting geographic research, it is crucial to analyze multiple levels of processes: the emergence of space (including ideologies, institutions, states, and governments), the creation of space (involving political economy), and the underlying structure that influences the atmosphere (political economy and political philosophies) (Shakouee, H. 2003).

Foucault's genealogical approach is focused on examining the influence of power and knowledge on urban spaces and the evolving roles of cities. This approach investigates the social construction of cities and their transformations through various relationships and processes. Genealogy explores the dominant roles assumed by cities, regardless of the discourses that have shaped them, and also considers the potential for cities to adopt new roles. The objective of this research is to specifically address these issues in relation to the city of Mashhad.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The text examines the examination of power and the role of cities within the framework of geography. It states that research in this area primarily concentrates on economic advancements and measures like employment status. The investigation into the roles played by cities in developed nations, especially major capitals, has received significant attention. The comprehension of the formation and alterations of these roles is underscored by considering the impact of political, economic, and social factors over time(Cornish, V. 1971).

The text examines different researchers and studies that explore the role and purpose of capital cities, urban governance strategies, sustainable cities, economic transformations, and social theory

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(Gottmann, J. 1977). It emphasizes the analysis of factors that influence the adoption of a capital role by metropolises and the evolving roles of capital cities(Hall, P. 1993). The Urban Infrastructure Development Group of the World Bank also addresses urban transition and the necessary conditions for achieving sustainable cities(Harrington, A. 2005). Furthermore, a book is referenced that offers an overview of key topics, theories, and discussions in contemporary social theory.

The text examines multiple research and studies conducted by Jackson, Zimmerman, Campbell, Mayer, Blyth, and Pain regarding the future of cities. These scholars analyze diverse elements including policy-making, economic dynamics, international relations, spatial factors, and urban governance to understand their impact on the development and functioning of cities. Bowles highlights the necessity for innovative approaches in town and city development and management. (Zimmermann, H. 2010), (Campbell, S. D. 2001), (Mayer, H. 2016), (Pain, K. *et al.,* 2008) and Bolz, U. *et al.,* 2005).

The notion of power in urban areas and its distribution among various components was initially brought forth by theorists like Lefebvre in 1968. Their discussions revolved around "The Right to the City," which emphasized the detrimental impact of capitalism on urban spaces (Massey, D. 1999) and (Philo, C. 1992). Richard Peet also delved into the examination of how political philosophies and spatial policies influence geographical transformations. Several theorists, including Foucault, have investigated the knowledge structures established by influential institutions such as education systems. Foucault's extensive body of work, spanning from 1969 to 2007, extensively analyzed the interconnectedness between knowledge, power, and its spatial consequences. (Peet, R. 2007), (Foucault, M. 1969), (Foucault, M. 1980), (Foucault, M. 1979), (Foucault, M. 1982), (Foucault, M. 1994) and (Foucault, M. 2007).

This text examines power dynamics in urban spaces, with a focus on the city, using a genealogical perspective. It investigates the formation, maintenance, and reduction of power in relation to the city's role and function. The genealogical approach analyzes historical discontinuities and discursive zones to decode and elucidate these power dynamics. Furthermore, it takes into account non-discursive factors that impact the relationship between elements of power in the city and the emergence of knowledge/power relations.

The relationship between knowledge, power, and space has been a topic of interest for geographers for a long time. This interest was reinvigorated by the theories put forth by Foucault and Gramsci. Foucault posits that space plays a crucial role in the exercise of power, and that knowledge and power are closely interconnected. Technological advancements have altered how those in positions of power can gather and disseminate information. The distance from the center of power is significant in determining the influence and credibility of a specific geographical area. Centers become focal points for truth, knowledge production, information control, and the enforcement of power (Gregory, D, Meusburger, P, and Suarsana, L. 2015).

The text explores the significance of cities as hubs for the convergence of resources, ideas, and aspirations. Moreover, it highlights the concept of knowledge as a form of power and explores the various ways in which knowledge management and power relations operate. The exercise of power within a city involves multiple institutions and individuals at different points in time. Additionally, the text references Foucault's viewpoint on the interplay between space and power, emphasizing how power shapes the evolution of cities.

Urban space and the role of cities can be comprehended by analyzing the social, economic, political, and ideological frameworks that have impacted the city throughout history. By acknowledging historical shifts and significant events, we can grasp the progression of cities and anticipate their potential changes. Investigating the prevailing discourses and their influence on the physical and socio-economic aspects of the city will facilitate a deeper understanding of its role. Utilizing the genealogy approach, which tracks the evolution of a phenomenon over time and scrutinizes power dynamics, allows for an analysis of how cities' roles have transformed based on past developments.

METHODOLOGY

In the academic context, the study of the genealogy of cities involves examining how power and knowledge have influenced their role throughout history. Researchers in this field use various methods, such as analyzing historical sources and conducting interviews with individuals who possess historical recollections when primary sources are not available. To analyze the past and present roles of cities, scholars employ data analysis techniques including genealogical analysis, historical analysis, and content analysis. These methods enable researchers to examine discourse areas, historical discontinuities, and the impact of prevailing discourses on urban space and power-knowledge relationships. Additionally, development documents and scientific research are valuable resources for analyzing the role of cities at different levels.

Mashhad, a city situated in the northeastern region of Iran, is home to a population of 3.5 million individuals. It holds the distinction of being the largest city in the eastern portion of the country and ranks as the second largest overall. Geographically, Mashhad is positioned within a plain that is encircled by mountains, resulting in a diverse climate. Notably, Mashhad has gained significant prominence as a revered destination for Shia pilgrims due to the presence of Imam Reza's tomb, attracting millions of visitors annually. Over time, the city has experienced simultaneous development and population growth; however, recent urban advancements have led to uneven patterns of expansion.

DISCUSSION

The text explores the relationship between cities and development in developing countries, with a specific focus on Iran. It highlights the influence of political economy and urbanization theories on this relationship. The text argues that urban systems and centers are shaped by the government's position in the global economic system. Additionally, it points out that the movement of capital from peripheral areas to central locations can contribute to underdevelopment in the periphery. When considering Mashhad, the text underscores the significance of analyzing its development through the lenses of "management-politics" and "tourism-pilgrimage". The research methodology involves identifying significant historical moments, examining discourses before and after these moments, and evaluating their impact on the city's accepted roles (Kechuyan, H., Zaeri, Q. 2009).

The text explores the significance of Mashhad in studying discourse and historical periods in Iran within an academic context. It provides an explanation of how discourse analysis is carried out at different levels, namely national, regional, and local. At the national level, the text examines the overall policies and future prospects of the country. At the regional level, it investigates essential documents and resources associated with regional development initiatives. Lastly, at the local level, it evaluates significant documents and projects

pertaining to urban development in Mashhad that have influenced its physical, economic, and social characteristics throughout history. The examination of academic documents and research on country planning has revealed that Mashhad holds a significant administrative and political position. It is acknowledged as a regional city and occasionally regarded as a city with national responsibilities. Although its economic, political, and cultural significance is widely recognized in various projects, its geopolitical importance is often overlooked. Table 1 provides a comprehensive list of the primary roles assigned to Mashhad in these plans.

Function	Planning level	Functional infiltration	Mashhad Administrative - Political Functional Scale
1. Important geopolitical function in Iran 2. Communication Center with neighboring regions and countries 3. Guiding and enhancing historical cultural and religious relations between nations and neighboring regions and countries 4. Directing and strengthening trade and economic relations between neighboring regions and countries	1. National Physical Plan 2. Land use plan 3. Iran's 2025 vision 4. Medium Term Development Plans of Iran 5. National Land Use Regulations	Geopolitical areas around the eastern region of Iran including: Caspian Sea, Central Asia, Iranian Plateau, Oman Sea and Indian Ocean	Transnational
1. National and religious unification and identification 2. Linking the eastern region of Iran with the national market 3. Participation in the national development process 4. Offering excellent public services, tourism and pilgrimage at national level 5. Participation in the process of political development	1. National Physical Plan 2. Land use plan 3. Iran's 2025 vision 4. Medium Term Development Plans of Iran 5. National Land Use Regulations	Iran	national
1. Physical-spatial and land-use equilibrium and development contagion at the level of Khorasan and Southeast region 2. Provision for the creation of a regional market 3. Improvement of human development indicators in Khorasan and south east region	1. Physical plan of Khorasan region 2. Physical Plan of the Southeast Region 3. Provincial Preparation Plans 4. Other regional projects	Khorasan region (North, South and Razavi) South East of Iran (Sistan & Baluchestan & Kerman)	regional Trans-regional
1. Extending the development to the entire Mashhad area and complex 2. Manage, organize integrated development management at Mashhad area and municipal complex 3. Help to promote human development indicators at Mashhad area and conurbation	1. Mashhad area program 2. Mashhad Urban Collection Program 3. Comprehensive Mashhad Metropolitan Programs	Mashhad metropolitan area Mashhad conurbation	Local

The development of cities is impacted by political decisions made by urban planners and policymakers, as well as power dynamics both within and outside of urban areas. These approaches have a significant influence on the economic and social structures of cities. The roles that cities play can be identified through various methods. Although economic factors are crucial, it is also important to take into account other geographical factors when examining cities. In contrast to traditional historical approaches, genealogy emphasizes the identification of gaps and disruptions in historical processes rather than a static essence (Zeimaran, M. 2003).

The text postulates that there are no immutable foundational principles and laws, and that the quest for regulations and significations in human phenomena is shaped by power and knowledge. The connection between knowledge and power is explored, with the proposition that a genealogist scholar can scrutinize concealed truths by investigating the mechanisms that shape and govern power. The significance of the urban setting in this scholarly milieu is also of particular concern to a genealogist.

The genealogy of the role of the city is an effective method in the academic context for comprehending the historical development of cities and their roles. Through this method, power relations and forms of knowledge within the city can be identified, as well as the historical origins of social relationships. Comparatively, this approach is more adept at searching, discovering, and describing these aspects when compared to alternative methodologies. To successfully employ this method, it is crucial to adopt an appropriate approach that avoids historicism and takes into account all factors that influence spatial relationships. Power and knowledge are pivotal components for comprehending the past, present, and future functions of cities in an academic context. The academic text explores the methods to enhance the dominant functions of a city through the utilization of power and knowledge tools. By analyzing historical records, research endeavors, and development strategies, one can identify the discourses of power and knowledge within the city. Subsequently, it is essential to recognize the potentials and infrastructure of the city and establish supplementary roles that can enhance the quality of life. This entails considering economic, social, and cultural dynamics in order to ensure sustainability. The objective is to broaden the scope of the city's functions in order to enhance its cultural and economic standing, as many cities currently grapple with power structures that result in social and economic issues. These circumstances significantly impact the overall atmosphere of cities, rendering them submissive.

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