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URBAN BOUNDARIES AND ALTERNATIVE SPACES

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by

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Abstract

For the past century, Iran has been characterized by an intense social polarization: on the one hand, those who claim a traditional, “Islamic” lifestyle, on the other those who champion a modernization akin to westernization. This paper examines how the two forces have played out in shaping the physical spaces of the capital city, Tehran.

The urban transformation of Tehran initiated in 1934 aimed, among other things, to restrict the cultural activities and public life of a traditional urban class in favor of a western-oriented elite. The Iranian revolution of 1979 attempted the reverse: with similar procedures but with different outlooks, the revolution reinserted traditional culture into the public sphere and marginalized non-traditional subcultures. Today, a wide gap can be observed in Iran between government-sponsored socio-cultural values and those of more liberal social groups. Both after 1934 and again after 1979, particular urban settings have played a key role in the form of “alternative spaces” that enabled the marginalized social group to preserve the vitality of their lifestyle.

Using a case-study approach, this thesis examines the ways specific aspects of urban morphology have contributed to the formation of these alternative urban spaces. Through a parallel analysis of Tehran’s morphological and social transformations, this study posits that urban boundaries shaped by physical structures have been a significant factor in the formation of these alternative social spaces. The thesis focuses on the Grand Bazaar of Tehran as the most significant alternative space for the traditional class in pre-revolutionary Iran, and Ekbatan housing estate as a major example of alternative space in the post-revolutionary era. The outcomes of this research shed light on the interrelationship of physical and socio-cultural landscapes in socially contested cities.

Key words: Iran; Public Spaces; Social Transformations; Bazaar; Ekbatan
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Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to explore urban boundaries in contemporary Tehran from a socio-spatial point of view and to thereby offer a consideration of the conflicting relationship between social, political and economical power and public spaces.

The focus is the process of spatial segregation and social differentiation in two distinct historical and socio-spatial conditions: the Grand Bazaar (market) of Tehran during the Pahlavi era and the shahrak-e-Ekbatan (Ekbatan Residential Complex) in the years following the 1979 revolution.

The central argument is that when certain urban boundaries are spatially segregated from rest of the urban fabric the top-down (hierarchical) power structure that controls the city is blocked such that a different socio-cultural landscape can emerge. Despite significant variations in their social and functional nature, such urban zones become the spatial manifestation of the socio-economic dualities present in society.

Tehran experienced major changes in the last century. The city underwent radical physical modifications in the 1920s and 1930s and profound shift in socio-cultural policies wrought by the revolution of 1979. The major political, cultural, and economic reformations that began in 1925 under Reza Pahlavi, the Shah of Iran, had a major impact on the socio-spatial condition of cities. Specifically, the Shah’s urban transformation of Tehran initiated in 1934 aimed, among other things, to restrict the cultural activities and public life of the traditional urban class in favor of a Western-oriented elite. Consequently, a wide gap emerged between
government-sponsored socio-cultural values and those of more conservative-traditional social
groups. Through a process of modernization in Tehran, a cultural and economic system was
superimposed on society whereby traditional institutions saw a decline in their long-held so-
cial and cultural power and were gradually marginalized. Institutional secularization, cultural
Westernization and the changing status of women during this process of modernization were
accompanied by a structural transformation in Tehran, which began in 1937 with destroying
defensive walls around Tehran. Further, the oil boom of the 1960s accelerated the transfor-
mation of Tehran from a mid-scale city to a metropolitan. In fact, Tehran became the coun-
try’s unrivaled economic, industrial, cultural, and bureaucratic center. However, as a result of
this transformation, the city became polarized in terms of old and new: its old urban fabric
became segregated from the new developments and thereby marginalized. Spatial segrega-
tion, among other reasons, brought with it a decline in the cultural and economic significance
of traditional society. Yet, paradoxically, spatial segregation also functioned as a constructive
tool by preserving the city’s socio-cultural structures from modernization. The bazaar, the
most powerful public structure in traditional society, found a pivotal new role as a protective
shell for the cultural, religious, and economical institutions of traditional society.

The trend toward the urban expansion and transformation of Tehran continued in more or less
the same vein after the revolution of 1979 however the ideological basis of the revolution
required a new social and cultural framework to be implemented in the city’s public spaces.
Therefore, any manifestations of a Western-oriented lifestyle were limited in public spaces.
The new emphasis on traditional values brought with it many strictly enforced restrictions on
how people could behave and present themselves in public such as control over the dressing
style and relationships between men and women. Thus, private spaces became a realm of rel-
ative freedom. In the second decade after the revolution, however, some of the limitations in force in regard to public spaces started to lift. And, through this process, a new type of public space emerged—one in which people had license to behave with a higher degree of freedom. These “alternative spaces” were most often privately owned areas open to the public, including shopping centers, art galleries, cultural centers, coffee shops, and restaurants, where limited control was exercised over people’s activities, behavior, and appearance. In this condition, the residential complexes developed during the construction boom of 1970s shaped alternative spaces in a considerably larger scale. Through their segregation from the urban fabric, these residential complexes constituted semi-private zones with limited public access in which the top-down controlling power was absent.

Several studies in the social sciences, arts, and literature focus on the spatial conflicts and territorialization of public spaces in both the pre-revolutionary and post-revolutionary periods in Tehran. And, in a number of these studies, the central concern is the socio-economic processes that resulted in the interiorization of public activities and manifestations of resistance against external forces in public spaces.

Further, a number of studies consider the socio-spatial processes in the relationship between a normalizing political and social power and urban settings. For example, in *Communication in the Iranian revolution* (1979), Hamid Mowlana explores the mechanisms whereby the in the lack of access to TV, radio, newspapers and magazines, bazaar acted as an alternative media for the traditional opposition forces in the revolution of 1979. In his detailed analysis of Tehran’s bazaar culture, Arang Keshavarzian investigated the interrelationship between the spatial structure of the bazaar and the organizational hierarchy of the merchants in bazaar
Amir-Ebrahimi focused on the processes through which formerly public activities moved to enclosed and private spaces in the post-revolutionary context (2007). Her work also contributes to our understanding of the mechanisms of control in Iranian urban spaces. Nazgol Bagheri’s work focuses on the transitive appearance and behaviors of Iranian women in a range of public spaces as an everyday manifestation of control (Bagheri, 2013).

The present study contributes to this body of work by focusing on the socio-spatial processes in the city that result in the formation of alternative spaces. This condition of alternative spaces, which conflicts with the general condition of the city, has been studied based on a parallel study of the morphological, social, and cultural transformations of Tehran since the 1920s. Through a consideration of Tehran’s bazaars and shahrak-e-Ekbatan, the focus of this thesis is to identify and offer a discussion of the socio-spatial attributes in urban settings that contributed to the formation of Tehran distinct socio-cultural landscapes in the presence of a normalizing power.

In the present study, historical data including maps were used as the basis for studying the pre-revolutionary bazaar and in the case of shahrak-e-Ekbatan, the study was mostly based on fieldwork that was conducted in June and July 2013. On-site observation included mapping the activities, behaviors, appearance, and demographic specifications of user groups. The researcher conducted in-depth interviews with residents shaped the main theme of the study, which related to the social and spatial mechanisms underlying the bazaar’s functioning. Through the interview format, the researcher collected a range of data including information pertaining to the residents’ feelings about certain spaces and other user groups to their social relationships and the activities they engaged in. A questionnaire was designed and used
to uncover the residents’ attitudes toward other residents and their relationships with public space. And, this study also includes a spatial analysis and simulation techniques to enrich the field’s understanding of the spatial structure of shahrak-e-Ekbatan.

With an emphasis on the functional and spatial centrality of the bazaar as the center of public life, Chapter 1 provides an understanding of the private and public realms of life in Iranian cities including Tehran before the beginning of industrialization in Iran in the 1920s. Chapter 2 investigates the socio-spatial transformation of Tehran both in the first (1890) and second (1937) phase of transformation. The morphological transformation of Tehran that initiated in 1937 and the resulting marginalization of traditional society during this time is the focal point of this chapter, which also offers an account of the ambitious vision held out for Tehran’s future in the wake of the oil boom of the 1960s. Chapters 3 and 4 explore the distinct mechanisms that led to spatial segregation in the city of Tehran and to the formation of alternative/alternative spaces in two contradicting conditions: one during the modernization of Pahlavi and second during the cultural traditionalization during the post-revolutionary era. In Chapter 3, a consideration of socio-economic factors is offered with a focus on the transformational processes that resulted in the segregation/differentiation of the Grand Bazaar of Tehran as the resisting core of traditional society during the period of radical modernization. Finally, Chapter 4 investigates the interrelationship between the socio-cultural landscape of Ekbatan and its physical condition in the city of Tehran.
Chapter 1. The Development of Tehran

Tehran’s social, political, cultural, and urban landscapes underwent rapid transformations during the 20th century—transformations that also changed the face of Iran’s cities more generally. Analyzing the challenges that Tehran and other Iranian cities faced as a result of these transformational processes requires an understanding of the socio-spatial dimensions of the nation’s pre-industrial cities. The spatial structure of Iranian cities before their modernization and indeed after reflects society’s changing attitude toward the public and private realms of life.

The spatial segregation and zoning of Iranian cities were founded on and perpetuated a clear distinction between the public and private realms of life. Further, as an effective tool for controlling public spaces, spatial segregation responded to the demand for surveillance in public spaces. Spatial barriers can be recognized at different scales from the scale of a single-family house to that of an entire city.

Before the industrialization of Iranian cities that generally started in 1920s and 1930s, central to the urban fabric of Iranian cities was a continuous structure shaped by courtyard houses. The cities consisted of a “nested structure of private domestic spaces,” whereas the houses were “segregated and private spaces” (Bianco, 2000). Overall, the cities featured narrow streets in a zigzag formation surrounded by walls without openings surrounding the houses (Benevolo, 1980). The characteristically narrow streets penetrating this monolithic urban fabric did not offer a setting for public activities. In fact, the streets did not function
either as public spaces or as visual connectors between the buildings. The social life and public functions of the city were concentrated in certain areas—and in the bazaar in particular.

In this chapter, the cultural, social, economic, and spatial factors driving the formation of the bazaar as the public urban core of the city will be discussed. A consideration of public–private relations, the social structure of traditional Iranian society, and the segregated zones of the city as the embodiment of this social structure will be offered.

1.1. The Private Realm: The Central Role of the Family

As the central social unit of traditional Iranian society, the family has a determining role in the nature of Iran’s social structure more generally. Traditionally, social life was shaped around extended family and kinship relationships. Consisting of grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins all living in the same house, the extended family was “an autonomous unit of production and consumption … [which] rigorously preserved its belief in the hierarchy, unity, and cohesiveness of the domestic group” (Nassehi-Behnam, 1985).

Neighborhoods also provided security and support based on kinship relationships and/or the solidarity of groups defined by members who shared a religion, ethnicity, and/or profession (Kheirabadi 2000). However, the family served as the dominant social structure such that it defined the personal and social lives of individuals.

The concept of the internal environment of the family as the source of stability and support and of the external environment beyond the family as a source of instability and danger shaped a controlled and limited relationship between public and private life (Pourahmad & Mousavi, 2011).
The central structure of the family brought with it a demand for privacy, reflected in the form of the traditional Iranian house whereby a clear distinction is constructed between the public and private realms. Traditional Iranian houses are entirely open to a central courtyard and usually with no or very few openings to the streets. Thus, the internal space of the house is disconnected from the surrounding environment—both spatially and visually (Figures 1 and 2).

The courtyard-based construction merely offers a separating blank wall between the house and the city with just a few openings to the city such that a strong line demarcates where the internal environment of house (family) gives way to the external environment of the city (society).

It should be noted, too, that there are public (andaluni) and private zones (biruni) inside the house. The andaruni sections are restricted to family members such that women are not ex-
pected to wear the *hijab* here, whereas the *biruni* sections are shared with guests so that women are expected to wear the *hijab* in these parts of the house.

### 1.2. The Public Realm

Urban social life is based on family and kinship relationships; however, various forms of social life developed across Iran’s neighborhood and guild networks (Adelkhah 2000). Through social control, public activities, behaviors, and appearance were strictly maintained in accord with social norms in public spaces.

Public activities were gender-divided and public spaces male-dominated. The *hijab* acted as a physical barrier to women’s engagement in public spaces. Some spaces such as the gymnasi-um (*zurkhane*) and the teahouse (*ghahvekhane*) were the exclusive province of men. And, in regard to religious ceremonies, women could participate as audience members in a separate room of a mosque such as a *tekye* or a *hussainia*, whereby women and men would pray simultaneously but separately. Further, the public bath that was located inside the bazaar was the only public space that was exclusively reserved for women to use— but only at certain times.

Overall, public activities were generally characterized by religious themes and held in highly controlled gender-divided spaces. Official prayer sessions held by groups(*namaz-e-jamaat*), religious theater (*ta’zieh*), mourning for a religious figure (*he’yat*) and a group read-

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1 This is an Islamic law that requires women to cover their bodies and hair in front of men except those who are members of their immediate families.

2 A *tekye* is a place where Shias gather to mourn the killing of Husain bin Ali, one of the prominent religious figures of Shia.

3 A *hussainia* is a congregation hall for Shia commemoration ceremonies.
ing religious texts (jalaseh) were some important forms of social life with a religious component (Adelkhah, 2000).

1.2.1. Bazaar: The Main Public Space in the City

The traditional market (bazaar) was the main arena for the extra-familial social life, public life, and urban activities of the city (Ashraf, 1988). In the hot, dry climate of central Iran, the bazaar provided a shelter for all the citizens and a safe realm with a high degree of social surveillance. Whereas the streets were almost free of activity, the bazaar was the place for people to shop, spend time with friends, and exchange information (Figure 3).

The bazaar is an immense structure that offers a variety of commercial spaces and public buildings. Usually structured around a number of main covered linear streets (raste), the bazaar includes commercial typologies such as enclosed courtyards (sara), small squares (timche), and crossroads (charsoo). Providing access to major public buildings in-
cluding mosques, public baths, cafés and gymnasiums, the bazaar played a significant urban role in the spatial structure of cities.

The bazaar incorporates many of the characteristics of the preindustrial city, as described by Lofland (1973). First, the bazaar includes a variety of commercial, recreational (ghahvekhane and zurkhane) and religious/cultural (mosques, hussainia, tekye, etc.) facilities. The bazaar’s public spaces were also used for a range of purposes, whether as a forum for making announcements of interest to the community, a place to punish criminals, or as a center for religious ceremonies. Thus, the bazaar functioned as a multi- and mixed-use space. Second, the heterogenous socio-cultural landscape of the bazaar was made up people from a variety of social classes and ethnicities.

1.2.2. The Grand Bazaar of Tehran

Tehran’s bazaar dates back to the 16th century. However, the structure that we recognize today as the city’s grand bazaar was built during the expansion of Tehran in the 19th century. In keeping with
the set-up of other Iranian cities, most of Tehran’s major mosques, public baths, teahouses, and gymnasiums were located either inside or near the bazaar as the core of the city. Adjacent to the bazaar, the Shah Mosque and the Friday Mosque shaped the religious core of the city. The bazaar was a covered structure possessing all the original components of an Iranian bazaar including the main streets, the crossroads, and the square (Figures 4 and 5). Tehran’s bazaar originally consisted of only two crossroads, but gradually expanded to become the largest bazaar in Iran.

1.2.3. The Bazaar and the City

The bazaar is a pivotal point in the urban structure of most Iranian cities. The pre-industrial cities of Iran usually consisted of defensive walls with a number of gates connected to the main streets of the city. The citadel (arg), the government center of each city, is usually separated by walls from rest of the city. The bazaar is usually an extension of significant streets in the city (Figure 6).

Before the urban transformation of the late 19th century, the structure of Tehran and its bazaar was comparable to that of other traditional Iranian cities. Tehran was a city surrounded by defensive walls, and its bazaar crossed through the residential neighborhoods connecting the southern gate to the arg (citadel) located in the

Figure 6 Map of Tehran and the Old Bazaar in 1859; Arrows depict the gates. Bazaar connects the main streets that are connected to Tehran’s gates Source: Author based on the Map of Tehran in 1859
Tehran also featured multi-purpose urban squares that were used for a variety of activities including trading, political announcements, public execution, social meetings, and religious ceremonies (Mirgholami & Siddh Sintusingha, 2012). The central location of the bazaar in the Iranian city was a determining factor in the bazaar’s role as the center of social activity. The bazaar connected different segments of the city through its linear structure. Not surprisingly, Iranian’s bazaars were recognized as the core of city life. Although the streets running through the bazaar constituted a continuation of the urban street network, the bazaar shaped a different world through its spatial and non-spatial elements. Each bazaar has a number of access points, usually gates that provide a clear spatial barrier between the city and the streets within the bazaar (Figure 8). These gates were locked during the night and during attacks on the city. A hierarchical structure among the gates is readily discernible: the main gates connect the bazaar to major urban areas, and subsidiary gates connect the local streets to the bazaar. Passing through these thresholds, people move from one world to another: from an open street to a covered space where a variety activities is offered, from an unpaved street to a

Figure 7 Drawing of bazaar of Tehran, Shops without vitrine in close encounter between costumers and shopkeepers Available at http://tehranbazaar.com/calendar/calendar.htm accessed on May 6 2014
carefully paved street, from blank walls to diverse and exotic shops, from silence to a crowd of people, including shoppers, merchants, and artisans at work. This threshold can accurately be described in Bourdieu’s words as the point where the “world is reversed” (Bourdieu, 1970).

1.2.4. Controlling the Bazaar

Iranian bazaars were usually built by “state authorities” or “wealthy individuals” (Edgu et al., 2012). Tehran’s bazaar was built under the sponsorship of Shah Tahmasb (Mazumdar, 2000). The hofreh (shops) were owned privately by merchants, whereas the raste (main streets in the bazaar) and other public spaces in the bazaar were controlled by the state. As a unit within the state’s police force, the sheriff of the marketplace (Darooghe-he-bazaar) was responsible for security at the bazaar and for controlling trade (Kianfar, 2010). Controlling public ethics including exercising surveillance over tramps, prostitutes, and drunken people was another responsibility of the sheriff (Kianfar, 2010).

At the rule time of Naser al-Din Shah (1848-1896), wealth generated by export–import business activities enabled the merchant class to buy the royal family’s lands and gradually became landowners—a phenomenon that changed the balance of power in favor of the bazaari’s (Hanachi, 2011). With their increasing power, the bazaaris’ control over the

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Figure 8 Main entrances to Grand Bazaar of Tehran. Available at http://region12.tehran.ir/Portals/0/image/1389/313/C1-1.jpg accessed on May 6, 2014

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4 bazaari is a general term used to describe anyone who is working inside the bazaar and is engaged in its business.
commercial system of the bazaar and over the bazaar as a spatial structure grew likewise.

Over time, the bazaaris created permanent bonds within their networks and developed a strong knowledge of the bazaar as an urban structure. The social force resulting from these networks is a determining factor in the socio-cultural landscape of bazaar. Through their daily work at the center of this space, the bazaaris have complete control over the activities that take place there.

A citizen who enters the bazaar becomes a customer. Thus, to pass through the gates of the bazaar is to partake in a journey through the city: moving from the public streets to a semi-privately controlled urban structure. In this sense, the bazaar reveals its contradictory nature: it is the most sociable and the most integrated part of the city, and at the same time it is protected by gates and controlled privately by the bazaaris and the state.

The bazaar is an enclosed space with narrow proportions. The streets, the main commercial element of the bazaar, are a covered linear space of 4 to 8 meters wide. The shops arranged along this axis are located at a higher level than the streets are (Figure 9). The shops do not have storefronts. Instead, the shopkeepers present their goods while seating or standing in front of their shops close to the streets. The shops are considered private places; therefore, the customers are not allowed to enter them. Thus, all trade takes places along the streets.

As they are generally standing in front of their stores, the bazaaris are in constant visual and verbal interaction with pedestrians crossing the streets. Also, they provide a more or less constant social surveillance over what people are doing inside the bazaar. At any given time,
several bazaaris are observing the pedestrians as they make their way along the streets (Figure 9). The permanent and unofficial nature of the bazaaris’ surveillance over the public spaces in the bazaar thus functions as a passive control system.

1.2.5. Sources of Power: The Bazaar–Mosque Alliance

The clerics (ulama) have always constituted a significant social power in Iranian society. Through the juxtaposition of the bazaar and the religious centers, the bazaaris and clerics act in concert in regard to exercising social power. Since its early days, Islam has supported merchants and encouraged the bazaar as a place for social engagement (Ashraf, 1988). Aware of the clergy’s resistance to the dominant power of the government, the bazaaris supported the mosques by paying their religious tax the clergy and by funding religious institutions. The social power of the clerics-bazaaris is reflected in their control over the mosque and the bazaar as the most significant public spaces in the city (Revault 1983). The controlled public space provided in this way arose from the demands of conservative society, which thereby made the alliance between the mosque and the bazaar possible.

Religious activities are associated with the physical structures of mosques and other religious spaces, which are considered sacred. The religious nature of the rituals and ceremonies held in the bazaar and bazaar’s peripheral structures mean that this space has a symbolic importance.
The religious theme of activities is a determining factor in the socio-cultural environment of bazaar inasmuch as the bazaar is occasionally used for rituals and other religious activities (Figure 10). Even today, the bazaar serves as a major center for rituals. For example, shops are closed during the religious holidays and the bazaar is decorated to reflect the religious events (Foroutan & Sanatgar Kakhakei, 2008). The bazaar transforms from a shopping center into a place to mourn religious figures (azadari) or to celebrate religious festivals (eid) (Foroutan & Sanatgar Kakhakei, 2008).

1.3. Summary

The structure of the pre-industrial cities in Iran was based on entrenched social hierarchies. In an overarching way, the strict separation of the public and private realms of life shaped clear socio-spatial boundaries in the cities. These boundaries ranged from the separation between the public and private spaces within a single house to the segregation of public and private functions throughout the entire city. Thus, clear boundaries between public activities (concentrated in the central market) and the private realm (residential neighborhoods) of each city including Tehran were apparent. As the central urban structure, the bazaar functioned as the defining public realm of city life. The segregated and privately owned public space of the
bazaar shaped a system of control over the public activities in the city. A significant proportion of the public spaces in the cities were under the control of the bazaaris (i.e., the economic power of the city), the state (i.e., the political power) and the clerics (i.e., the religious power). The spatial structure of the bazaar contributed to the controllability of these spaces by providing a high degree of social surveillance over the public spaces.
Chapter 2. The Transformation of the Traditional City

During the second half of the 19th century, Iranians’ growing awareness of the intellectual and technological advances taking place in Europe brought with it demands for the modernization and Westernization of society (Alemi, 1985). A significant growth of publications, the development of modern schools, and above all the establishment of electoral law for the National Assembly and the constitutional revolution of 1906 are some of the most important achievements of the Qajar period (Abrahamian, 2008).

2.1. Urban Transformation

Tehran’s modernization was not limited to the social and political domain. Instead, trends toward modernization extended to the city’s spatial vocabulary. The first opportunity to transform Tehran based on Western planning ideas came in the 1890s when the city’s growing population meant that it was necessary for the city to expand (Madanipour, 1998). At this time, the original defensive walls around the city were demolished and a larger medieval-inspired octagon wall was built around the city and a number of European-style streets with shops were built (Figure 11) (Alemi, 1985).
2.1.1. The Second Phase of Transformation

Tehran underwent significant changes during the Qajar period and especially after Naser al-Din Shah’s reign (1848-1921). However, it was not until 1925, the beginning of Reza Pahlavi’s reign, that modernization dramatically changed the face of Tehran. Reza Shah’s ideas regarding city development were strongly influenced by European models such that his government envisioned a “secular,” “modern,” and “culturally uniform” future for the country (Madanipour, 1998).

A law was passed to widen and extend Iran’s roads in 1933, allowed the government to demolish some of the old urban fabric in order to construct new roads and extend old ones and thereby provide automobile access to the cities. In 1937, the walls surrounding Tehran and the city’s and 12 main gates were demolished to allow the city to grow. Additionally, a matrix of wide, straight boulevards was superimposed onto the urban fabric—a process that also entailed destroying some parts of the grand bazaar (Figure 12).

Replacing old narrow streets, these new boulevards gradually became the main channels for transportation in the country’s cities. Through linking several squares, the network of streets responded to the increasing number of cars and facilitated transportation within Tehran.
(Mirgholami & Sidh Sintusingha, 2012). The construction of the two main roads, Pahlavi (later known as Vali-Asr) and Shah-Reza (later known as Enghelab), in particular, shaped the north–south and east–west transportation axes of Tehran, respectively. Thus, Tehran started to change from a city characterized by narrow zig-zagging streets to a city with wide, straight boulevards with shops on both sides.

2.1.2. The Comprehensive Plan for Tehran (CPT)

In the 1960s, Iran’s oil boom significantly raised the country’s GDP and thus provided an opportunity for Muhammad Reza Shah (who had succeeded his father, Reza Shah, in 1941) to accelerate reforms in all sectors. Iran’s GDP increased from $30 million in 1954–1955 to $20 billion in 1975–1976 such that the country became increasingly dependent on its oil income (Abrahamian, 2008). Iran became a major destination for American and European exports. In fact, between 1973 and 1978, U.S. exports to Iran doubled (Ahmed, 1973). During these years, the contribution of agriculture to the economy declined whereas the industrial section witnessed an annual growth rate of 15% between 1965 and 1975, the highest rate among developing countries during that period (Ahmed, 1973).

The central role of Tehran in this new industrial-based economy transformed the city into the unrivaled economic, industrial, and cultural center of the country. On this point, it should be noted that 40% of the country’s national investment
and 60% of its industrial investment were located in Tehran in the mid-1970s (Madanipour, 1998). Due to the high rate of migration to Tehran from rural areas, the city’s population grew from 1.59 million in 1966 to 2.98 million in 1976 and the number of dwellings within or in striking distance of the city doubled (Madanipour, 1998). This rapid population growth resulted in the uncontrolled expansion of Tehran. As “suburban villages” and “satellite towns” merged with each other and with the existing urban landscape, Tehran became a group of awkwardly connected towns without a coherent urban structure during the 1970s, the last years of Muhammad Reza Shah’s reign (Madanipour, 1998).

The accumulation of capital, industry, and services along with uncontrolled constructions resulted in chaotic growth in Tehran during the years leading up to the revolution. The high density of the city center, the growing number of informal settlements around the city, the expansion of commercial activities along the main roads, and excessive pollution acted as the impetus for government authorities to prepare a comprehensive plan for the future of Tehran. At the same time, the oil boom provided a basis for creating ambitious, visionary plans for the future of Tehran.

Under these conditions, a team of Iranian and American architects and urban planners led by Victor Gruen and Abdol-aziz Farmanfarmaian were commissioned to form a Comprehensive Plan for Tehran (CPT) to reorganize the urban growth of Tehran (Mirgholami, 2012) (Figure 13). Incorporating a number of satellite towns, the Gruen-Farmanfarmaian masterplan proposed a linear and polycentric extension of the city toward the west (Costello, 1998). The purpose of this linear development was to prevent “undesirable high density, congestion, and decreased accessibility” (Gruen & Farmanfarmaian, 1968). This west–east axis was also designed to redirect the north–south axis of Tehran’s growth (Costello, 1998). Based on private
vehicle ownership, a set of urban infrastructures including highways were proposed to shape this axis (Emami, 2011).

The Gruen-Farmanfarmaian scheme included a series of bounded towns interconnected through highways. Similar to Gruen’s super-block concepts implemented in American cities such as Kalamazoo, Fort Worth, and Fresco, each town had a pedestrian-oriented center with a variety of public spaces and commercial buildings (Lang, 1994). The Gruen-Farmanfarmaian proposal included ideas for self-sufficient neighborhoods with 15,000–30,000 inhabitants, a high school, a commercial center, and other necessary facilities. These neighborhoods were to be linked by a transportation network with motorways, a rapid transit route, and a bus route (Madanipour, 2006). Replacing the street matrix, the proposed super-highways aimed to speed up the transportation system in Tehran and also to shape a modern image for the city. Further, the Gruen-Farmanfarmaian plan also included a proposal for distinct high-income and low-income neighborhoods (Figure 14). The high-income neighbor-
hood plan depicts low-density, low-rise houses arranged along curvilinear streets and cul-de-sac and low income plans depicts apartments arranged along the rectilinear streets.

Although the CPT was neglected after the revolution of 1979, this plan still had an effect on the development of Tehran (Mirgholami & Sidh Sintusingha, 2012). Most significantly, the west–east axis became a major force for future developments and the idea of self-sufficient neighborhoods was adopted to respond to the needs of the fast-growing city (Mirgholami, 2012).

Further attempts for developing a new comprehensive plan for Tehran did not have specific results. For example, a comprehensive plan prepared by an Iranian firm (ATEC Consultants) in the 1980s also failed because of the unrealistically high costs associated with it.

2.1.3. The Emergence of Large-Scale Residential Complexes in the 1970s
The increasing number of immigrants during the 1960s and 1970s and consequently the growth of informal settlements around Tehran necessitated the large-scale construction of residential units. The high demand for housing and government support motivated private developers to invest in constructing residential complexes (Madanipour, 1998).

Initially, the idea of residential complexes emerged as a response to the population growth of Tehran and as an effort to solve the problem of the informal settlements that were growing up around the city. However, over time, investment in this market was directed to housing for the middle- and high-income classes. Consequently, low-income groups did not have a significant share in the 500,000 or more residential units built between 1974 and 1978.
A significant number of urban developments constructed under the name of the *shahrak* (Town) were influenced by the Gruen-Farmanfarmaian proposal for Tehran’s residential neighborhoods: self-sufficient neighborhoods with commercial centers and diverse cultural and recreational facilities that were connected to the city through highways. In the 1970s, the old neighborhoods were gradually replaced by high-density residential complexes for the middle-class. These complexes had new physical structures and facilities, relied on a new definition of public, and were designed to accommodate a greater density of people (Mirgholami, 2012).

Due to the booming construction market, insufficient domestic technical knowledge, and the demand for new ideas, foreign consultants found themselves playing a determining role in the development of residential complexes. For example, *shahrak*-e-Ekbatan, *shahrak*-e-Ati saz, and *shahrak*-e-Omid are just three of the well-known neighborhoods built in the 1970s by foreign consultants. Offering a new lifestyle in a well-equipped living environment, these residential complexes appealed to members of the middle- and high-income classes.

In the 1970s, the living conditions of the lower classes, which lived in marginalized neighborhoods, was in sharp contrast with the living conditions of the middle and upper classes. The economic gap between the classes shaped during the rapid growth of the country in the 1960s and 1970s became an important factor in the revolution. The low-income classes were promised that they would realize a bright future in the post-revolutionary era. To fulfill this promise, the housing market came under the strict control of the government after the revolution and large-scale developments became a tool for mass housing for the low-income classes.
2.2. Socio-economic Transformation

2.2.1. Westernization

The transformation of the city landscape significantly affected social life. A new Western-oriented consumerist lifestyle started to emerge in Tehran and an abundance of Western cultural products familiarized the Iranian people—especially in the cities—with Western lifestyles. New forms of entertainment as well as new custom were promoted through publications, radio, cinema, and TV channels. A large portion of magazine, TV, and radio programs were devoted to advertising Western goods. Controlled by the government, the mass media included magazines with “American-style contests” and “the latest cosmetics, dresses, and Hollywood gossip” as well as American and European shows and movies, which dominated theaters and television programming (Mowlana, 1979).

Furthermore, this new consumer lifestyle was also promoted by the government through official educational programs. For example, the Point Four Program, an assistance program for developing countries with financial and technical support from the United States, provided young women with opportunities to become familiar with new living appliances, housekeeping procedures, and Western housing decor (Karimi, 2012). With an emphasis on “healthier life-styles” Point Four and similar programs responded to the new market conditions in which the growth of the industrial section and imports from Western countries fueled the new industrial and consumer society (Karimi, 2012).

Government policies supporting cultural reforms were subject to criticism and confrontations from members of traditional society. The education system and the mass media sponsored by

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5 This is the fourth foreign policy objective mentioned in the United States president Harry S. Truman inaugural address on January 20, 1949.
the government were considered “corrupt” as they did not conform to Islamic regulations. And, although scientific and technological advances were gradually accepted in traditional society, this quarter offered significant opposition to Western cultural products. Cultural products from the West were associated with a negative mentality in traditional society.

Given the public’s lack of access to the mass media, clerics delivered sermons that reflected and heightened the objections of traditional society to the exposure of society to what were considered “immoral” and “non-Islamic” behaviors, such as drinking alcohol, nudity, and open relationships between men and women. This cultural confrontation is best symbolized by the Shiraz Art Festival (1978), a major arts festival organized by the government in which a Hungarian theater group called Squat put on a performance that included scenes focused on sexuality and nudity. This performance met with unprecedented negative reactions not only among the bazaaris and the clergy but also in the press. The performance was regarded as a “cultural assault” on the part of Muhammad Reza Shah.

2.2.2. The Family and the Status of Women

The industrialization of Iran, which began in the 1920s, gave rise to a high demand for a work force to serve the factories and the service sector. In this newly industrialized society, people migrated en masse from small cities and rural areas to large cities in search of employment and better living conditions and in doing so wrought changes in the country’s social structure (Nassehi-Behnam, 1985). The hierarchical structure of the Iranian family with its extended family form began to give way to a single-family model with additional members.

New governmental policies and improvements in education brought changes to women’s condition in society. A new family law established in 1967 eased working conditions for
women. In fact, women were considered a great potential work force in Iran’s new industrial society. In addition, the country was experiencing economic difficulty as expressed by a high rate of inflation, and under these conditions, women were urged to enter the workplace in order to improve the economic well-being of their families. During this period, women were allowed to work in governmental organizations, attend law and medical school, and drive cars (Abrahamian, 2008). Furthermore, access to higher education provided new work opportunities for women. In 1972, 1.4 million women were working in Iran, which was significantly rising at the time (Foran, 1993). Although men continued to hold the position of head of the household, women began to take on a more significant role in regard to decision-making, administrative tasks, and managing the family budget (Nassehi-Behnam, 1985).

Women became considerably more visible in the public domain, and new policies meant that they could appear without the *hijab* in public spaces. In fact, the influence of the West grew to such an extent that some policies even discouraged women from wearing the *hijab*\(^6\) (Abrahamian, 2008). Although some parts of the city rigorously adhered to tradition, some middle-class women started going out without the *hijab*. The presence of women in work spaces and public spaces changed the face of Tehran from a male-dominated city to one that at least included women in a more visible way than was previously the case.

The changes in the condition of the family and of women contrasted with the traditional point of view wherein women’s role was restricted to domestic responsibilities. Once barred from the public sphere, women were now present in education, government, service, and health care. Thus, the barriers between public and private and private showed signs of giving way.

\(^6\)This refers to a law established by Reza Shah in 1935 known as *kashf-i-hijab*. 
2.2.3. **Secularization**

Replacing the role of religion with new institutions, Reza Shah’s reforms provided a basis for the secularization of Iranian society. Through the specialization, rationalization, and structural/financial differentiation of society, the country’s religion lost its place as the central system and instead became a subsystem among many other subsystems (Abazari et al., 2007). The system of *khoms* was replaced by taxes, court, which had been managed by the clergy on the basis of *feqh*\(^7\) law, was replaced by a new judicial system, and religious courses taught in *maktabkhane*\(^8\) were replaced by modern sciences taught in Western schools (Abazari et al., 2007). The emergence of newspapers, magazines, radio, and TV weakened the role of clerics as the most valid form of communication and information (Abazari et al., 2007). The secular institutions stood in stark contrast with religious beliefs, and the loss of the religious aspect from many activities meant the loss of traditional culture.

2.2.4. **Economic Transformation**

The percentage of the population engaged in the capitalist mode of production (supported by state) grew from 3% in 1914 to 10% in 1941 to 48.6% in 1977, and this growth was accompanied by the parallel growth of socio-economic power on the part of the petty-commodity mode of production (bazaar). On one side, there were traditional *bazaaris*, urban entrepreneurs, and the clergy who were strong supporters of the continuity of traditional culture and economic system represented by the bazaar, the mosque, the *husseinieh*,\(^9\) the *hayat*,\(^10\) and the

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\(^7\) *Feqh* is Islamic jurisprudence based on interpretation of religious texts.
\(^8\) The *maktabkhane* was a type of elementary school where young children learned to read and write and gained a knowledge of Islam from a cleric or another person with religious knowledge.
\(^9\) The *husseinieh* is a space for religious ceremonies.
\(^10\) These are religious gatherings.
And, on the other side, a new order supported by the government was growing up (Abrahamian, 2008).

Instead of the petty-commodity mode of production represented by the bazaar, the government’s economic policies were in favor of the capitalist mode of production. Furthermore, the government demanded complete control over the financial activities of the bazaar. Due to governmental pressure and economic difficulty, some of the retailers moved from the bazaar to the streets (Madanipour, 1998). Gradually, as the street shops and shopping centers shifted from the commercial zone of the cities, the bazaar lost its original importance as the only zone of financial activities. Moreover, the Shah’s “anti-corruption” campaign in the 1970s, the aim of which was to control the wholesale and retail trade in the bazaar is considered a major economic confrontation between the Shah and those with a financial interest in the bazaar (Stockpol, 1982).

Though they lost their original position, the bazaars, mosques, and other traditional structures maintained their autonomous structures. Representing the views and mores of traditional society, they constituted a strong source of power parallel to the official government.

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The *dasteh* are organized groups in religious ceremonies.
2.3. Socio-Spatial Transformation

2.3.1. Social Changes Reflected in Tehran’s New Building Typologies

The emerging Western lifestyle required a new type of public space as typified by the tendency of secular institutions to define new zones for social life by providing public buildings. The secular nature of these building typologies contributed to a new atmosphere in Tehran’s public spaces. Stadiums and gymnasiuums replaced the zurkhane, and old forms of entertainment were replaced by parks, cinemas, theaters, and concert halls. The growing consumer culture promoted recreational shopping in the new shopping centers and at the street retailers. The café replaced the ghahvekhane and thus became both the new gathering place for groups of intellectuals and a symbol of intellectual life (Chalandar & Shangool Niya, 2013). By offering new forms of sociability and entertainment, these new public spaces implied a rejection of traditional lifestyles and expressed an endorsement of Western values that were in conflict with values of traditional society.

Figure 15: New boutiques and shops started replacing shops in bazaar. Available at http://art-ghadimiha.blogspot.com/2013/12/23.html, accessed by May 21, 2014
2.3.2. Social Changes Reflected in Changes to the Urban Structure

The new streets offered a new image of public spaces, new spatial experiences, and new forms of sociability. Resembling the architecture of the European streets, these new public spaces were positively engaged with the idea of the “modern” for the elite. The symbolic importance of the new streets had a significant impact on the polarization of public spaces. Built during the first stage of Tehran’s transformation, the Lale-Zar Street (the so-called Champs-Élysées of Tehran) became a symbol of the developed Western world or farang.\(^\text{12}\)

The second phase of the city’s transformation was associated with the construction of several new streets. As retailers, shops, restaurants, cinemas, and cafés started to emerge along these streets (Figure 16), these new streets became the urban stage for a new social life and the spatialization of a new culture. Whereas the bazaar engaged with the meanings of “traditional,” “segregated,” and “pre-industrial,” the new urban realm became a symbol of the “modern” and “developed” world. Thus, the new network of streets changed the nature of the public realm.

\(^{12}\) *Farang* is a term that was used to refer to Europe in the 19\textsuperscript{th} century.
The hierarchical network based on social structure and public–private relationships was replaced by a grid network of streets that created homogeneity through connectivity (Madanipour, 1998). The public realm previously concentrated in the bazaar and its peripheral urban structures became a widespread network of orthogonal streets with shops on both sides distributed throughout the entire urban fabric. The shift of the public realm from the bazaar and its peripheral public buildings to the streets, which were now under the control of the central government, effected a decline in the power of the bazaari-clerics over the public spaces.

2.4. Summary
The primary structure of Tehran resembles that of many other pre-industrial cities in Iran. Rapid modernization in the 1920s and 1930s not only changed the cultural, economic, and bureaucratic structure of the city, but it also changed the face of Tehran. In 1937, a matrix of orthogonal streets was superimposed on Tehran. New building typologies were introduced, and social and cultural mores imported from the West began to dominate the cities.

By the 1970s, Tehran had become the industrial and economic center of the country. The oil boom of the 1960s had enabled the government to start ambitious projects for the future of Tehran. At the same time, Tehran’s exponential growth made it necessary for the government to prepare a comprehensive plan for the future growth of the city. Tehran’s comprehensive
plan imagined a future wherein the city would become a series of interconnected satellite towns. And, though, this plan was never carried out formally, it still had a significant impact on the growth of Tehran.
3.1. Against the Bazaar

3.1.1. Parallel Functional Structures

The bazaar was seen as an obstacle to modernization. However, with the exception of just a few cases, direct interference in the physical structure of the bazaar was avoided. Even though the urban interventions of the Pahlavi era meant that some parts of the grand bazaar were demolished in order to build new streets, a comparison of the present spatial structures of the bazaar with 19th-century maps of the same area reveals that overall the spatial structure of bazaar has remained intact. The Shah’s assumption was that the building of modern alternatives would render the bazaar obsolete. The banks would be an alternative to the money-lenders, industry would replace small-scale production and shopping would shift from the bazaar to the supermarkets and department stores (Keshavarzian, 2007). New secular public spaces would replace the bazaar, the mosque, and other traditional public spaces. And, as a result of this strategy, the bazaar did, indeed, begin to lose its economic monopoly in the city.

3.1.2. Segregation from the Urban Movement Network

Tehran’s urban transformations of 1890 and 1937 changed the spatial role of the bazaar in the city. Whereas the first stage of the transformation was limited to the construction of a number of European-style streets, the second phase superimposed a widespread grid of streets over the old urban fabric. In this second phase, the new urban network paid minimal attention to the existing urban network. It is evident that an effort was made to limit the extent to which the bazaar and the arg were dismantled. Yet, there was no attempt to integrate the old streets of the city into the new network. Although the new streets did directly connect various segments of the city to each other, the new urban grid did not penetrate the bazaar area. Thus,
the bazaar turned into an urban superblock accessible from four surrounding streets: Bozorjmehri, Sirous, Khayyam and Mowlavi.

The new urban grid transformed the urban structure of Tehran and the role of the bazaar in this spatial structure. The configurational properties of the urban structure determined the patterns of movement in the city and changes in the urban grid transformed the system of urban movement (Hillier, 2007).

An analysis of the spatial syntax provides a way to understand the extent and nature of these changes. Through this method, it is possible to investigate the configurational properties of the urban structure by measuring the relationship between each component of the urban system and all the other components. Axial line analysis is among the analytical techniques that have gained credibility in the syntactic study of urban systems. This technique models the architectural or urban systems by driving a network of axial lines through all the convex spaces of the system. These axes represent lines of movement and permeability. The number of spaces intervening between one space from another gives us the depth between them (Bafna, 2003). A computer-based analysis determines the relative depth value of each line in respect to all the other lines in the system. The mean depth value is inversed in order to obtain the degree of integration for each line in the urban system (Bafna, 2003). Simply speaking, integration is calculated by inversing the relative mean depth of each axial line from the entire system. As this relationship corresponds to all parts of the system, it is called global integration.
The degree of integration is highly correlated with the flow of pedestrians in an urban setting (Hillier, Penn, Hanson, Grajewski, & Xu, 1993). Thus, higher pedestrian traffic can be expected in the more integrated areas.
Figure 23 Axial line map of Tehran in 1859, Streets with the highest degree of integration are located around bazaar. Source: Author

Figure 22 Axial line map of Tehran in 1944, Source: Author
The axial line analysis of the six of Iran’s major old cities (Shiraz, Kerman, Qazvin, Hamadan, Kermanshah, and Semnan) conducted by Kayvan Karimi shows that the streets inside the bazaar are usually the most integrated of the streets in Iran’s pre-industrial cities (Karimi, 1997). The same idea will be applied to the old fabric of pre-industrial Tehran using a city map from 1859. A comparison of this map with a post-transformation map of Tehran will address changes in the urban fabric in terms of the extent to which the bazaar is integrated. The axial line analysis of the 1859 map shows that the integration value of the streets increases toward the center and that the urban core matches the location of the bazaar in the city (Figure 23). The main axis of the bazaar has the highest integration value (Rn = .81) and other most integrated lines are located on the other streets of the bazaar. The mean degree of integration of all streets of the city (mean integration Rn=0.51) is lower than the integration value for the bazaar (Rn=0.81). This significant difference reveals the essential role of the bazaar in the urban structure of Tehran at the time. As we move from the center of the city to its borders, the degree of integration decreases. The urban transformation of 1937 shifted the core of the cities from the bazaar to the matrix of streets. Using the space syntax’s axial line analysis, the degree of global integration is obtained for the post-transformation map of Tehran (Figure 23). After the transformations, the degree to which the bazaar is integrated (Rn = 1.59) was reduced significantly, to less than the average degree of integration of all the streets in the city (mean integration Rn = 1.64). The urban integration shifted from the bazaar to the new major streets in the city including Boozar-jomehri (later known as Panzdah-e-Khorded) (Rn = 3.03), Shapoor (later known as vahdat-e-Eslami and Hafez) (Rn = 2.89) and Pahlavi (later known as Vali-asr) (Rn = 2.96). Whereas before the transformation the urban core (bazaar) was located at the center and the edges had lower degrees of integra-

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13 The software used for this analysis was UCL Depthmap 10, developed at the University College of London.
tion, after the transformation an urban core cannot be recognized. Whereas the Boozar-
jomehri runs in the center of the city in an east–west axis, the Shapoor and Pahlavi streets are closer to the city’s Western edges (Figures 25).

As noted, the degree of integration is highly correlated with the flow of pedestrians in a city. After the transformation of Tehran, the new highly integrated streets became the main arteries for urban movement within the city. The declining role of the bazaar in the spatial structure of the city shifted the paths of urban movement from the bazaar to the new streets. The intensity of the pedestrian flow has always been a determining factor in the positioning of shops and commercial spaces in the cities where the shops tend to be located along the streets with the most pedestrian movement (Hillier, 2007). Thus, the city’s new streets including Bozorjmehr, Shapoor, and Pahlavi with their high pedestrian traffic became popular locations for new shops. It can be said, therefore, that as the bazaar became less integrated into the spatial structure of city so the pedestrian traffic
shifted to the new streets and thus the bazaar suffered a decline in both spatial and economic fortune.

3.1.3. New Transportation Systems

The superimposition of the urban matrix, of the new wide streets, onto the city, brought with it the domination of the motor vehicle in the urban transportation network. Orthogonal streets cut off the urban fabric in order to facilitate the movement of cars, motorcycles, and carriages. After 1937, in just a few years, Tehran had changed from a walking-oriented city into a car-oriented one. The street retailers and shops were directly accessible by motor-vehicle, whereas the transportation of goods and materials in the bazaar still relied on livestock and handcarts. The street shops had the advantage of attracting customers who preferred to use cars for shopping. Further, without undergoing a far-reaching process of destruction and rebuilding, the narrow zig-zagging streets of the bazaar could not be used for cars.

3.2. Resistance through Segregation

The social, political, cultural, and urban transformation shaped a polarized public sphere in society. A fresh lifestyle started emerging in the new industrial economy and through growing relationships with the world more generally. As the country was exposed to modern-world ideas and cultural products, the educated urban elite began to seek a new identity. However, this search for a new identity and culture gradually expanded to other groups in society. On the other hand, though, traditional factions strictly retained their cultural traditions and beliefs. Members of these factions viewed the imported ideas, products, and cultures with suspicion, rejecting them unless important clerics instructed them otherwise. Many of the new activities and styles of appearance promoted in the modern lifestyle were considered “immoral” and “non-Islamic.”
The Western cultural values promoted by the government were in stark contrast with traditional cultural values. Because of its policies of Western-oriented cultural reforms, Iran’s government was accused of endangering traditional cultural values and lifestyles.

Given the conflict between the government and Western society, the bazaar took on critical significance as the core of public life in traditional society. The streets of the bazaar may have lost their role as a major conduit of the urban movement network, yet the bazaar still remained an important destination. Resisting external pressures, the economic power of the bazaar provided an alternative space to members of traditional society where their rituals, culture, and beliefs could remain vital. Given the public’s lack of access to the mass media, the bazaar and its subsidiary spaces found a new role as the channels of public communication (Mowlana, 1979). From its origins as an economic center, the bazaar morphed into a powerful source for disseminating the cultural values of traditional society. The mosques, hussainia, and tekye, which had to begun to decline in the face of modern advances, flourished as centers of interpersonal political and social networks (Mowlana, 1979). Thus, the bazaaris and clerics, alike, became a strong resisting power against the homogenizing power of government policies.

Several scholars have studied the factors that enabled the bazaar to survive as both an autonomous economic center and as alternative medium for traditional society by focusing on the bazaar’s economic strength, the social factors supporting it, and its relationship with the clergy. According to Keshavarzian, the Pahlavi regime’s policies of “replacement, rather than incorporation” in regard to the bazaar resulted in the formation of an autonomous economic zone (Keshavarzian, 2007). The bazaar ran its own production, distribution, and sales system,
which was to a great extent was independent from the government’s economic system. As the most powerful economic institution in traditional society, the bazaar functioned as a financial power, as an economically independent base, that enabled traditional society to resist external pressures and maintain their social and cultural systems. This economic power was intensified by the strong network of bazaaris who were unified against external threats. The bazaar was considered as a whole and threats to any of its segments were met with resistance from the bazaaris as well as from the clerics and other members of society.

The bazaar’s segregation from the urban transportation system endangered its financial operations, and the new images and experiences offered by the emerging public spaces attracted people in droves. Despite the negative effects of Tehran’s transformation on the bazaar, the spatial segregation of this urban structure from the urban fabric provided new socio-political opportunities. No longer the spatial center of the city, the bazaar became a protective shell for its own economic, cultural and social structure.

The powerful network of the bazaaris became a major source of political resistance in the context of the bazaar. The role of the bazaar as a political power can be seen in a number of milestones in modern Iranian history including the nationalization of oil, the Mossadegh era of 1950–1953, and the Ayatollah Khomeini’s 1963 campaign against Mohammad Reza Shah. In the revolution of 1979, the bazaar became the center for traditional groups rebelling against the Shah. The conflict between the bazaar and the state grew to the extent that some of the armed groups such as the mujahedin-e-Islam (Rebels of Islam) whose purpose was to overthrow the Shah were directly funded by important merchants at the Bazaar.
Despite its financial dynamism, the bazaar turned into a place where time stood still and the effects of the changing world outside were minimized. The spatial segregation of the bazaar resulted in the formation of a complex financial, cultural, and spatial system that ran entirely independently. The bazaar turned into an internal space: an enormously large urban structure with its own distinct structural logic inside an urban matrix.

3.2.1. Blocking the Top-Down Control of the Urban Grid

Similar to Haussmann’s renovation of Paris (1853–1870), the transformation of Tehran in 1937 included ideas for controlling the urban fabric by providing troops with easy access to it. The street matrix was both a transportation system and a strong network that reached beyond the power of central government and the new economic system to the whole city. The transformation of the old urban fabric functioned to integrate older parts of the city into the larger socio-economic system promoted by the government and its supporters. However, the bazaar remained intact and uncontrolled to a large extent. Integration into the larger urban network for the traditional groups in society was equal to incorporation into a modern Westernized lifestyle that stood in contrast with traditional culture and beliefs.

Had it become integrated into this urban network, the bazaar coherency would have lost its coherency under the controlling power of the government. The spatial segregation of the bazaar from the urban fabric set it apart from the widespread controlling network that ran through the city. Through its physical segregation, the bazaar blocked the flow of cultural, social, and economic forces from the urban matrix. Thus, the internal structure of the bazaar remained intact in the context of the ever-changing city under the control of government. The bazaar was segregated from the modern city and thus occupied a different world. Strongly
linked with the past and powerfully present in the contemporary context though divorced from it, the bazaar was a place where people could forget the other world outside.

3.2.2. Preserving Cultural Components, Buildings, and Institutions

Through its segregation, the bazaar maintained a network of public buildings that functioned as the cultural and intellectual center of traditional society. The spatial coherence of the bazaar linked all the religious structures including the mosques, the hussainias, the tekye, and the sagha-khane. Thus, the bazaar turned into a shelter for tradition. The physical proximity of these spaces and their independence from the modern city was a main source of their power. The structural differentiation between the bazaar and the rest of the city led to an internal condition in which traditional lifestyles could be preserved. These spaces remained under the complete control of the bazaaris and the ulama. Though responsible for the security of the bazaar, the state was unable to impose its socio-cultural paradigm on the activities there.

The bazaar remained a significant part of social life for traditional groups in society. The rituals and ceremonies constituted important kinds of social life and the exchange of information and the functioning of social networks still depended to a large extent on these spaces. Though embedded in the modernizing city of Tehran, the bazaar offered the continuity of a lifestyle that supported traditional beliefs and practices.

3.2.3. Retaining a Traditional Image and Identity

The bazaar also had symbolic significance for traditional society. Its architecture had become an image of tradition in contrast with the neoclassic and modern architecture promoted by the state. Whereas the new public sphere was credited for making a break from the past, the bazaar found a symbolic meaning as the dynamic continuity of tradition. Historically, the ba-
zaar had been a scene for the expression of beliefs through rituals and cultural activities. The bazaar and its peripheral spaces had become an unshakeable background to the social life of Iranian society. Thus, the bazaar functioned not only as an economic center but also as the physical embodiment of tradition in a modernizing city.

3.3. Summary

The transformation of Tehran deprived the bazaar of its role as the spatial center for public activities in the city. Its segregation from the rest of city life resulted in the bazaar losing its centric role in the city. Additionally, the bazaar also saw a decline in its status as the most powerful financial center in the city. However, paradoxically, the bazaar’s segregation from city life constituted the foundational reason for its ultimate survival. Disconnected from the homogenizing power of the world outside, the most significant public center of traditional society remained intact. A protected citadel in the city, the bazaar became the preserver of tradition. The bazaar could have been merged into the new urban system and controlled under government power. Instead, the segregation of the bazaar resulted in the formation of a parallel world to the modernizing city outside.
Chapter 4. Ekbatan as an Alternative Space

4.1. Introduction
The Shah’s cultural policies evoked major tensions between the government and traditional groups in society. After the revolution of 1979, the policies for secularizing and modernizing public space gave way to policies that emphasized Islam and traditions. Powerful religious forces behind the revolution aimed to change the cultural landscape of Iran. Returning to the traditional values of Iranian society became the basic theme of the cultural policies after the revolution (Arjomand, 1989). The new policies limited the distribution of Western cultural products, encouraged women to concentrate on domesticity and motherhood as their main responsibilities, and ended cultural secularization by bringing religion back into the public realm (Afshar, 1985).

The cultural policies after the revolution of 1979 changed the relationship between the people and public spaces—especially in large cities. Rules and regulations were established to reinforce “new codes of appearances and behavior” in public spaces including a dress code for women (hijab), the separation of men and women in public spaces (Kian-Thiebaut, 1999). These regulations were hardly new to Iranian society. In fact, they had been enforced through social control in traditional parts of the cities for many years.

Traditional groups responded positively to these codes, believing that they would remove the tension wrought by the cultural imbalances between respective areas of the city. In the new homogenous socio-cultural landscape, modern and traditional parts of the city were no longer distinguishable by the nature of the social life in their public spaces.
On the opposite side, new codes limited the continuity of the modern lifestyles that had come into being during the Pahlavi era. Spaces for non-traditional forms of interaction such as bars and clubs were closed. The functioning of cinemas and theaters was limited, and the wearing of “atypical” clothes in public spaces was outlawed.

Foucault discusses the role of space in transforming power. His concept of gaze and asymmetrical visibility brings up the power of gaze as a disciplinary power that transforms human being into subjects who must always act as if they are under the surveillance of guards despite their presence (Foucault, 1977).

With the end of Iran–Iraq war in 1989, control over public spaces weakened and restrictions on appearance and behavior codes gradually declined (Amir-Ebrahimi, 2004; Madanipour, 1998). Though, this decline was by no means linear in nature, such that the moral police continued to operate at various times, an overall change in the policies can be recognized. As a result, public spaces became active and the strict distinction between private and public life blurred. In this transforming condition, a new type of public space, which I will call “alternative space,” emerged that allowed modernist groups to pursue their lifestyles with a higher degree of freedom. These are usually privately owned spaces that are open to the public with less control over activities, behaviors, and appearance, and including shopping centers, art galleries, cultural centers, coffee shops and restaurants.

Gradually, alternative spaces became the stage for an alternative lifestyle. This alternative lifestyle was based on the mobility of individuals in the network of alternative spaces scattered across metropolitan Tehran.
Parallel to this network, residential complexes shaped a different type of alternative space that brought the elements of an alternative lifestyle into a single spatial structure. The segregation of these spaces from the urban network changes the landscape of power and control. Consequently, top-down governmental control has been limited in these bounded areas and the social control over the spaces reinforced.

Building on the previous section, the question in the present section considers how the urban condition and spatial configuration have contributed to the formation of a different socio-cultural landscape. The focus is on the public spaces in shahrak-e-Ekbatan,\textsuperscript{14} Tehran’s largest residential development of the Pahlavi era. The discussion will include an account of how the alternative spaces offered in shahrak-e-Ekbatan go beyond the occasional activities featured in other alternative spaces to shape a unique socio-cultural boundary.

To answer this question, it is necessary to first reach an understanding of the spatial configuration of shahrak-e-Ekbatan and its relationship with the urban fabric. Second, the socio-cultural landscape of public spaces in Ekbatan will be explored.

\textsuperscript{14} shahrak is usually translated as town. However, in Tehran, they are usually large-scale residential developments that include some infrastructure.
4.2. Setting of Research

Located in the Western part of Tehran, shahrak-e-Ekbatan is the largest residential complex in the city. Ekbatan was constructed in three distinct phases (Figure 26). In the first phase, this planned town was designed by American architect Jordan Gruzen, developed by the Tehran Redevelopment Corporation and built by a corporation of international construction groups in the 1970s. Construction (the second phase) began in 1967 and finished more than 10 years later. The initial master plan for Ekbatan envisioned a self-sufficient residential complex with separate zones for cars and pedestrians. After the revolution of 1979, the project of developing Ekbatan was assigned to the Ekbatan Renovation and Development Company, which completed the third phase in 1990. Also, public buildings, schools, libraries,
medical centers, playgrounds, markets, cultural centers, and mosques were added to the Complex in this phase.

Adjacent to the Mehrabad airport in the west, Ekbatan is bounded by highways on its north, east, and south sides (Figure 27). The first phase of Ekbatan includes 10 distinct blocks of two different types. These blocks are arranged along a linear market 1,500 feet long, which also includes two plazas between its segments (Figure 28). Consisting of terraced towers, type-A blocks (Figure 26) are organized around a large courtyard and three subsidiary courtyards and type-B blocks (Figure 29) are arranged around three main and two subsidiary courtyards. The courtyards can be categorized based on their respective positions (internal/external) and sizes (types A, B, and C).

A row of trees creates a green belt around each phase of shahrak-e-
Ekbatan. A limited number of entry points controlled by watchmen provide vehicular access to internal street and parking lots.

A decision was made to minimize the role of the car in Ekbatan, and this resulted in a single peripheral street that circulates around the complex and provides access to parking. With a structure based on separate blocks and clearly defined courtyards, the marketplace has significantly affected the spatial structure of Ekbatan.

4.2.1. Urban Boundaries
Understanding the socio-cultural landscape of public spaces in Ekbatan requires investigating its relationship with the city and the spatial configuration of the blocks that make it up. shahrak-e-Ekbatan, along with shahrak-e-Bime, shahrak-e-Apadana, and shahrak-e-Fakouri, has shaped a cluster of residential neighborhoods in the Western part of Tehran, which is bounded by Mehrabad Airport on the west and three major highways on the north, east, and south sides. These neighborhoods are accessible through a peripheral ring of highways, which provides limited access points to each neighborhood. Each of these four neighborhoods is a bounded zone with little interconnectivity to the rest of the area. shahrak-e-Apadana and shahrak-e-Fakouri are closed rings that are only accessible through highways. Thus, the only area that can be accessed from shahrak-e-Ekbatan phase I without using a car is shahrak-e-Bime and Phase III of the shahrak-e-Ekbatan.

Figure 30 Trees Block view from the street, Source Author
Vehicles can gain access to Ekbatan through two entries, i.e., from the southern highway and from the northern highway. Ekbatan is not accessible from outside the region for pedestrians. The only street that connects pedestrian movement from Ekbatan to other areas is Nafisi Street, which is located between the first phase and shahrak-e-Bime. Interestingly, this street was blocked by a wall for many years to prevent access from shahrak-e-Bime. The wall was destroyed in 1997.

The strong boundaries shaped by highways around Ekbatan have been intensified by visual and spatial barriers. The spatial configuration of spaces in Ekbatan is based on a set of parallel layers. The transition from the surrounding streets to within the block entails crossing several layers of space. These layers provide a set of boundaries that decreases the spatial and visual connection between inside and outside. These layers constitute an impenetrable shell for Ekbatan whereby a visually and physically segregated “inside” creates a community that is segregated without being gated.

The green layer (trees, bushes, and flowerboxes), which surrounds the complex shapes a visual and physical obstacle around the edges (Figure 30). There are only two car entrances, one on the west and another on the east side. Also, pedestrian access is provided through a limited number of entrances (Figure 31).
4.2.2. The Configuration of Public Spaces
The segregation of Ekbatan from the rest of the urban fabric created an isolated system. In this sense, Ekbatan’s spatial configuration is analyzed not in the urban context but in its own system of spaces. Ekbatan is a collection of micro-urbanisms with its own internal logic (Madanipour, 2003). Ekbatan consists of clusters of residential blocks, green space, and roads. Public open spaces in Ekbatan are confined by the u-shaped blocks—a shape that appears to be the result of an effort to maximize access to sunlight and optimize the geometry of the courtyards.

The formation of these clusters around a public space has the implicit meaning of “enclosure, privacy, security, intimacy and communication” (Madanipour, 2003). This emphasis can be traced back to numerous historical examples in which a number of settlements formed around a courtyard or an urban square. These centers provide focal points in a settlement or a city, and there are usually a number of facilities within walking distance of the residential areas.
Ekbatan includes a variety of enclosed open geometrical spaces. This configuration is in contrast with the other residential complexes in Tehran such as shahrak-e-Omid where the vast open spaces are punctuated by but not shaped by residential blocks (Figure 32). External courtyards are confined and connected by peripheral street and internal courtyards by the central market.

4.3. Methodology

This research is conducted at two scales. First, the relationship between Ekbatan and the urban fabric will be examined. Next, the study will focus on blocks A4 and B4 in the first phase of the Ekbatan residential complex in order to investigate the relationship between spatial attributes and the socio-spatial mechanisms in the space. These blocks offer all the different types of courtyards in a manageable area. Data was collected on blocks A4 and B4, which are both located on the northern side of the Rah-Ahan Sport Complex (Figure 33). Questionnaires and in-depth interviews with 20 residents in the public spaces, and mapping of the activities in the public spaces are the principal data sources for this study.

In order to investigate the pattern of activities in the courtyards, blocks A4 and B3 in the first phase of Ekbatan were chosen. Representing all three types of courtyards (shown in Figures 18 and 19) in Ekbatan, these two blocks provide a satisfactory basis for a comparative study of the types of activities and their relative intensity in these spaces. The main factors for categorizing courtyards were their dimensions and position in relation to the other spaces. Courtyards A and B are located close to the central market, whereas courtyard C is located on the peripheral street side.
Figure 33 Configuration of Spaces in Ekbatan Phase I. Blocks are arranged along the central Market and a green layer covers the complex. Reproduced by Author from “Tehran,” 35°42’31.99”N and 51°18’30.59”E. Google Earth, October 19, 2013. May 15, 2014.
**Interviews:** Interviews were conducted in order to obtain an in-depth view of the users feelings toward the selected public space, their reasons for choosing certain spaces, and their relationships with other residents and people from outside Ekbatan. In total, 20 interviews were carried out over a period of one week. The participants who were chosen in the public spaces for interviews represented a range of age groups of residents in Ekbatan: 8 women and 12 men participated in semi-structured interviews that lasted from 15 to 30 minutes and took place at the public spaces in Ekbatan. The aim of interviews was twofold: first, providing an understanding of the socio-spatial processes in Ekbatan and to gain an insight into the attitude of residents towards the public spaces including the facilities, the use of each spaces and their conception of spaces and second to obtain people’s perception of other residents of Ekbatan and also those from outside of Ekbatan who were using the public spaces. Interviews shaped an understanding the socio-spatial processes of public spaces of Ekbatan.

**Questionnaires:** The interviews were helpful in the design of a questionnaire that would provide data including education and occupation, questionnaires were used to determine number of friendships, length of residency, and the frequency and quality of activities in the public areas. After coordination with the management board of blocks A4 and A5, the researcher, accompanied by the respective block’s watchmen, distributed 140 questionnaires to the apartments. Sixty-four of the 140 questionnaires were returned by the participants for a return rate of 45%. The study participants comprised 28 women and 35 men. Completed questionnaires were returned to a locked box that was located in the shared area of the apartment’s first floor. All the participants were residents of Ekbatan. The questionnaire consisted of three parts. The first part comprised demographic questions, the second asked about inter-

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15 The questionnaire is provided in Appendix A.
personal relationships with other residents, and the third focused on attitudes toward the open spaces.

To reach an understanding of the socio-economic condition of Ekbatan, demographic data obtained from the questionnaires were coupled with online data. Specifically, the focus was on land price as an economic indicator. Although deriving this data through the questionnaire format was not possible, the apartment price is used in the present study as a key factor for estimating the economic condition of residents in shahrak-e-Ekbatan. As official data pertaining to land price were not available, a popular Iranian real estate web page (ihome.ir) was used to extract data on apartment prices in Ekbatan and its surrounding neighborhoods. The average land price of the apartments in Ekbatan and two adjacent neighborhoods (shahrak-e-apadana and koo-e-bime) posted for sale in the time period between January 2014 and April 2014 was calculated.

The second part is focused on the interrelationship between spaces inside Ekbatan. This part is mostly based on the observation of activities and spatial analysis methods. The observation was conducted on a sunny weekday in late July 2013. Static people (users) within the courtyards were observed from 8:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m. The age and gender of the users as well as their activities were registered on a map at 10-minute intervals. Data from six basic maps constructed in this way were aggregated in a final map representing activities in one-hour periods. The registered activities consisted mostly of sitting, chatting, and playing. Routine pedestrian traffic or short stops were not registered.

The process of observation included both registering the age and gender of users as well as the type and location of activities. Since very few people used the space before 4:00 p.m.
Thus, distinct maps were produced registering the activities in each courtyard between 4:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. at one-hour time intervals. As the study was conducted on a weekday, this can be explained in reference to the idea that people use spaces after they have finished work. In addition, children usually come to these spaces with their parents or when there are enough people in the courtyards to keep eye on them.

To indicate the spots that were used by multiple users in these one-hour periods, the activities are visualized on a map with 2ft x 2ft quadrants. The number of activities in each quadrant was counted and visualized by color.\textsuperscript{16} Figure 36 shows the result of these observations in which the red quadrants have the highest number of users in the one-hour periods and the dark-blue quadrants have the lowest number of users (only one user in the one-hour periods). Figure 37 shows the density of activities in each courtyard in the one-hour periods. The total number of activities in the one-hour periods was divided by the area of each courtyard to obtain the density of activities.\textsuperscript{17}

A space syntax analysis, specifically a visibility graph analysis (VGA), was used in this study to determine the relationship between the degree of visibility (as an indicator of social control) and the type of activities in public spaces. Based on the representation of the courtyards with a 15ft x 15ft square tile tessellation, the visual integration values were computed\textsuperscript{18} for the network of visibility connections among the tiles. In this analysis, residential blocks and a central market were considered visual obstacles.

\textsuperscript{16} Syntax 2D program developed in the University of Michigan was used for the visualization of data.
\textsuperscript{17} To avoid very small numbers, this has been shown in the number of activities per 1,000 square feet.
\textsuperscript{18} The calculation was performed using Depthmap, a software package developed at the University College of London.
Area refers to the amount of space directly visible from a position without crossing any boundaries, and integration refers to the “number of corners one must turn around before all areas of a plan become available to him/her” (Turner, 2001; Zamani, 2008). The greater the integration, the fewer the corners to turn round.

Also space syntax’s gamma analysis has been used in this study to reveal the relationship between different spaces in complex. In gamma analysis each space is represented by a square or a point. Spaces that are directly accessible to each other are connected by a line.

4.4. Socio-Cultural Landscapes in Ekbatan

4.4.1. Results
The interviews showed that generally people in Ekbatan recognized themselves as a distinct group and frequently referred to themselves as Ekbatan. This sense of attachment is also revealed in the questionnaire in which more than 26% declared that they are very highly and 43% declared that they are highly attached to the community.

Interviews also reflected negative attitudes towards the presence of outsiders in public spaces of Ekbatan. Again, this negative conception of outsiders is also evident in the participants’ questionnaire responses. In answering an item that asked what they would change about their residential complex, 12 of the 18 participants who answered this open-ended question stated that they would not let outsiders into Ekbatan.

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19 Someone who is from or lives in Ekbatan, but also has an implied meaning of belonging to the community
Demographic data obtained from the questionnaires reveals that the rate of education in Ekbatan is significantly higher than the average for the municipality district located in\textsuperscript{20}. Whereas the percentage of people with a college degree in region 5 of the Tehran Municipality is between 35 and 38\%, for phase 1 in Ekbatan this rate is around 63\%.

The participants’ questionnaire responses depict strong social bonds among the people in Ekbatan. In fact, 43\% of the participants indicated that they had more than 10 friends in Ekbatan, and 24\% indicated that they had between 5 and 10 friends in Ekbatan.

Questionnaires show some correlations between different attributes. There is a moderate positive correlation between the satisfaction of residents from the public spaces and their sense of attachment to spaces ($r = 0.45$). Also a moderate positive correlation can be found between the intensity of using public spaces and the sense of satisfaction from public spaces ($r = 0.42$). A weaker correlation can be recognized between the sense of attachment and the intensity of using public spaces ($r = 0.28$).

As discussed, land price is used in this study as an indicator for understanding the economic condition of Ekbatan’s residents. Based on the data obtained from the real estate website (ihome.ir) for the homes registered for sale in the period of January 2014 to April 2014, the average land price per square meter in Ekbatan was 40,857,000 IR Rials/square meter, which is 15\% higher than surrounding neighborhoods with an average land price of 40,202,500 IR Rials/square meter. These figures also show the relative popularity of Ekbatan over adjacent areas and its distinct economic condition in that area.

\textsuperscript{20}The city of Tehran is divided into 22 municipal districts, each with its own administrative centers. Ekbatan is located in district 5.
4.4.2. Differentiation
Boundaries distinguish a group of people from rest of the urban fabric and become a means of differentiation and such is the case with Ekbatani where an insider versus outsider mentality is in operation. The socio-economic differences between the residents of Ekbatan and those of the surrounding area have intensified the segregating effects of the boundaries. As discussed, educational level and land price were selected as a means by which to establish an understanding of the socio-economic of Ekbatan’s residents.

Strong social bonds also provide a strong basis for differentiating between communities. Several studies have shown the correlation between social bonds in a community and the sense of attachment to it (Austin & Baba, 1990; Emily, 1990; Mesch & Manor, 1998). Strong social bonds in a community act as a system whereby outsiders are excluded (Nursanty, 2012).

Thus, in concert with the spatial segregation of Ekbatan, socio-economic differences and strong social bonds intensified the duality between insiders and outsiders for Ekbatan. This has brought the concept of “strangers” or “outsiders”—i.e., those who do not live in Ekbatan but use its public spaces—to the daily conversation of residents in Ekbatan. For the Ekbatanis, the exclusion of “outsiders,” functions as a main driver of the formation of a controlled world of familiar people, images, and settings which is in contrast with the anonymity and chaos of the uncontrolled world of strangers.

Not surprisingly, Ekbatanis are aware of their distinct socio-economic condition in their urban area. And, the prevalence of the “stranger/outsider” conception is certainly serves to intensify this differentiation. This emphasis is evidenced by the researcher’s conversations with
the *Ekbatanis* in which they referred to their high socio-economic condition with a sense of pride:

“Look where the Ekbatan is located. It is located between Mehrabad [Airport] and Azadi square. But those who live in here are all doctors, engineers or successful merchants. That’s why Ekbatan is so peaceful. People are from a high-income class.”

(Man, aged 18–25)

“Fortunately, land price in Ekbatan is high [so] that uncultured people cannot buy apartments in here. If there is a crime in Ekbatan, there must be someone coming from outside.”

(Woman, aged 35–40)

Although these statements appear brutal, they reveal that people living in Ekbatan are aware of their high socio-economic status within the region. The resistance of the *Ekbatanis* to the large-scale developments around Ekbatan including the construction of a shopping mall and a metro station serves to prevent more outsiders from coming into their space:

“It is true that building [a] shopping mall brings a lot of money to this area … but those who come for shopping in the future will also come and sit in these courtyards. Now,

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21 This refers to the middle-income area in Tehran where Ekbatan is located.
22 The quotations have been altered very slightly in order to facilitate readability.
with the metro station, lots of outsiders take [a] train and come to Ekbatan. I recognize lots of outsiders.” (Man, aged 25–35)

There is significant concern about outsiders’ access to Ekbatan because its relative freedom owes a great deal to its segregated condition. The lack of police control over the public spaces in Ekbatan has given rise to a relative social freedom there:

“Even [the] police [do] not care that much about drug users in here. It is a free environment. You can even bring alcohol out in here. No one cares.” (Man, aged 45–50)

Alcohol and drugs are forbidden in Tehran’s public spaces; however, in Ekbatan, far from the eyes of police, it is possible to partake in both of these. Thus, outsiders are those who can potentially bring danger and hazard to Ekbatan and who endanger the Ekbatanis’ control over their public spaces. The following narratives are illustrative of this point:

“Outsiders come here to smoke drugs. Can you imagine that some of them have planted drugs in courtyards? They know that police barely come to this area. Even if they hear [the] sound of a motorcycle [i.e., the police], they can run and hide themselves around the blocks. It is really hard to catch them in here.” (Man, aged 45–55)
“They [outsiders] come from a different mindset. They have a different culture and mentality. They get shocked when they come to this new environment and get spoiled very fast.” (Man, aged 20–24)

4.4.3. Control
The strong boundaries of Ekbatan coupled with the availability of living amenities including schools, health centers, libraries, a cultural center, sports complexes, mosques, and a hospital, has shaped a strong inertia against the mobility of residents. These parallel functional structures mean that residents have comparatively little need to leave Ekbatan. This disinclination to be mobile on the part of residents, as opposed to the uncontrolled movement in the surrounding metropolitan area, has resulted in activities, interactions, and relationships becoming localized.

This sense of locality brings with it a sense of ownership and control over the spaces through the constant presence of the residents. Ekbatan’s boundaries not only act as a means of differentiation and exclusion but also as a tool for collective control over the public space. Spaces within this boundary are subject to the constant surveillance of residents. Under the gaze of the group, appearances, behaviors, and activities are organized.

This control has been constructive more than restrictive in the case of Ekbatan. The nature of the activities and the user groups in Ekbatan indicate the security implemented by the people in the public spaces. Unlike top-down control, which is associated with restrictions, local surveillance is a means of security:
“I won’t let my daughter [of 15 years old] go biking outside Ekbatan. She might be harassed by young people. Here, we can keep an eye on her.” (Woman, aged 40–45)

The courtyards are considered an extension of the private domain and a secondary domain of life for the Ekbatanis. This conception has resulted in a demand for complete control over the courtyards from the residents as a part of their living territory. Overall, the residents aim to be dominant over the socio-cultural landscape of public spaces in Ekbatan and any other controlling forces are seen as a threat to the realization of this demand.

Unlike these spaces that are usually adjacent to retail and office buildings, the courtyards in Ekbatan are surrounded by residential units. Surveillance over the spaces in Ekbatan is associated with the physical presence of the police force in the public spaces adjacent to the living spaces. This requires the police to come into close contact with residents in their living environments, which is usually avoided. The residents of Ekbatan consider the courtyards to be a part of their living environments, and the presence of the police force in Ekbatan is considered a violation of their personal domain. The police force is rarely present in Ekbatan, as it tends to be associated with conflict there.

In Ekbatan’s public spaces, it is possible to spot a good number of young girls with their heads uncovered. The girls usually wear scarfs around their shoulders to be used occasionally. Ekbatan’s type-B courtyards are popular places for people to play with their dogs:

“I usually bring my dog in here (courtyard B) … So many lonely old people live here with their pets … it is easy for us
to bring our pets to here while it is almost impossible to take
them out of Ekbatan.” (Man, aged 18–25)

Moreover, Ekbatan is a well-known place for the formation of subcultures influenced by Western culture. These subcultures are subject to criticism from the fundamentalist groups in society because of their “Western” and “non-Islamic” aspects. For example, Ekbatan is the origin of parkour or free-style running and a major site of parkour festivals in Iran. The area is also known as the origin of graffiti or wall painting in Tehran. In fact, its concrete walls have long provided a showplace for the work of graffiti artists. There is a series of such walls in phase 3 of Ekbatan (known as divar-e-azad²³) which is a favorite place for the work of graffiti artists. The graffiti artwork in divar-e-azad has been painted over several times, though, and parkour festivals have been banned in recent years.

With more than 100,000 residents, Ekbatan is a micro-city within Tehran that occupies an area of one square mile. Considering Ekbatan’s dimensions and position, its boundaries have created a hole in the urban fabric. Through its physical segregation, Ekbatan blocks the flow of movement from the urban network. Inertia caused by this border minimizes the social exchanges between Ekbatan and the rest of the city such that the population from outside the city is generally blocked from entering.

4.5. The Hierarchy of Public Spaces
In the previous section, I discussed the socio-spatial mechanisms resulting in the formation of a socio-cultural landscape in Ekbatan that differs from the socio-cultural landscape of the rest of Tehran. The matter of interest in this section is that of establishing the relationship be-

²³ Free wall
between the configurational properties of spaces and user groups, behaviors, and activities in each courtyard.

The depth from the central marker (as the spatial core of the complex) and the degree of visibility in the spaces have been studied. The visibility of spaces is considered an effective factor in the controllability of spaces (Newman, 1972). Hillier and Shu’s study shows that crime is less likely to occur in areas with a high degree of visibility (Hillier et al., 2000). Thus, it is expected that the degree of visibility affects the pattern of activity and behavior in the spaces. On the other hand, the depth from the central market, as the communal center of Ekbatan, is expected to change the activities in terms of both type and intensity.

To conduct this study, first an analysis of the degree of visibility and physical depth from the market was obtained by using the visibility graph analysis and gamma analysis. Then based on the observations, relationships between these factors and the spatial patterns of behavior were explored.

4.5.1. Results

The linear plan of Ekbatan involves a series of spatial layers. In this spatial structure, spaces that could serve as a connection with the city including the market and public courtyards are placed in the innermost layers of the complex, whereas trees and streets are located in the external layers where they act as spatial and visual barriers. This can be called reversed integration given that as we move through the layers we move from private to public, from segregated to integrated, and from inactive to active spaces.
As discussed, the central market connects all the internal courtyards and is the functional and spatial core of the complex. The centric location of the bazaar combined with its functional significance serves as the spatial core of *shahrak-e-Ekbatan* phase I. Thus, it can be stated that the depth from the central market indicates the extent to which the communal core is spatially integrated into the complex.

Taking the central market as the basis, Figure 34 shows the gamma graph analysis of the spaces. This map reveals that courtyard C has a greater depth from the central market than do courtyards A and B.

Courtyards can also be compared based on their degree of visibility, and in the present study, Space Syntax’s Visibility Graph Analysis was used for the comparison. The central market and the residential block are considered the visual barriers in this regard. As noted, visual integration is an indicator of the visual access from a segment to all other parts of a system. The results (Figure 35) demonstrate that the type-A courtyards have the highest mean visual integration level (≈5.3), the type-B

![Figure 34 Gamma Analysis of Spaces, Source: Author](image)

![Figure 35 Visual integration based on Visibility Graph Analysis of shahrak-e-Ekbatan Phase 1, Source: Author](image)
courtyards have a significantly lower mean visual integration level (=4.3), and the type-C courtyards have the lowest value (= 3.8).

Figures 36-38 shows the results of observation study and reveal a significant difference between the levels of activities and the demographics of the users in the various courtyards. The figure 36 shows the quadrat map of activities in one hour periods. Whereas courtyards A and B were used by a number of groups during the observation, courtyard C was used only rarely.

The average density of users (the number of users per 1,000 square feet in a one-hour period) in courtyard A is \( d = 0.45 \) (figure 37). Their principal activities consisted of chatting (49%), relaxing (30%), and playing (21%). Figure 38 shows that this space is mostly used by elderly men and women. The edges around the central maze are popular places for groups of old people to gather. The maze itself is a favorite spot for mothers to play with their children. Younger people prefer to hang out in the side squares.
The average density of users in courtyard B is three times less than that of courtyard A (d = .15). The activities observed in courtyard B were similar to those observed in courtyard A. However, in courtyard B, the people engaged in the activities were younger than those in courtyard A. In addition, the people in courtyard B engaged in a wider variety of activities, which included playing cards, smoking, and playing with pets. Courtyard C, however, is not used very often. Occasionally, young children playing soccer or volleyball were seen there. In total, only 18 people were observed in this courtyard, of whom only 3 were sitting or chatting.

### 4.5.2. Comparison and Discussion

A comparison between the courtyards in terms of the intensity of the activities in each reveals certain patterns. For example, there is a major difference between the courtyards in regard to
activity density. The density of the activities in courtyard A \((d = .45)\) is 3 times more than that of courtyard B \((d = .15)\) and 15 times more than that of courtyard C \((d = .03)\). Also, there is a difference between the courtyards among the user groups and activities. Most of the users of courtyard A are elderly men and women, whereas courtyard B is a place for younger people. The number of users in courtyard C is significantly lower than the number in the other two courtyards, and most of the users in courtyard C are children playing soccer.

Courtyards A and B are at the same depth from the central market; however, courtyard A is more visible. Compared to these courtyards, courtyard C is at a greater depth from the central market and is less visible. Thus, a parallel hierarchy can be recognized between density of the activities, visibility, and depth from the spatial core of Ekbatan. Courtyard A with the highest degree of visibility and lowest depth from the central market attracts the most users. Courtyard C is the least visible, has the fewest activities, and courtyard C is the least visible, is at the greatest depth from the central market, and has very few users.

This hierarchy can also be realized in the user groups and the types of activities. Courtyard A provides a high degree of social surveillance and visibility. Thus, this courtyard provides a controlled and safe environment for children to play in and where groups of elderly people can relax. The dominant activities and behaviors in the spaces have helped to produce a language that controls the behaviors and activities in the spaces and excludes unwanted groups and activities. The following statements illustrate this point:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree of visibility</th>
<th>Depth from the Central Market</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 41 Comparison between the Degree of visibility and depth from the central market in three types of courtyard, Source: Author
“I usually play with my [6–8-years-old] daughter in here [courtyard A]. Even when I am cooking in the kitchen, I ask these gentlemen [points to a group of older men] to keep eye on her. I ask them not to let my kids go to other courtyards.”
(Woman, aged 28–35)

“I come here [Courtyard A] almost every day after work. I and these gentlemen start gathering around 5 and enjoying talking to each other and watching the kids playing in here.”
(Man, aged 50–55)

Further, the public spaces have been manipulated in order to change the dynamics of the activities. Originally, courtyard A had a relatively simple plan, but later a central square and two subsidiary small squares were added to it. This has changed the activities inside the space:

“When I was a kid, we used to play soccer or other games in that courtyard [courtyard A]. But they [the complex managers] built that maze and fountain in the middle of the space. We couldn’t play there anymore. They told us ‘Your games are noisy and bother the residents.’ So we started playing in the back courtyards [courtyard C]. You can still find kids playing soccer there.” (Man, aged 25–35)
The users of courtyard B are mostly young adults and teenagers. Similar to courtyard A, the layout of the public spaces does not allow high-activity games. Thus, courtyard B has become a favorite place for young people to gather in their own smaller and quieter world to chat, play, and smoke. It provides the privacy they need:

“That courtyard [courtyard A] is too busy for us. Mostly old people sit [there]. These smaller courtyards are more quiet and cozier…. We want to smoke, laugh aloud, and have fun together, make fun of each other. This makes older people angry with us. This is why [the spaces] for young and old people have been separated. Young people usually sit here (courtyard B), and old people sit in that courtyard (courtyard A).” (Man, aged 20–25)

Interestingly there is a reciprocal negative feeling about the activities in these courtyards.

“Unfortunately there are some young people that sit in those spaces and smoke or make trouble for residents…. I wish there was control over their behavior…. It is becoming really annoying.” (Man, aged 45–55)

“Lots of benches have been removed … because before this they so many young kids came and made a lot of noise…. So they started removing the chairs.” (Man 20–25)
Courtyards A and B (both of which are highly visible and highly integrated) are less popular than courtyard C with outsiders who come to smoke grass\textsuperscript{24}. In courtyards A and B, they are subject to the social control of residents. During the process of observation, no smokers were observed in courtyard A whereas courtyard C was a popular place for those who smoke drugs.

4.6. **Summary**
Boundaries are means of ordering, exclusion and distinction (Hernes, 2004). Boundaries can be physical, social or mental. Multiple boundaries exist in each system that defines its relationship with the world outside as well as the organization of its internal structure.

Ekbatan is physically segregated from the city both in macro-level and mid-level. It is separated from the city through highways and has weak connections with adjacent neighborhoods.

Physical exclusion is a determinant factor in the socio-cultural landscape of Ekbatan. Physical borders of Ekbatan have shaped a strong inertia against the pedestrian traffic between inside and outside. This to a large extent hinders outsiders and segregates the internal sphere of Ekbatan and the world outside. Interviews and questionnaires revealed that these boundaries not only have shaped the conception of outsiders among the residents but also have resulted in the residents demand for the exclusion of external socio-cultural forces from the physical spaces and complete control over the spaces.

Mechanisms of exclusion are not only physical but also social and economical. Studying the degree of education in residents of Ekbatan and also their economic condition shows significant differences between Ekbatan and rest of the city. Residents of Ekbatan differentiate

\textsuperscript{24} Marijuana
themselves from the adjacent neighborhoods referring to their own higher socio-economic level. These socio-economic factors act as a system of social differentiation.

Boundaries are also capable of regulating internal interactions. Boundaries that have determined the internal spatial structure of Ekbatan have an essential role in ordering the intensity and type of activities in public spaces. Based on two main physical factors (the degree of visibility and the physical depth of each courtyard from the central market as the spatial core of the complex) a hierarchy can be established among the spaces. Observations revealed that boundaries with the higher degree of visibility and lower depth from the central market attracted significantly higher number of users as well as the different type of activities and user groups.

Boundaries are also shaped by the social bonds among the residents and their sense of attachment to the community. Both factors act as mechanisms of distinction and exclusion and are correlated. Also, residents who have lived for a longer time in the complex have developed stronger social bonds and those who are more satisfied with the public spaces and use it more often have a significantly higher sense of attachment to the community.

The socio-cultural landscape of Ekbatan is the result of familiarity in a selected group of people and exclusion external forces and shaping social control over the public spaces. The rejection of the up-down control through the socio-spatial segregation and local control over the spaces made the formation of an alternative space possible. Alternative space refers to the relationship of public spaces with the duality of public-private spaces in Tehran: public space as the stage for dominance of governmental up-down controlling power and the private space as the domain of freedom.
Residents of Ekbatan do not own legal instruments for excluding outsiders and the process of exclusion is a socio-spatial mechanism. While “outsiders/strangers” are only capable of developing transient bonds in space, residents are able to use their social force which determines the socio-cultural landscape of Ekbatan. Residents are those who have shaped permanent bonds within their network and also have developed a strong knowledge of the Ekbatan as an urban structure.

Chapter 5. Conclusion

This thesis aimed to investigate the conflicting situation of public spaces through studying the relationship between the power and the public spaces in the city of Tehran. The focus was on certain urban settings that have shaped a socio-cultural landscape which is different from the stat-promoted public sphere.

Through a parallel social and spatial analysis of Grand bazaar of Tehran during the Pahlavi’s reign and shahrak-e-Ekbatan a Housing estate from 70s during the post-revolutionary Iran contributing factors in the formation of this different socio-cultural landscape is investigated. Both settings exemplify the conflicting situation of the public spaces in two different timeframes the context of contemporary Tehran.

Social and physical boundaries of Ekbatan and bazaar have shaped an environment distinguished from the widespread and homogenizing power that dominates the city. Boundaries have a centric role in the nature of these settings. Space acts as a mediator of power in the cities and social and spatial boundaries provide the opportunity for the formation of an autonomous public sphere. Urban boundaries define territories in which local interpersonal networks and sense of local ownership over the spaces in developed. Segregation at the same time results in social differentiation and formation of the insider-outsider duality. This shapes a mechanism in which public spaces in
the city are privatized and external forces are excluded. The socio-cultural landscape is minimally affected by the broader community and the up-down controlling system.

Boundaries in bazaar have shaped a setting in which the socio-cultural landscape is based on certain ideas, values and beliefs mainly based on the Iranian traditional society. These practices have been established and promoted during the years in the form of public activities, rituals and ceremonies in the space. As a result spaces have been engaged functionally and symbolically with these meanings. While parallel practices with differentiating role are not established in Ekbatan, distinct patterns of appearance and behavior can be recognized. Therefore in the absence of organized manifestations, understanding the socio-cultural landscape of Ekbatan is possible through studying minor social practices including hijab. Subcultures that have been shaped in Ekbatan are the result of its relative freedom that have been popularized by young groups and cannot be seen as a part of the everyday practices.

Physical structures act as a means of differentiation both structurally and semantically. Bazaar is distinguished from the modern city by its traditional and pre-modern structure. Bazaar turns into a reference point in the city. Similarly in Ekbatan the spatial structure is a means of differentiation comparing to street based planning in rest of the city. Through their segregation from the main urban movement network, both Ekbatan and bazaar have been able to spatially segregate from the world outside. However, there are certain differences between this exclusion in Ekbatan and bazaar. In Ekbatan, highways cut off all the pedestrian access to the area. This shapes a significantly stronger border comparing to bazaar in which spaces of bazaar are directly accessible from some main streets in the cities. Also, because of its function bazaar is an important destination in the cities which decreases its border effects. Ekbatan, however, is a residential area which does not serve as a destination.
Formation and maintenance of the social bonds in bazaar is to a large extent relied upon the physical structure of bazaar. The term that merchants in bazaar are known with (bazaari) shows that this network is dependent to the physical structure of Ekbatan. Social bonds are to a large extent relied upon the physical structure of bazaar. The term bazaari which refers to the merchants in bazaar refers to the physical structure of Ekbatan. These social bonds are means of differentiation between bazaaris and merchants outside bazaar known as khiabani\textsuperscript{25}.

This difference is the strength of physical boundaries between Ekbatan and bazaar reveals an important difference between them: Ekbatan owns more powerful physical boundaries comparing to bazaar. While in bazaar the social boundaries are more significant. Similarly, social bonds in Ekbatan are shaped around the physical structure, however, they are more based on informal communications and are less organized based on common interest. However, they have the same distinctive effect/ Social bonds in Ekbatan act as means of exclusion. Bazaar is a system with distinctive rules and regulations. It is an institution with certain hierarchies. While established however, established rules in Ekbatan are very few.

For so many years, ideas and beliefs have been manifested through the rituals in the space provided by bazaar. The infrastructure and background that have been developed through so many years in bazaar cannot be found in Ekbatan. However, Ekbatan provides a basis for the formation and flourishing of alternative lifestyle in the public life.

\textsuperscript{25} Khiaban means street
Appendix A - Questionnaire

Age:

1- 18-24
2- 24-35
3- 35-49
4- 50-65
5- +65

Gender:
1. Male  2. Female

Education:
1. Elementary and Middle School
2. High School
3. College
4. Masters or Ph. D

1- From the amenities listed below, which one do you use the most?

A- Play Grounds
B- Swimming Pool
C- Parks and Gardens
D- Sport Facilities
E- Benches and Public Spaces
F- Game Tables
G- Shops
H- Restaurants and Cafes

2- What do you usually do in public spaces of Ekbatan? (you can choose more than one)
A- Playing
B- Resting
C- Conversation
D- Socio-Cultural Activities
E- Walking
F- Shopping
G- Other

3- How often do you use public spaces?
A- Every day
B- Once or twice a week
C- Once or twice a month
D- Never

4- How satisfied are you with the open spaces?
A- Very satisfied
B- Satisfied
C- Medium
D- Not-Satisfied
E- Very Non-Satisfied

5- How attached are you to your community in Ekbatan?
A- Very High
B- High
C- Medium
D- Low
E- Very Low
6- How long you lived here?

A- 0-5
B- 6-10
C- 11-15
D- 16-20
E- 20 and higher

7- Number of friends in Ekbatan?

a- 0-5
b- 5-10
c- More than 10
Appendix B- Results from Questionnaires

Figure 40 Education, Source: author

Figure 41 Age, Source: author

Figure 39 From the amenities listed below, which one do you use the most?, Source: author
Figure 44 What do you usually do in public spaces of Ekbatan? (you can choose more than one). Source: author

Figure 43 How many friends do you have in Ekbatan?, Source: author

Figure 42 How long have you lived in Ekbatan?, Source: author
Figure 45 How satisfied are you with the open spaces?, Source: author

Figure 46 How often do you use public spaces?, Source: author

Figure 47 How attached are you to your community in Ekbatan?, Source: author
Bibliography:

Chapter 1


Chapter 2:


Chapter 3:


8.

Chapter 4


