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4 Visibility of Turkish amenities: immigrant integration and social cohesion in Amsterdam⁴

ABSTRACT This chapter examines social and spatial characteristics immigrants' commercial and communal amenities to understand the dynamics of their visibility on the street. It defines visibility as the observable physical features of immigrant amenities such as signs and practices, important for the integration of immigrant groups to the mainstream society. The research focuses on the visibility of Turkish immigrants in Amsterdam. For the social characteristics, it studies public and parochial realms that are established and maintained by these amenities. For spatial characteristics it examines these amenities at city level in terms of their location and at neighbourhood level in terms of their personalisation, permeability and robustness. The findings of this study indicate that visibility can be an operational concept to improve the amenities for the goals of integration.

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4.1 Introduction

Throughout history, immigrants have always played a significant role in shaping and appropriating parts of cities. Some of the oldest examples of this are the Jewish and Chinese neighbourhoods located in many of the major European cities such as London, Paris, and Amsterdam. However, it was after the 1960s that immigrants influenced and changed the cultural landscape of European cities the most. This was due to the arrival of migrant labour from Italy, Turkey, Greece, Morocco, Portugal, and Tunisia to northern European countries as a result of trade recruitment. The arrival of guest workers along with the migration from post-colonial countries around the 1970s was followed by migration from the cold war areas East Europe. This produced in a significant change in the demographic and spatial organization of major European cities (King and Lulle, 2016).

Since that period, immigrant integration has been a subject of policy concern in Western European countries, generally through policies that aim to enhance social mix and social cohesion. Immigrant integration can be understood as ‘the process of becoming accepted part of society’ (Penninx and Garcés-Masareñas, 2015:15). Social cohesion is understood as the ‘internal bonding’ of the society as a whole (Schuijt, 1997: 18), generally considered – in policy documents – as a remedy for the problems associated with neighbourhoods concentrating low-income and ethnic groups. ‘To enhance social cohesion (...) [and] commitment to effective integration of migrants in receiving societies should be strengthened’ (King and Lulle, 2016: 53). At neighbourhood level, attachment to it, and social networks are considered important elements of social cohesion (van Marissing et al., 2006).

Policy and academic attention towards the integration and social cohesion, of especially Muslim groups, has intensified and modified particularly after the 9/11 attacks in 2001 and urban clashes in the outskirts of some European cities. The mass arrival of Middle-Eastern refugees since 2015 has intensified these discussions even more. Despite the important policy efforts promoting immigrant integration and social cohesion, these goals are still a challenge for most Western European cities (King and Lulle, 2016).

As immigrants gradually settled in specific areas of European cities, they became increasingly visible on the streetscape through their shops, restaurants, cafés and religious places. These amenities, which have distinctive languages, signs and ways of street appropriation, created characteristic immigrant neighbourhoods, recognised as, for example, African, Turkish, Surinamese neighbourhoods, and many others.

The visibility of immigrant amenities in public space is shaped by their social and spatial characteristics. Social characteristics refer to the potential social interactions and associations that amenities are able to generate for enhancing social cohesion among immigrants themselves and between them and other cultural groups. Spatial characteristics refer to the features of the built environment in terms of location and physical setting, which can be analysed at city and neighbourhood levels.

Although there has been academic attention toward some aspects of the contribution of immigrant amenities to the integration of immigrants groups and social cohesion, especially in terms of the provision of jobs and their potential to improve their economic status (Kloosterman and van der Leun, 1999), the role of the social and spatial characteristics of immigrant amenities in these processes has not been sufficiently studied.

The main aim of this chapter is to examine how immigrant amenities may contribute to immigrant integration and social cohesion. It focuses on the social and spatial characteristics of Turkish commercial and communal amenities, which are studied through their visibility in streets of Amsterdam. The leading questions are: How do the social and spatial characteristics of Turkish amenities shape their visibility in the streets of Amsterdam, and how can these characteristics be improved towards the goals of immigrant integration and social cohesion? By answering these questions, the study aims to introduce visibility as a useful concept in the debate on immigrant integration and social cohesion.

Amsterdam is chosen for this study, because it accommodates many neighbourhoods characterized by immigrants' amenities, of which Turkish neighbourhoods are the most prominent (Iamsterdam, 2016). Since the 1990s, the political and economic circumstances have changed in the Netherlands, as in most West European countries. This has brought about the demise of left-wing governments and their multicultural policies, and the rise of right-wing governments, political parties and related policies, leading to drastic effects in immigrant neighbourhoods. Trends in the real-estate market and urban renewal have led to gentrification processes, with the resulting expulsion of immigrants to the outskirts.

The following section introduces the theoretical aspects of the main concepts related to visibility in public space and its relations with immigrant integration and social cohesion. A section explaining research approach and methodological approach follows this. The next section introduces the Turkish neighbourhoods in Amsterdam as well as their demographic and locational characteristics within the context of the social, economic and political change of the Netherlands. The following two sections analyse the social and spatial characteristics of Turkish related amenities. The last section presents the conclusions.

4.2 Visibility in public space, immigrant integration and social cohesion

Being visible in public space as a way of contributing to public life can be related to the rights of being in these streets, to use them in certain ways and to invest them with a sense of community, which is crucial for the settlement processes of immigrants (Sezer and Fernandez Maldonado, 2017). From this standpoint, immigrant amenities may play a vital role in the integration of immigrants and further processes of social cohesion.

There are different dimensions of the concept of integration (Ager and Strang, 2004) three of which are especially linked to the visibility of immigrant amenities in public space and which affect the social cohesion of immigrant communities with the hosting society. The first is spatial integration, which is highly significant for the sense of belonging. Spatial integration is considered the opposite of spatial segregation, which is measured by 'statistical units in which over or under-representation of a population category relative to another category determines the level of segregation' (Musterd and Ostendorp, 2009: 1519). It is often assumed that the residential segregation of vulnerable groups, such as immigrant and low-income groups has a negative effect on the life opportunities of these groups, due to their limited social contacts with other groups. The availability of, and the mechanisms to access to affordable housing are the main drivers of the formation of residential concentration areas (Musterd and Ostendorp, 2009).

The second dimension of the concept of integration is the social and cultural integration of immigrants, which is closely related to their social interaction. Studies in this area pay attention to relations of social inclusion or exclusion with the native society, participation in clubs and associations, immigrants' social ties, religiosity and identity (King and Lulle, 2016). These studies consider the built environment, mainly of neighbourhoods, as a container of social relations, without a specific attention being paid to the spatial qualities of the built environment.

The third is the political integration of immigrants, primarily associated with the rights of citizenship. This indicates 'to what extent are immigrants regarded as fully-fledged members of the political community' (Penninx and Garcés-Mascreñas, 2016: 14). This topic has been studied with a focus on the access of immigrants to housing, education, health system and participation in public and political institutions (King and Lulle, 2016). It is mostly analysed and measured through

statistical indicators of access to such services. This chapter takes the stance that taking visibility in the public space as a point of departure provides more robust empirical evidence about daily practices of immigrants than quantitative measurements of immigrants' housing, employment and education situation. Visibility can provide insights into immigrants' participatory practices of making public space (Hall, 2015), which is crucial for processes of immigrant integration and cohesion.

To sum, the social and spatial characteristics of public spaces such as streets, plazas and markets require special attention since they have a potential to support or diminish immigrant's integration and social cohesion among themselves and between other groups. Studies show that low-income households rely heavily on their neighbourhood for their social ties (van Marissing *et al.*, 2006). Such interactions promoting social cohesion occur at two levels: among immigrants of the same cultural background, and between them and other cultural groups.

4.2.1 **Visibility of immigrant amenities in the public space**

Immigrant amenities are a cultural manifestation of immigrant quarters. The shops with immigrant signs and products, culinary businesses from unfamiliar cuisines, religious places such as mosques, synagogues, and temples with special events characterise immigrant neighbourhoods. Their visible features are not limited to signs, language, or merchandises, but also include their related social and spatial manifestations in the city. Their visibility is an expression of cultural traits of immigrant groups in public spaces, more precisely at street level. In other words, these amenities offer the general public the possibility to observe and experience immigrant cultural expressions (Watson, 2006).

Social characteristics of the visibility of immigrant amenities

The visibility of immigrant amenities in public space has been associated with three different but inter-related issues: social interaction, sense of belonging and rights of citizenship. First, the visibility of immigrant amenities provides opportunities for immigrants and other groups to interact with each other. This is because visibility in public space promotes encounters between different city inhabitants and allows witnessing of one another's presence and activities (Watson, 2006; Janssens and Sezer, 2013a, 2013b). The different levels of social encounters occur in three types of urban realms: the public, the parochial and the private realms (Lofland, 1998).

Friendly recognition, parochial helpfulness, proactive intervention and embracing and contesting diversity are typical of the parochial realm (Kusenbach, 2006). These three realms are associated with different degrees of visibility in public space, in which the public and parochial realms are associated with visibility in public space, and the private realm is associated with invisibility (Brighenti, 2007).

Some observers argue that visibility is a key feature of public space, which can promote civility in the public realm in the sense of mutual respect and recognition among different urban groups without neglecting differences (Young, 1990). By promoting a distinctive public space, the visibility of immigrant amenities may increase the attractiveness of the street for visitors by providing enjoyment and the excitement of experiencing something new and unexpected; 'a different atmosphere and a different crowd of people' (Young, 1990: 239).

However, some types of amenities might also be associated with fear and may raise unease towards certain groups. Public unease for some of the communal amenities such as mosques and teahouses are examples of such situations in some European cities (Göle, 2011). This may be different for commercial amenities, which are generally more open for interaction with the general public (Aytar and Rath, 2012). Nevertheless, in either case, the encounters promoted by immigrant amenities might provide opportunities to overcome prejudices and help to learn how to live in a diverse city (Amin, 2008).

Second, the visibility of immigrant amenities creates an active and recognizable public space that contributes to immigrants' sense of feeling at home and belonging to the community (Oldenburg, 1999). Through the large variety of land uses, programmes, and types of businesses, as well as the variety of time schedules, streets uses, user behaviour, and active street frontages, these amenities shape a public space that helps to establish a community's identity (Bentley *et al.*, 1985). Communal places, such as mosques, synagogues, and others, which manifest the cultural differences of immigrant groups and their own symbols, signs and architectural styles, are significant for building social ties between people (Göle, 2011). Such communal places and small commercial businesses may also help to build 'a sense of communality among acquaintances and neighbours, who are involved in interpersonal networks that are located within communities' (Lofland, 1998:10), which characterises the parochial realm.

The concept of 'imagined city' (Anderson, 2006) is useful to understand the significant social role of such spaces for the social cohesion among immigrant groups.

‘Urban dwellers orient themselves by constructing an imagined city, and that city is located and continually reproduced in different ways through a wide range of common daily practices. It is through daily social practices that the city comes to be meaningful spatially, as a place of home, as a cluster of symbols, and as site for the reproduction of personal and group identities.’ (Shutt, 2015:117-118)

In this way, the visibility of immigrant amenities becomes a landmark for some groups by which they develop feelings that evoke attachment to such places and a sense of belonging (Çinar and Bender, 2007).

Third, the visibility of immigrant amenities in public space is also considered a form of expression of citizenship. It can be understood as immigrants claiming the rights to be a part of the city’s public life (Lefebvre, 1991; Nikšič and Sezer, 2017). Ordinary people insert their own practices and uses into the urban fabric and make them visible in public space. This is also ‘a mechanism by which urban dwellers assert their right to participate in society, and their struggles over the right to use public spaces take different forms’ (Loukaitou-Sideris and Ehrenfeucht, 2009: 7).

There might be conflicts and tensions between different groups claiming their rights to use and shape the same places. These conflicts may be between different population groups, or even between immigrant groups and planners, administrators and authorities trying to maintain a certain spatial order (Lefebvre, 1991). Communal amenities, as places of worship and gathering of immigrant communities, may raise stronger conflicts and contestation issues than commercial amenities (Göle, 2011). This suggests that being visible in public space is strongly related to practical and political issues (Zukin, 1995).

Spatial characteristics of the visibility of immigrant amenities

The spatial characteristics of immigrant amenities’ visibility can be analysed at city and neighbourhood levels. At city level, visibility is related to their spatial distribution; at neighbourhood level, visibility gives evidences of the users’ appropriation of the streets in which they are located. Appropriation is understood as the ways that the users of these amenities transform and personalise the built environment for their own needs.

The spatial distribution of immigrant amenities is correlated to the residential distribution of immigrant groups. This is because such amenities address the needs of the relevant immigrant groups and locate where those groups inhabit (Aldrich and Waldinger, 1990). However, the residential concentration of immigrants may change

due to housing policies, urban renewal policies, and real estate trends. Especially since the 1990s, there has been an increasing drive towards inner city development and transformation in European cities, which has led to the relocation of former residents to the outskirts and changes in the commercial activities to address the needs of the more affluent new residents (Zukin, 2012).

The public space of immigrant neighbourhoods, more precisely the streets, is the most obvious place to observe these changes at neighbourhood level. Commercial streets clustering immigrant amenities are directly influenced by the socio-economic and spatial transformation of the neighbourhood (Vaughan *et al.*, 2017). But non-commercial streets also accommodate immigrant amenities affected by neighbourhood transformation processes.

At neighbourhood level, the visibility of immigrant amenities may be analysed according to the observable spatial characteristics of these amenities. The urban design literature provides different criteria for analysing the spatial characteristics of the built environment. To analyse the responsiveness of physical environments to the needs of the users, Bentley *et al.*'s (1985) advanced seven criteria – permeability, variety, legibility, robustness, visual appropriateness, richness and personalisation.

For the purpose of this study, personalisation is considered the most important characteristic, alongside legibility and robustness. Personalisation has been understood as the way amenities customise their environment. Legibility is the condition by which people can understand their environment through the visual characteristics of the exterior and/or the interior of the amenities, which vary from amenity to amenity. Robustness is the condition by which amenities may stimulate new uses beyond the planned uses.

4.3 Methodological approach

The study collected data on the visibility of Turkish commercial and communal amenities in Amsterdam. For practical reasons, we called the study area Amsterdam, but it included Amsterdam Metropolitan region, which covered both the city centre and other areas such as Amstelveen and Zaandam. Amsterdam is a useful case study because almost half of the city population is of foreign origin. Turkish immigrants are one of the largest immigrant groups in the city, after Moroccan and Surinamese

groups, representing 5,5% of the almost 1 million inhabitants of the metropolis. Migrants with a Turkish background are considered to be poorly integrated in Dutch society, with low levels of social cohesion. This is related to their low education profile and high dependency on welfare benefits (Crul *et al.*, 2012), although they are also known by their entrepreneurship skills compared to other immigrant groups (Rath and Kloosterman, 2000).

The research was conducted in four phases. The first analysed the context regarding the main changes in residential concentration of Turkish immigrants in Amsterdam between 2000 and 2015. The second carried out an analysis of the social characteristics of amenities, focusing on the potential for sociability of communal and commercial amenities based on observations and unstructured interviews with visitors of these amenities. Interviews were framed as open-ended informal conversations including questions about the participants' personal background, daily practices and experiences in these amenities with Turkish and non-Turkish people. Special attention was given to ensure a good level of diversity of interviewees in terms of age and gender.

The third involved a study of the spatial characteristics of amenities at city scale. This involved mapping the streets in which communal and commercial immigrant amenities were distributed, building a typology of commercial streets in relation to their type of location, and type of user groups and spatial analysis of their characteristics at neighbourhood level, focusing on three criteria: personalisation, legibility, and robustness.

4.4 The socio-economic and policy context

4.4.1 Immigrant integration, social cohesion and urban renewal policies in the Netherlands

There is an implicit relation between urban renewal and immigrant integration policy, which is related to the changing context of the Dutch welfare system from a social democratic towards a neoliberal approach. This was most obvious since the 1990s. The residential concentration of immigrant groups was considered an obstacle for

their integration. Urban renewal intended to overcome this problem by promoting social mixing and social cohesion at neighbourhood level (Van Kempen and Bolt, 2009). The results of these interventions were more evident in the 2000s, most notably in Amsterdam, in the form of gentrification processes in central districts; and the displacement of immigrants to the outskirts.

4.4.2 Turkish neighbourhoods in Amsterdam

In Amsterdam, Turkish immigrants concentrated in two kinds of neighbourhoods: the affordable social housing estates in inner city areas or the post-war estates in the outskirts. The most recent changes in residential concentration of Turkish immigrants can be explained within the context of the general urban development trends of Amsterdam. Two important factors are salient. The first are the real estate trends related to housing which led to an increase of housing prices in inner city Amsterdam have vastly increased since the mid-1990s. The city has become highly attractive for tourists and young professionals greatly increasing the housing demand (Rath, 2007). The second are urban renewal policies, both at national and city level which aimed to reduce the residential concentration of low-income households in social housing areas by promoting social mixing and social cohesion (Van Kempen and Bolt, 2009). This has brought the displacement of vulnerable households towards the outskirts, a phenomenon known as 'state-driven gentrification' (Uitermark 2009).

Figure 4.1 shows the location of Turkish residential concentrations in 2000, 2007 and 2015, illustrating certain concentration trends in the inner city neighbourhoods where residential concentration has diminished, whereas in outskirts it has increased.

Recent demographic dynamics for Turkish immigrants show a steady increase of Turkish immigrants until 2007 and stability from then on (see Table 4-1). They now constitute 5.5 of the total population of Amsterdam.



FIG. 4.1 Residential concentration of Turkish immigrants in Amsterdam region in 2000, 2007 and 2015 (Source: Author's own elaboration with data from Regiomonitor Groot Amsterdam, 2017.)

TABLE 4.1 Turkish residents in Amsterdam 2000, 2007, 2015*

	Amsterdam Population	Amsterdam Population of Turkish origin	% of Amsterdam Population of Turkish origin
2000	858,587	39,486	4.6%
2007	884,472	49,007	5.5%
2015	973,815	53,948	5.5%

*data valid for the municipalities of Amsterdam and Zaanstad

(Source: author's elaboration with data from the Gemeente Amsterdam, 2000, 2007, 2015; Zaanstad in cijfers, 2000, 2007, 2015)

4.5 Social characteristics of Turkish amenities in Amsterdam

4.5.1 Commercial amenities

Turkish commercial amenities play a fundamental role to shape the public and parochial realms of Turkish immigrants. Turkish commercial amenities include daily food shops, eating and drinking places, service enterprises and other type of shops. These businesses offer opportunities for casual social encounters among Turkish immigrants and between them and other cultural groups, which may vary from casual contacts to commercial exchanges. These opportunities depend on the services and products offered by these amenities and their location.

Turkish food shops include bakeries, grocery stores, butchers, and supermarkets, which sell *halal* and Turkish products not usually available in other shops. They are often small-scale and low-skilled enterprises that depend on informal social networks among Turkish immigrants to start and sustain their businesses (Kloosterman and Rath 2010). Some Turkish women prepare home-made products, and sell them in these food shops. These amenities offer opportunities for spontaneous encounters, and long-lasting social interaction, establishing both a parochial and public realm that goes beyond the Turkish community; promoting informal chats among staff and clients, as well as among clients. Most clients are women shopping for daily food and socialising with neighbours, and sometimes prolonging the conversations at street level.

Turkish restaurants and cafés in Amsterdam offer a combination of a parochial and public realm. They generally offer specialised Turkish cuisine; home-made products and street food, in economical options for lunch and dinner. Turkish families go out for dinner and meet other families in these restaurants. Turkish women regularly organise tea gatherings and socialise in these cafés. They also attract clients from all Amsterdam, particularly young professionals and students. Non-Turkish groups come to these businesses and enjoy a different atmosphere and culinary experience. To widen their target group, Turkish restaurants may offer fusion cuisine. For example, most pizzerias in Amsterdam are Turkish-owned, and serve both Italian and Turkish cuisines. Their long working hours increase their attractiveness for some groups, especially youth, who use some of these cafés as meeting point.

Turkish service enterprises present a variety of urban realms. The first type of Turkish service enterprises – tailors, clothing and shoe repair, automobile repair, and hair salons – are also small-scale, labour-intensive and low-skilled enterprises. Turkish hair salons are interesting examples of creating both a public and parochial realm, not only among Turkish women but also non-Turkish customers. The regular visits and long stays in these salons promote informal conversations between staff and clients, and among clients, who would otherwise hardly socialise.

Further, there is another category of Turkish amenities, which sells furniture, household products, clothing, souvenirs, textiles, and music products. These amenities are part of the public realm by offering products for all groups of the society, unless they target specific interest group, such as Islamic clothing shops.

4.5.2 Communal amenities

Turkish communal amenities – including mosques, teahouses, and Turkish oriented organisations – play a vital role in forming the parochial realm of Turkish migrants by offering opportunities for social encounters.

Mosques are one of the most significant places where the parochial realm of Turkish immigrants in Amsterdam is established. They are a basis for informal interactions and connections about private and communal issues, due to the daily and regular visits to the mosques, which strengthen the sociability among its visitors.

The parochial realm established through mosques is almost exclusively for Turkish immigrants. Visitors are mostly Turkish immigrants, as other Muslim communities rarely use Turkish mosques. Mosques promote the communication among the

Turkish community, for example, with announcements for job seekers, vacancies, houses for rent, etc. (see Figure 4.2). In Amsterdam mosques are often differentiated from each other in terms of their religious and, sometimes, political views. Hence, they serve also visitors from other neighbourhoods who share the similar views.



FIG. 4.2 Announcements in a Turkish mosque in Amsterdam (Source:Photo:Sezer)

Mosques are gendered places, exclusively visited by men, establishing a parochial realm, which is also gendered. Women visit mosques only in special occasions; women and men use different doors to enter a mosque and sit in separate designated areas, so they do not meet each other and nor do they socialise.

In most cases, mosques cluster with teahouses, groceries, hair salons, and even, in some cases, billiard rooms. This promotes socialisation by prolonging visitors' contacts with their peers, strengthening the parochial realm with feelings of belonging.

Other significant communal amenities are Turkish teahouses, small cafés where Turkish men exclusively gather and drink non-alcoholic drinks. They also facilitate social gatherings where men chat, and exchange ideas,

political views and practical knowledge, enhancing the male parochial realm. In Amsterdam parochial realms in teahouses are exclusive, as they generally gather locals from similar social status, political views, education, income, and even city of origin (Veraart, 1987).

Turkish organisations exhibit another type of parochial realm, generally more open to non-Turkish groups. They can be religious organisations, more oriented towards women and children, generally located in a close proximity to mosques. They facilitate social interaction through special events and festivals that they organise, bringing Turkish and other groups together, and providing occasions for observing Turkish religious practices.

Secular organisations generally focus on language, health education, and women emancipation. Some others are sport organisations; giving training and organising sport competitions. Secular organisations are more able to facilitate regular social encounters between Turkish immigrants and other groups.

4.6 Spatial characteristics of Turkish amenities in Amsterdam

4.6.1 City level

This study counted 461 visibly Turkish amenities in Amsterdam Metropolitan region in 2007, in which approximately 95 per cent (400) were commercial and the remaining (61) were communal. Most commercial amenities were food shops (150), eating (128) and drinking places (46), followed by service enterprises and shops from other categories (76). Most communal amenities were Turkish-oriented organisations (35), teahouses (16) and mosques (10).

Communal and commercial amenities were widely distributed across the city. They were settled in three types of locations: main commercial streets; secondary commercial streets; and randomly distributed in the side streets and backstreets of the neighbourhood. These commercial streets could also be distinguished by the

type of user groups, local; citywide; or even touristic oriented. To distinguish this typological classification of the main and secondary commercial streets according to their target groups our analysis used Van Nes (2005) and Bruyns' (2011) studies on typology of commercial streets in Amsterdam. Table 4-2 shows the typology of streets and their city location.

TABLE 4.2 Typology of streets of commercial and communal amenities in Amsterdam

	Central districts		Outskirts	
	Main commercial street	Secondary commercial street	Main commercial street	Secondary commercial street
Locally-oriented	S1	S2	S7	S8
City-wide	S3	S4	S9	S10
Tourist-oriented	S5	S6	S11	S12

Source: Sezer.

Figure 4.3 shows the different types of streets in which commercial and communal amenities were clustered in 2007 in Amsterdam (see also Table 4-3). The study identified 19 main and secondary commercial streets, from which 12 are located in central districts as Oud West, Zuid and Oost. The most frequent types of streets are secondary commercial streets in central districts and main commercial streets in the outskirts. Central districts show a wider variety of street types than those in the outskirts, which are all oriented to local residents. In fact, the last four types (S9 - S12) in the outskirts did not appear, as only the more central ones cater the citywide economy.

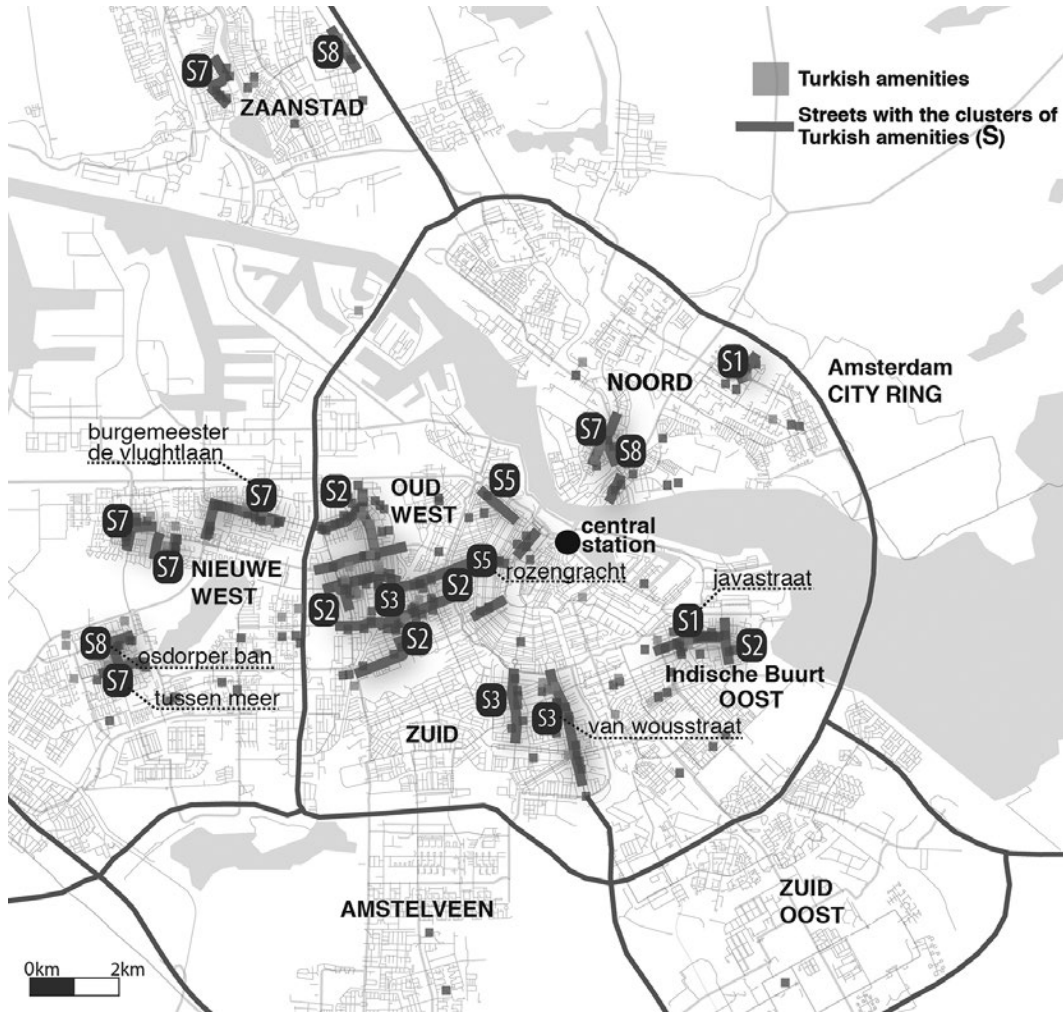


FIG. 4.3 Types of streets in which commercial and communal amenities were clustered in 2007 in Amsterdam. (Source: Authors' elaboration)

TABLE 4.3 Types of streets in which commercial and communal amenities were clustered in Amsterdam in 2007

	Central districts		Outskirts	
	Main commercial street	Secondary commercial street	Main commercial street	Secondary commercial street
Locally-oriented	2	5	5	2
City-wide	3	1	0	0
Tourist-oriented	1	0	0	0

Source: Sezer.

All commercial streets have daily food shops, eating and drinking places. Hair salons, clothing companies, and shoe repair shops are generally located at locally-oriented streets (S1, S2, S7, S8). Souvenir, music shops, some service amenities such as travelling agencies, and clothing, and furniture shops are on streets catering the citywide economy (S3, S4). Commercial amenities that are dispersed generally belong to the service sector, such as clothing and car repair shops, but also some eating places such as snack bars.

Turkish communal amenities are mostly located on non-commercial streets. However, there are exceptions such as: Fatih Mosque located on a touristic main shopping street (S3: Rozengracht) and teahouses located on a local main shopping street (S1: Javastraat). Communal amenities mostly cluster around mosques, teahouses and organisations, and may also include commercial amenities such as grocery stores and eating places.

Most streets with clusters of Turkish commercial amenities located outside of the city ring are also characterised by the residential concentration of Turkish immigrants; however, unlike inner-city districts, these concentrations have been intensified from the 2000s (van Amersfoort and Cortie, 2009). The street types S7 and S8 in Nieuwe West are streets developed in the post-war period designed with modernist view with wide streets. These streets are local in character, catering to the needs of the residents of their neighbourhoods (van Nes, 2005).

Turkish commercial amenities located in these streets show differences: in S7 (Burgemeester de Vlugtlaan) they are mainly daily food shops, but also large furniture shops and restaurants. Turkish commercial amenities in another S7 (Tussen Meer) are eating and drinking places, or night shops. The secondary shopping street S8 (Osdorper Ban) close to S7, there are a few shops specialising in textile and household products. The commercial amenities located outside of the commercial streets are large-scale Turkish supermarkets.

Communal amenities located outside of the city ring of Amsterdam, are mostly located in backstreets adjacent to the commercial streets, or in quiet residential areas. Similar to the communal amenities in the inner city, these amenities mostly cluster around mosques, teahouses and organisations.

4.6.2 Neighbourhood level

This sub-section presents an analysis of three spatial characteristics – personalisation; legibility (of the façade and the interior); and robustness – of six different types of Turkish amenities in Burgemeester de Vlugtlaan, located in the western suburbs.

Commercial amenities

As Figure 4.4 shows, almost all commercial amenities have personalised their façades and interiors. They have Turkish names written on large name boards, colourful window displays with a variety of Turkish products and, in some cases, advertisements of events, such as concerts by Turkish singers. Remarkably, some eating places in the inner city generally mix their Turkish names and cuisine with Greek, Italian, or Moroccan names and cuisines. This Turkish-South European ‘fusion’ cuisine may indicate the development of hybrid identities, a positive sign of social integration.

Along with the exterior signs and types of products, their entrances and –in some cases- interiors have a clear legibility, suggesting their function. Additionally, these amenities can be considered robust, as they stimulate a large variety of unplanned street uses, influenced by their opening hours. For example, during the day, Turkish women gather in front of Turkish food shops. During evenings, Turkish men, especially youngsters, gather around night shops, cafés and restaurants. The availability of sitting furniture and the wide sidewalks promotes these gatherings. Similarly, these gatherings are also promoted by some service enterprises – such as hair salons – that are open late or during the weekend.

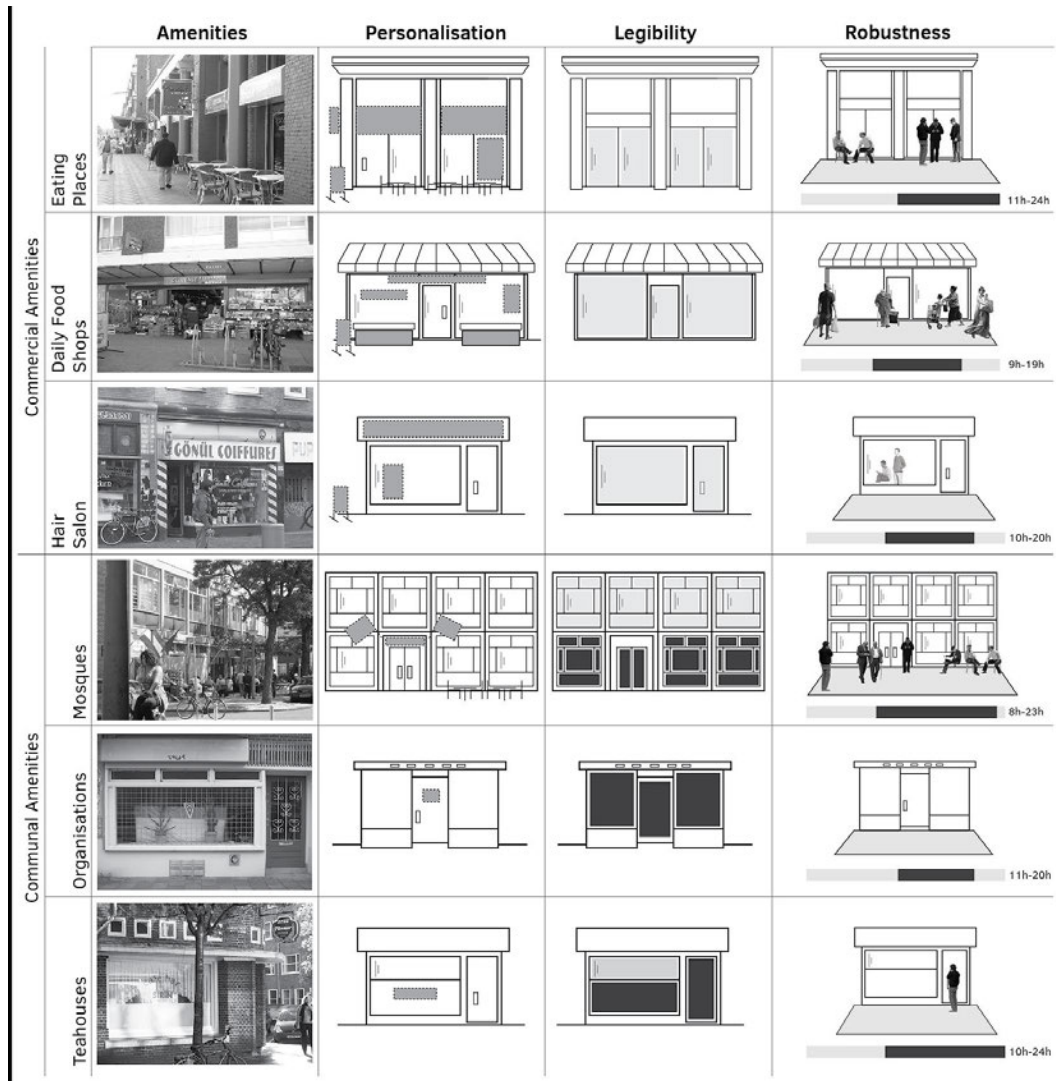


FIG. 4.4 Neighbourhood level analysis of Turkish amenities in terms of their personalisation, permeability and robustness at street level. (Source: Sezer)

Communal amenities

The bottom types of Figure 4.4 present the spatial characteristics of communal amenities in Burgemeester de Vlughtlaan. In Amsterdam, most mosques, organisations and teahouses are not easily noticeable at street level, therefore have little legibility. They often lack name boards, clear signs, or visually permeable facades and they do not suggest their function.

Among the various communal amenities, the mosques are the most interesting, due to their differences in terms of personalisation, as shown in Figure 4.5. In central districts, mosques were very often converted buildings without features of Islamic architecture, such as minarets, or other Islamic signs and symbols. In the outskirts, however, they are more noticeable and legible, and occupy larger areas, extending their activities to the street. They also have minarets, large Islamic symbols, or flags and name boards. In both cases, due to the intimate nature of praying practices, the mosques façades do not allow visual permeability of the interior of the building.

The praying activities of mosques, dominated by men, in prescribed times of the day, promote robustness at street level, due to specific and rhythmic street uses, such as gathering and chatting. Almost all the mosques in Amsterdam have adjacent amenities, such as Turkish teahouses and religious organisations that prolong the street use the whole day. The events organised by mosques or associated organisations, such as street festivals in religious days, stimulate additional planned and unplanned uses in the streets or neighbourhood parks by Turkish and other cultural groups, promoting social cohesion.



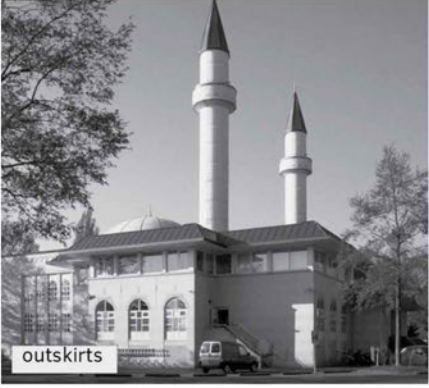
Mosque	Personalisation	
 <p>central district</p>	<p>unrecognisable entrance</p>	<p>unnoticeable islamic architectural elements</p>
	<p>architecture hides mosque function</p>	<p>short-term gatherings in the building</p>
 <p>city edge</p>	<p>recognisable entrance</p>	<p>unnoticeable islamic architectural elements</p>
	<p>architecture does not reflect mosque function</p>	<p>long-term gatherings in and around the building</p>
 <p>outskirts</p>	<p>recognizable, processional entrance</p>	<p>distinctive islamic architectural elements</p>
	<p>architecture clearly expresses mosque function</p>	<p>long-term gatherings in the building</p>

FIG. 4.5 Mosques in three different locations in Amsterdam and their personalisation at street level. (Source: Sezer)

Secular organisations have more noticeable names, and window displays with their activities and events. During the public events that they organise – demonstrations, festivals –they stimulate street use, or in some cases, in parks and squares. In doing so, they have a higher level of personalisation, legibility and robustness than religious organisations.

Teahouses present an intermediate level of personalisation, legibility and robustness. Although they generally block the inside view at street level with curtains, or frosted glass windows, some of them extend the tables and chairs to the street, giving them a more open appearance. They are generally recognisable by their names, generally referring to Turkish places.

4.7 Conclusion and recommendations

This study brought new insights about the role of Turkish amenities in Amsterdam, especially commercial amenities, not only to promote the integration of Turkish immigrants into mainstream society but also to enhance the social cohesion both among themselves and between other cultural groups. Although recent urban renewal trends have been displacing immigrants from the central districts to the outskirts, most of Turkish amenities are still located in streets of the central districts of Amsterdam. This represents a significant transformation in the situation of these amenities, which in many cases has negative effects on their visibility, and consequently in their ability to promote integration and social cohesion.

The social and spatial characteristics of Turkish amenities shape differently their visibility in streets of Amsterdam. First, there are clear differences between commercial and communal amenities in terms of their abilities to promote social encounters and interactions among Turkish community and between Turkish and other groups. Commercial amenities present a wide variety of encounters and interactions, but this is very limited for the communal amenities, which mainly target Turkish groups. These social characteristics are also reflected by their spatial characteristics. Commercial amenities are clustered on main and secondary commercial streets in which they transform public space through the personalisation, legibility and robustness. Communal amenities are located in quiet neighbourhood streets and their visibility at neighbourhood level is often very limited, though some differences were identified in central and outer districts.

Recent studies on gentrification in Amsterdam suggest that the current trends of residential gentrification go hand-in-hand with commercial gentrification (Sezer and Fernández-Maldonado, 2017), which results in the displacement of long established businesses.

The findings of the analysis of the social and spatial characteristics indicate that promoting both public and parochial realms around the Turkish amenities can be useful for achieving the goals of immigrant integration and social cohesion. Despite the recent urban renewal trends in Amsterdam, which have changed neighbourhood demographic profiles, the presence of Turkish amenities at street level allow these groups to manifest their cultural identity and presence in the city. City government, urban design and urban planning professionals should be informed and take this into account in city development policies and strategies. This is especially relevant in the case of national urban renewal policies and local city strategies, which have a high impact in neighbourhood transformation processes.

