Re-thinking Open City Theory:

The Case of Tehran

PhD Thesis

by

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To all those Iranian women who resist any form of oppression

Acknowledgements

Abstract

This thesis investigates Richard Sennett's open city theory in the sociopolitical context of the Iranian capital, Tehran. Open city theory is built on design interventions that set out to modify specific forms of design, inherited from the functional city of the early twentieth century, that create social divisions in cities. Instead of designing more private, formal, gated and safe urban environments that segregate people according to their individual characteristics, ethnicities, professions and so on, open city theory encourages coexistence, complexity, tolerance and diversity through design. However, this research is not just an attempt to analyse or apply this theory to another city, but is also an investigation of the potential dimensions of openness in the non-western sociopolitical context of Tehran – dimensions that might not necessarily fit Sennett's theory.

To begin with, the study suggests that open city theory is perhaps too charged with a western sense of openness/closedness, about what a city is or should be. This is to suggest that a lack of both social interaction and a vivid and diverse urban life cannot always be seen as the result of functional urban planning and that therefore, closedness should not be conceived as a concept that describes *only* those western cities undergoing rigid neoliberalisation, privatisation and new capitalism. This thesis, on the contrary, uses the idea of closedness to describe the oppressive urban life of cities under totalitarian and authoritarian rule, and suggests new perspectives that strip away the overcharged meanings currently attached to the concepts of openness and closedness in western countries.

Based on a mixed methodology, this study shows how closedness in Tehran is tied to the constant production and re-production of Islamic spaces by state apparatuses, not just to create homogeneous and synchronous relations, but which also treat the body as an entity to be disciplined and controlled. But this research goes beyond that to show how in the oppressive political climate of Iran, openness should also be understood differently to the way it is used in open city theory, to include any moment through which people – especially women and youth – create spatial arrangements outside and beyond the control of the authorities. And since these moments are not permanent, the openness they produce is also characteristically transitory, and subject to happening in specific time-spaces. By paying attention to transient interactions in semi-public/semi-private spaces such as cafés, taxis, buses and the metro (as well as in virtual spaces online), this research suggests that in Tehran it is not design interventions but people

who dissolve the normative social structure and order of urban life to develop a kind of brief sociable experience.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

When I completed my MA in Architecture in *Cultural Identity and Globalisation* at the University of Westminster in 2016, the first question I asked myself was 'What did I actually learn from the relationship between *cultural identity* and *architecture*?' Perhaps the reason for this ambiguity and uncertainty was the case study I had chosen for my final thesis: a women-only park in Iran. This was an enclosed garden that offers women a freedom they cannot have in other [open] spaces of the city. Opposed from the start to the concept of dedicating to women a limited, enclosed, and isolated public space in the city, I chose the site to let my architectural skills blur the edge between inside and outside and create an in-between space at the edge of the park where freedom starts and ends. This was to be done by transforming the rigid, tall brick wall around the park into an in-between zone where the irregular design – such as its low to medium-rise, irregular positioning on the ground and so on – provided visual accessibility and interaction between inside and outside. However, it remained at the design stage; the hypotheses, speculations, theorisation, and design interventions could not be brought to fruition, because in reality men are not allowed to interact with women at the edges of women-only parks in Iran and there should be no visual access to the inside. This is related to the political, social and cultural climate of the country, which regulates the space to segregate, not to connect, people.

Going back to my question, I began this study to understand why these sorts of oppositional architectural design interventions, that challenge the Islamist mode of production of space, usually remain on paper in Iran. I realised that in Iran the best answer lies in making a bridge between the following forces: politics, society and identity on the one side and architecture and planning on the other. With this primary idea in mind, I came across Sennett's works on the theory of the open city; a series of design interventions that opposes planning schemes that increase the segregation of people who are different and provides settings for coming together and socialising in cities. Compared to other scholars engaged in these sorts of critical urban theory to foster tolerance and interaction among citizens, Sennett, with his multi-dimensional analysis of the urban, had more convincing answers to my questions. Within the discipline of urban studies there are many architects, planners, socialists, and thinkers who try to create complex and diverse social systems. What they all have in common is their opposition to urban regulations that increase zoning, segregation and privatisation, and the belief that this sort of

planning is, in fact, inherited from the early twentieth century 'functional city'; a city intentionally zoned, orchestrated, and shaped as a whole. They all believe that, instead of enhancing the quality of zoning regulations and segregating people from each other, urban planning today needs to be responsive to diversity and coexistence. Many western scholars – among them Jane Jacobs (1961), Lewis Mumford (1970), Henry Lefebvre (1970), David Harvey (1989), Lionel March and Leslie Martin (1972), Albert Pope (1996), Saskia Sassen (2006), Ricky Burdett and Dejan Sudjic (2007), Tim Rieniets, Jennifer Sigler, Kees Christiaanse (2009), Richard Sennett (2018) and so on – have stressed the importance of social diversity in urban planning in their work. There is another common ground in their argument that interests me the most. The city that they discuss is a western one, where the globalisation of labour and capital flows, transformation of production and political economy, shifts in the modes of ownership and land control, have all led to the alteration of the nature of cities. This is a nature based on the idea that city is a forum through which people can learn to live with strangers, to develop multiple images of their own identities, and to experience a condition of alterity rather than of difference.[1] But today, the modes of modern capitalism put up barriers to the experience of diversity and complexity in [western] cities. Urban environments today, for all these scholars and many others, are created in order to reflect an image of a 'healthy society' – which is done by erecting gated communities, walls, fences, and ubiquitous CCTVs – and these in turn make fortresses in the city, filled with the fear of unknown; the stranger (Davis, 1992).

But the difference between these thinkers and Sennett, is that Sennett's approach allowed me to think beyond the western model of social patterns and behaviours, because he himself gets inspired by a non-western context: from the diversity, informality, disorder and complexity of social life in an open-air electronic market (Nehru Place) in Delhi, India as a result of some design interventions. As a student who did her master's degree in architecture, I was familiar with the limits of classical and modern approaches in architecture that tended to organize space coherently through clear-cut patterns (Giedion, 1941, p.6). Sennett's approach to both architecture and planning is to create irregular, informal and complex space by taking power away from the designer and distributing it equally between both designer and user. Consequently his approach is unique, because he offers ways to skill people in such a way as to accumulate complex ways of living. Instead of imposing a design scheme in a top-down

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[1] Difference is a fixed classificatory scheme of identity, but alterity is a provoker, a force of anxiety, marked by strangeness, 'since you don't know what the other will do' (Sennett, 2001, 16).

manner, therefore, his theory leaves some room for experiment and possibilities in the process of design and avoids the rigidity of a fixed outcome, which means that the space is unfinished, or as he puts it, is incomplete and changes constantly with different users. He suggests five design interventions, each of which here becomes a section in its own right, as follows: *The Synchronous Form, Punctuated-Monumental Markers, Porosity, Incomplete Form, and Multiple-seed Planning.* Unlike twentieth century architecture and planning, they are capable of keeping alive the tensions, disorder, irregularity and complexity of urban phenomena.

However, my first response to his theory, published in *Building and Dwelling* in 2018, was to ask whether it was capable of being applied in every city around the world, or was just another western formulation for what he calls closed cities such as Frankfurt. Is *closed* a term, a concept, a phenomenon, or a metaphor that like a common language among western scholars describes only the neoliberal, privatised and capitalist model of urbanisation? How about totalitarian cities where a specific model of space should be [re]produced and limited ways of using the spaces are dictated from above? Do we have a language for that yet, or we can look at these theories from different sociopolitical perspectives as well? This is to suggest that by focusing only on western [urban] *problems* – namely neoliberalism and the private ownership of public land, gated communities, surveillance of CCTVs and so on – city actors, decision-makers, and planners in the west have been prevented from seeing alternative relations, narratives, and new possibilities within the spatial and institutional systems of non-western cities. One may refer to the point made above, about the open air market at Nehru Place, and defend Sennett based on the inspiration he draws from this place, using it as an example to advocate the nurturing of complexity and diversity in urban life through design interventions, because he believes that this place is a true mixed use of public and private functions and includes people coming from different nations and having various religious beliefs (Sennett, 2018, p.93-98). But my argument is about whether, within the informal setting of that market, Sennett also witnessed the coming together, mixing and face-to-face interaction of rich people from the higher casts of Indian society? Or perhaps people in India look for other potential ways to mix and interact with those who are different?

Coming from the homogenous environmental contexts of the west, Sennett and other urban scholars see a closed city as a city 'repressing anything that does not fit in' (Sennett, 2006), and therefore try to overcome the modernist separation of functions, neoliberal privatisation and capitalist surveillance systems. Can we then suggest that *closedness*, and its opposite term *openness*, are terms too charged with a western sense of urbanisation? When, for instance, they

are referring to issues of equality, democracy and rights in cities, they are referring, in fact, to a 'systematic transformation in the pattern of land ownership in cities', begun in the 1980s, which in return privatises and de-urbanises city space by reducing the texture and scale of spaces previously accessible to the public (Sassen, 2014, p.14). And of course, democracy here refers to Aristotle's notion of democracy which is based on difference and complexity. This is because every ancient Greek city was formed by *synoikismos* – a drawing together of different families and tribes, of competing economic interests, of natives with foreigners – and therefore the *polis* was composed of different kinds of men who acted in divergent ways that did not neatly fit together (Sennett, 1998). And the Pnyx and the Agora were places in which to practice this democracy.[2] However, even this ideal western model of democracy has its own fissures and cracks; some feminist scholars, such as Judith Butler (2011), have pointed out the absence of marginal groups such as slaves, foreigners and barbarians, and even women in certain circumstances, in the classical space of the *polis,* which means that they could not become part of the plurality that brought this space into being.

Nevertheless, my argument is based on my cultural and gender identity. As a woman raised in Iran, I wonder what closedness/openness means if one tries to strip these concepts from the overcharged meaning they currently have in the Western European context. What does closedness/openness mean in a city like Tehran, where urbanisation, or better to say cityness, connotes different historic, political, social and cultural patterns in the making and the use of urban spaces? Are there any other potential ways to think about this 'open city' theory that offers solutions to current urban problems *only* through design? What if we consider a rigidly hierarchical context in which neither the designer/planner, nor the developers, nor the people are the main decision makers on how a city should be designed and used? This thesis, stands against the open city theory. Sennett's ideal city seems to be complex, diverse, open, disordered, and informal and can be achieved through the experimental life, design and planning. In

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[2] Pynx was a bowl-shaped, open-air theatre that apart from dancing and plays, people could seek order in their politics, as the speakers could stand in the open, round space on a stone platform, while the mass of five or six thousand bodies gathered for this political theatre, sat around the bowl in assigned places, and watched each other's reactions. A theatrical-political space where eye, voice, and body could at the same time concentrate on a speaker, as well as identify others in the audience who might call out challenges or comments. The other space of democracy was the Athenian agora: the town square consisted of a large open space crossed diagonally by the main street of Athens, where a number of activities could occur simultaneously - from commerce, religious rituals, to casual hanging out – in temples, law court, banks, and other buildings on the back. Lack of visual barriers in the agora is one of the main characteristics of this place as men did not experience physical compartmentalisation when walking in the square. Which means that one could caught up in the middle of a trial occurring in the law court, shouting out his own opinion or simply taking in an unexpected problem, only because he came to the square to see a banker (see Sennett, 2016, p.3).

Sennett's version of open city, as mentioned above, people will tolerate differences. Implying this ideal image into the matter of city planning means that the designers, developers, private stakeholders, local authorities and communities will all work together for achieving the same goal: designing the city with the people, for the people. What he failed to realise is that the quest for open city, however perverted by the order of the functional city, can be as much a mark of political [re]action as the production of *the closed city*. In authoritarian cities, for instance – where, in comparison with democratic western context, time and space are produced, experienced and narrated differently – the quest for open city cannot simply be briefed into an attempt of providing some five design interventions, or better to say, to the measure of openness by design. Quite the opposite, it also can be seen as a sociopolitical effort that can locate larger meaning and purpose in those cities. Sennett's version of open city ignores the vast majority of cities performing under authoritarian states, such as Tehran. Although Sennett never claims that his open city theory is applicable in those contexts, his theory nevertheless has little to say about the wider questions of urban development and politics beyond the urban West.

Neglecting many cities that are functioning by ideology and authoritarianism, Sennett *still* thinks of the city as a kind of mid-eighteen century London and Paris version of the theatre of the world (*theatrum mundi*) where the streets and squares demand the constant interaction among differences/strangers (Sennett, 1976). Nevertheless, in offering this image, he slips into a one-dimensional view of history as he goes no further to dig into the political setting that brought these kind of theatre-like urban spaces into being. His approach to Haussmann's Paris, for example, overlooked all the complexities and political interventions of the authoritarian Emperor, who resorted to widespread political repression of alternative political movements and dealt with the surplus capital and unemployment problem of the time by way of urbanisation. Sennett (2018, p.32-33) explains astonishingly how Haussmann reconfigured the urban, and as a result, the social infrastructure of Paris to validate the discussion of the impact of the built form (what Sennett refers to as *ville*) on the lived and social life (what Sennett refers to as *cité*). But, in order to answer wider questions on the relationship between the built and the lived, one needs to take one step back and explore the relationship between urban development and politics that are usually dictated by the rulers over the ruled. On the contrary, Harvey (2008, p.3-4), for instance, discusses how Haussmann's rebuilding of Paris was, in fact, a model of capitalist urbanisation that was driven by the need of the authoritarian emperor to solve 'the crises of unemployed surplus capital and surplus labour and the abortive revolution by unemployed workers and those bourgeois utopians who saw a social republic as the antidote

to the capitalist greed and inequality'. Looking at Haussmann's rebuilding programme of Paris from a political economy point of view, he indicates how the emperor's vast program of infrastructural investment was a primary vehicle of social stabilization that absorbed huge quantities of labour and of capital by the standards of the time and, coupled with authoritarian suppression of the aspirations of the Parisian labour force.

Based on socio-political and ethnographic analysis of the urban context in an authoritarian city, this thesis stands in opposition to Sennett's open city theory. It shows how in Tehran closedness, and as a result segregation and lack of interaction among people, is not [only] the result of urban planning and development, but above all a consequence of political Islam[3] which aims to conquer all spaces in civil society that create no opportunity for people to interact with each other freely in the city, creating instead an alternative, traditional and religious politico-cultural-social order to the version of modernity that existed before the 1979 revolution. This is to say that while the current category of open city, provides a lens for viewing cities solely as subject to functional, neoliberal, global, and capitalist forces, this research recognises ideological and oppressive forces, takes them into account and challenges the putative open city theory by distinguishing the use of the term openness/closedness in another context as well. The aim of the research is to achieve different urban trajectories and forms and different ways of perceiving and recognising open city/closed city in authoritarian cities. By situating specific keywords from the theory and highlighting their different use in the context of Tehran, the thesis suggests other potential ways that openness might occur, not through design but by people themselves and the solutions they find to overcome *the* closedness of the city.

This is to suggest that not only do urbanisation processes not necessarily follow the western model in Tehran, but that social life is also perceived and organised differently in this city. This is because, according to some Iranian scholars such as Milani (1992), the private and public spheres in the context of Iran are rigidly emphasised through female bodies. She believes that in a veiled society, walls surround houses and houses compartmentalise – with *birouni* (outer) and *andarouni* (inner) areas – religious *Taqiyeh* (deliberate dissimulation) to protect faith;

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[3] There is a large spectrum of the Iranian model of political Islam, taken from totalitarianism/clerical fascism (Mozaffari, 2007, 2017; Bale 2009), to authoritarian (Chehabi 2001), illiberal democracy (Zakaria 1997), theocracy (Chehabi 1991; Arjomand 1988), revolutionary traditionalism (Arjomand 1986; 1988), clerical totalitarian (Schirazi 2009), authoritarian populism (Cotton 1986), a form of 'generic fascism' (Taheri 2010), and religious democracy (Majd, 2011).

Ta'arof (a ritualistic mode of discourse) disguises some thoughts and emotions and both parties and feelings become disjointed in both *Zaheri* (external) and *Bateni* (internal) spheres. On the other hand, Amir-Ebrahimi (2008) shows how the societal norms and conventions of such a society, known as *Urf*, encourage the inner self to be hidden under an appearance; the face (*zaher*). The face, like a high wall, hides and protects the inner self. She believes that the result is a duality (one of the cultural specificities of Iranian identity) that is important specifically to religious women, who are subjected to hiding their bodies, words, and inner selves under the veil and behind walls. Moreover, there are parallel forces, known as *Sharia* (religious law), that permeate the private, public, and political spheres of Iranian life and 'dictate' that women wear compulsory hijab, for instance, to keep themselves secure. This means that, apart from planning schemes, there are other forces such as *sharia* and *urf* that dictate to people, and especially women, how to use/not-use and act/not-act in the city. Therefore, unlike Western societies, which are preoccupied with issues of the race and culture of those from other countries, in Tehran, class status, sexuality, and family status become important factors in accessing, being in, and using the city's different spaces.

This study therefore argues that even if some architectural and planning strategies create open physical environments in Tehran, public spaces, such as urban squares, parks, galleries, libraries and so on, cannot be put to democratic use, because city dwellers, particularly women, have to follow certain codes dictated by the authorities. While these codes are mostly restrictive, this study has used documentary research, spatial visualisation and ethnographic work, to show how some people, especially women and youth, re-define these discriminatory codes and temporarily open up the closed city through their actions, behaviours, and bodily gestures.

It is worth noting that this tendency is not limited only to Iran but that other Muslim cities, such as Cairo, also witness such interventions, manipulations, and re-definition of the use of public and private spaces by women and youth. Mona Abaza (2013 and 2017), for instance, shows how, in a way similar to the Green movement (2009) in Tehran, people abruptly changed the models and codes of public, private and social life in Cairo during the Arab Spring and re-claimed public spaces through non-violent protests such as circulating information on the internet and illustrating their messages with graffiti on the walls of the city. This, in turn, offers a novel perspective on the relationship people make with their environment in cities under top-down, religious, oppressive and restrictive forces to the extent that public space – instead of offering citizens a platform, a stage to come together, debate and lobby for their political and

social needs – turns into a space of resistance and contestation, full of quiet tactics that transgress, manipulate, and re-define the codes and use of public and private spaces.

One of these tactics, for instance, emerged in Tehran in 1997, when a new movement, known as the reformist movement, led by Mohammad Khatami (president of Iran between 1997 and 2005), put an end to an era of extreme post-revolutionary suppression. Women and youth turned the rather less extreme political climate of the reformation era into an opportunity to increase their presence in physical and virtual spaces through a subtle or 'velvet' form of resistance and transgression, known as 'civil disobedience' (*nafarmani-ye madani*) (Amir-Ebrahimi, 2008, p.94). Since then, Tehran and (later) other major Iranian cities, have become full of massive contradictions and 'in-between' balances between freedom/control, tradition/modernity, resistance/obedience, public/private, inside/outside and so on. Not only have women become more educated, active, and stylish, they have begun to re-define what it means to be an ordinary Islamic woman by 'dint of their actions, working outside the home, exercising in parks, walking in the streets in colourful dress and running businesses in the male preserve of the bazaar' (Khatam, 2009, p.1). Another tactic they have used to change the closed and oppressive post-revolutionary climate is the 'new hijab', consisting of a tight, short, colourful jacket (manteau) which reveals the shape of their bodies, with small scarves that show off their hair. Since 1997, then, women have learned how to turn their bodies into a means to re-claim, re-organise and deconstruct the mechanisms of established authoritarian power and to transform the qualities of public/private spaces in Tehran. In exploring all these, this thesis relies on a mixed methodology that uses both primary data on the lived experiences of people in Tehran and secondary data on the urban rules and regulations in the design and use of public and private spaces in Tehran.

It is worth mentioning that there have been many good studies carried out by scholars, intellectuals and students – among them, Yusuf Kiani (1986, 1987), Mohammad Mansour Falamaki (1978), Amir Bani Masoud (2011) and others – inside and outside Iran, on the transition of public/private spaces, architecture, urban development and their socio-political impacts. However, less has been written on semi-private/semi-public spaces in Tehran, including cafés, buses, taxis, and the metro that are used to resist, challenge, transform, de-regulate, re-order and re-define the Islamic codes of production of [closed] urban spaces in Tehran. This is to argue that contrary to the way it operates in the west, urban closedness in Iran is tied to Islamic ideological doctrines that tend to control, discipline, and supress views other than their own. Consequently, openness also should be perceived differently, to include

any moment, situation, time and space through which these prescriptive and preventive forces are challenged and transformed. Needless to say, there is a limited body of work on the novel ways that women and youth use public spaces in Tehran, with the notable exceptions of Masserat Amir-Ebrahimi (2008) and Nazgol Bagheri (2013). However, no one has framed a design-based theory though which to read the social life of the people in the current socio-political context of Tehran. Reading Tehran through the open city theory suggested by Richard Sennett, will add to all these literature the temporary and transitory moments in which people experience openness, not through design, but through embracing the in-between spaces using new codes with which to access, be in, and use the city.

Research questions

The thesis focused on a mixed method strategy in which data was collected from different resources. Archival and other secondary resources – such as previous research, websites, newspapers, magazines, municipal and parliamentary rules and regulations and so forth – were used to explore the sociopolitical and urban context of Tehran. Ethnographic data were also collected from the lived experiences of people in different semi-public/semi-private spaces in Tehran, to answer the following research questions:

- Which aspects of open city theory can plausibly be expected to be achieved in the city of Tehran?
- What are the elements and characteristics of openness in Tehran?
- How might the concept of 'openness' in Tehran be different from that of open city theory?

Thesis structure

This dissertation consists of eight chapters, including this introductory chapter. Chapter Two is a review of the fundamental concept of this study, 'open city' and is organised into five sections. The first section interprets the metaphors of open and closed and what they mean when paired with the city. The next section explains, through a detailed review of the literature and a chronological narrative of the history of the open/closed city, the earliest appearance of the concepts open and closed in architecture and urban planning. I also outline the different ways in which different scholars have tried to use this concept of city, from Le Corbusier in the early twentieth century to Richard Sennett in the second decade of twenty first century. The

main aim here is to reveal the source of urban problems of today; that is, the emergence of the 'functional city' in the early twentieth century, based on the idea of a zoned, accessible, healthy and safe city. Through reviewing the work of some contemporary architects who are also working on open city theory, the section that follows elaborates different points of view on the open city, from the open city as a set of values to its conceptualisation as a set of design interventions. From there, I move on to explain, in the next section, why Richard Sennett's approach forms the basis of this research, and explain that there are gaps in his theory and its five design interventions (*Synchronous Form, Punctuated-Monumental Markers, Porosity, Incomplete form, and Multiple-seed Planning*). This is the failure to not consider cities' specific socio-political contexts in opening their built form; in other words, these design interventions cannot be used directly in other cities, whose sociopolitical contexts are different and unique. Based on a literature review, the last section of this chapter offers a general image of the sociopolitical context of Tehran, and uses this as a case study to show how some western categories, such as public and private space, are perceived and used differently in this context. I conclude that different approaches and different criteria need to be considered if one wishes to understand the city of Tehran through the lens of the open city. It is important to note that a large proportion of the literature review is based on reading western urban theories, because to be able to think differently about the metaphor of open/closed in Tehran, it was first important to be able to distinguish its origins and how it has been used by urban scholars throughout western history.

Chapter Three describes the mixed-methods approach used to gather and analyse the data. Both documentary and ethnography methods were among the theoretical and practical research themes in this study. While one method, documentary, as an inductive and objective approach, helped create an image of the political, social and urban context of Tehran, a subjective approach, ethnography, offered a richer understanding of everyday social life through observation, participation, photography, voice-recording, map-making, vignettes and so on. In this chapter, I review the history of these two approaches and explain my research method in detail.

By reading the modern urban history of Tehran through open city theory, Chapter Four offers a new insight into the sociopolitical and urban geography of this city. It is important to note that if one wishes to understand the sociopolitical and urban context of Tehran today, they need to consider 1979 as the focal point of their assessment. This is because what happened in 1979 was, in fact, a dissatisfaction, a rejection, or in other words a revolution against the prevalence

of a western order imposed by the Pahlavi dynasty. So this chapter indicates the closedness/openness of imposing a western order in the shape of the shah's programme of modernisation of traditional Iranian architecture, urban planning, society, culture and politics. It goes further to show that while the Pahlavis to a great extent opened up the country, they also closed it off to a large proportion of Iranian society, including traditional, religious and poor people, and so on. This chapter shows that the 1979 revolution was a reaction to the social, political and urban problems of the time, and conveyed a message of inclusion to those who had been excluded up to that point.

Chapter Five consists of a description of post-revolutionary Tehran, when Islam as an ideology became a constitutive element of Tehran. By indicating the role of *Velayat-e Faqih* and revolutionary apparatuses as its extensions in the Islamification of the urban, political, cultural and everyday life space of the people in post-revolutionary Tehran, this chapter discusses the meaning of openness and closedness in that context. It is explained that while the Islamic Revolution opened the city to those marginalised under the Pahlavis, namely traditional women, it closed it to, and negated those who had been influenced by the earlier western culture. In so doing, the new regime tried to Islamise urban, cultural and social space as well as the body. But this form of production of the Islamic city and body was in contradiction with both the shah's programme of modernisation of the city and people's bodies. This time, the Islamic regime was influenced by the modern utopia of women's equality and productivity and for its own legitimation wanted to retain women's presence in the city for the most part. The result was that the female body became both the object of, and subject to, this Islamification programme, to the extent that while the public presence of women was welcomed as an element of modernisation, their bodies were subjected to compulsory covering-up, as full hijab became one of the most important elements of Islamisation. However, this chapter also shows how the reformation era brought momentum for social reform and democratic change before conservatives gained power in 2005 once again. Since the reformation era, women and youth have become skilled at maintaining a public presence while simultaneously negating the top-down Islamic codes and regulations. These tactics, in turn, have opened up the closed city at different times and in different spaces.

Exploring these times and spaces, in which women and youth have transformed the quality and power-relations of the closed city is the central theme of the next two chapters. Chapter Six is a physical description of the case study, Tajrsih Square, through open city theory. It depicts the informality, irregularities, and complexity of 'the solid of buildings and streets' (Sennett, 2020,

p.8). But the chapter goes beyond this. Combining lived experience, photographs, maps, and vignettes, it shows how a more-than-physical reading of a city is needed if one attempts to grasp the energy and sense of living in a specific context. Adding these pop-up and temporary moments to Sennett's five design interventions helps to understand other potential ways in which people open up the closed city that dictates and prescribes a certain way of being.

Chapter Seven, on the other hand, reflects the social lives of people who are not tied to the physical layout of buildings and streets, but who are on the move, either in the roads and streets in private or public vehicles, or who are surfing and browsing in virtual space. It explores the urban, social, and everyday lives of people in buses, on the metro, and in taxis and private cars, as well as on social media. The central theme of this chapter is to indicate the temporary nature and momentary characteristics of openness in Tehran. This is done by exploring how people use these semi-public/semi-private spaces to promote social interaction, inclusion and complexity. Based on ethnographic data from observation, informal conversations, photographs, maps, vignettes and so on, this section ends by indicating that when streets, urban squares or shopping malls are constantly under the surveillance of the morality police, who dictate what people wear and how they should behave in public, the internet and social media operate as an alternative space that not only enhances the presence of women and youth but also creates, as a result, the possibility to challenge the top-down order and the increase in surveillance.

I end the thesis by answering my research questions in the concluding chapter (Chapter Eight). I conclude that closedness and openness are perceived and used differently by people in Tehran. The central argument is that even if a closed city becomes open through certain forms of design intervention, it is still unfit for democratic use by everyone when an authoritarian government rules over both the people and the city. Through this thesis, therefore, I suggest that instead of binding the theory of open city, only, to the rhetoric of 'functional city', there is a need to re-think it to include cities under totalitarian rule as well. The result is that instead of merely giving architectural and urban design the power to solve an urban issue, we will also value the everyday struggles, resistances, and sacrifices made by people in their everyday lives to open up a city that is closed to them by law (*sharia*) and norms (*urf*), if not by design.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter explores the main concept of the thesis, 'open city' theory, as well as the place to which it is applied, the city of Tehran. The chapter shows how many contemporary architects, geographers, historians, socialists, thinkers and decision makers now recognise the varied and plural nature of urban life, and work together to enhance livelihoods and human experience in cities, as well as to expand the plurality and diversity of societies.

The chapter is divided into five sections. The first four revolve around the western theory of the open city. The last section focuses on the Iranian context. It is worth mentioning here that since this is not a comparative study the literature review does not compare western with Iranian literatures of openness and closedness. The key concept in this study, the open city, comes from the west, but [alternative] experiences of openness and closedness in Iran are the primary topic in this reaserch. Because of this, the first four sections of the literature review explore the open city concept, while the rest of the thesis explores other ways in which, potentially, openness and closedness are experienced in Iran.

Therefore, in structuring this chapter, the first step is to look at how the words 'open' and 'closed' are defined, metaphorically, and to discuss what it means when these words are paired with 'city'. Based on this definition, the second section offers a historical narrative of the emergence of the open city. This has been done by emphasising the different ways architects and planners have approached the idea of open city. The third section goes on to explore what open city theory means today, and its current developments and advocates. Section three ends by indicating that among the various approaches to open city theory, Richard Sennett's work is the main focus of this research. Section four explains his approach, explaining its historical background and specific features. This section concludes by identifying gaps in his theory and explaining that the aim of this research is to fill those gaps. The final section of the literature review consists of an overview of the sociopolitical context of Tehran, the city that is the focus of the possibility of re-thinking open city theory.

2.1. Open and closed: definitions

'Open' is a broad and powerful metaphor that carries a lot of rhetoric; when applied to the city it can carry a range of different meanings. To investigate the meaning of metaphors, Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p.5) suggest paying close attention to the relationship between the meaning and the metaphor; 'the essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another'. This relationship indicates how and where concepts are grounded, structured, related to each other and defined – which can be subjective, objective or [specifically] experimental (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980); any attribution of objective or absolute truth to a metaphor should be rejected and replaced with an alternative account in which human experience and understanding play a central role (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, p.x). This indicates the ambiguity of a metaphorical expression, in which the listener must *redefine* the meaning to become part of the speaker's own (different) world, without losing sight of his own world. Metaphors are based on human experience and understanding (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, p.x) and can therefore have different meanings in different contexts, cultures and linguistic expressions. Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p.10) suggest that when one aspect of a metaphorical concept is comprehended in terms of another, 'other' aspects inconsistent with the metaphor will be hidden, which keeps the hearer from focusing on them. This is because in a metaphor the meaning is not right there in the sentence, because 'it matters a lot who is saying or listening to the sentence and what his social and political attitudes are' (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980, p.12).

Consider Simmel's account of door and bridge, for instance, which shows the human desire to connect and to border, to link and to separate at the same time (Simmel, 1994). This shows that while humans cut a portion out of the continuity and infinity of life by using a door to bring a piece of space together, at the same time they separate that portion from the rest of the world (Simmel, 1994, p.8). The idea of using a wall to create inside/outside or public/private is similar; Oles (2015) argues that walls have a paradoxical function as they enforce the separation of each side, but create unity at the same time by expressing identity and building a community. Likewise, Marcuse (1997) indicates that the key issues regarding the notion of inside/outside or private/public are who is on which side of the wall and how it can define power or reinforce domination. This point of view is reinforced if one looks carefully at the Greek city. According to Arendt (1998), the walls that enclosed cities created a specific political realm or private space separate from the public domain, while inside the walls of the city was an open area for the free movement of citizens, trade and rights. However, both sides of the fixed and solid [ancient] city walls had an economically useful role. Sennett (2006; 2018,

p.221) emphasises that in the medieval city the structure of the *military* wall morphed into *social* spaces for 'controlling entries, regulating commerce and ruling the business activities within the precincts of the wall' (see also Marcuse, 1997, p.106). Houses on both sides of medieval town walls and informal markets for selling black-market or untaxed goods all converted the military wall to an active zone of unregulated development or foreign exile, which challenged the very existence of the military wall as a tool for creating separated insides/outsides.

In defining open and closed, it can also be seen that the existence of one is always the presupposition of the other. The Cambridge dictionary defines open as 'not closed', which takes us back to the discussion of door and wall, above; opening a door or removing a wall is equal to freedom, exposure, and movement, while closing the door or erecting a wall enforces enclosure and limits. It is also important to consider that the term 'open' has travelled across different disciplines. Popper (1945)'s call for an 'open society', for instance, is an important account on how to break from over-determinate systems that restricted freedom and spontaneous human reorganisation. The question is what 'open' and 'closed' mean when paired with 'city'? The next section explores how different scholars have used these terms metaphorically, to describe diversity, mixity, tolerance, complexity, experience and social interaction in cities.

Open city was an experiment that played out in practice for the first time in WWII, and describes a city that did not take sides in the war, therefore abandoning all defensive efforts, generally in the event of the imminent capture of the city to avoid destruction, as seen in Roberto Rossellini's 1945 film *Rome, Open City*. After the World War II, many architects began to get inspiration from the dense, compact, irregular, and ever-changing form of traditional cities. Among them, Team 10 and Metabolists, were the first architectural groups that proudly praised 'openness' and 'uncertainty' in their discourses in order to change the post-war urban narratives (Domínguez, p.224). By 1959, it was manifestos like Oscar Hansen's *Open Form* that encouraged architects to provide a sense of place and equilibrium between the individual and the community. Later, by the 1960s, a number of activists and leaders, including Martin Luther King Jr, and the Chicago Freedom Movement, became more interested in this concept and used it to promote equality in American society (Mogilevich, 2012). Then, by 1970s, the concept of open city somehow emerged in design and planning in a form of a challenge to modernist urbanism and urban renewal and in reaction to the ever-expanding

suburban lifestyle with its spectre of undemocratic conformity, homogeneity, and exclusivity. The aim was to revive the city as the locus of a freedom that provides a form of public life that is elective, yet still founded in relations of co-presence (Mogilevich, 2012, p.20).[1]

Perhaps it is safe to say that Jane Jacobs was the first person to pair the concept of open with the city in planning, to stress the importance of 'diversity' and 'complexity' (Sennett, 2018). Jacobs (1961) argues that an image of an [open] city can be found in irregular, non-linear, open-ended and bottom-up slow urban developments which help to create diversity among physical functions and users. Before her, the philosopher Karl Popper had paired the term open with society in his 1945 book, *The Open Society and its Enemies*, in which he discussed how Europe had fallen into totalitarianism via the seductive myths spun by dictators, which claimed that 'we are one' and pitted 'us against them' (see Sennett, 2018, p.7). Jacobs, on the other hand, valued urban design and was interested in everyday, face-to-face encounters on the street. 'Open', to her, meant 'a city growing in an open-ended, non-linear way' (Sennett, 2018, p.87). Inspired by Jacobs, Sennett began to create a picture of an open *ville* and *cité* in today's cities, where 'citizens actively hash out their differences and planners experiment with urban forms that make it easier for residents to cope'(cited in Helleman, 2018).[2] However, it is important to know that Jacobs and Sennett are not the only scholars who have used the term 'open city' to describe the importance of diversity as the essence of urban environment.[3]

In 2009, at the 4th International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam (IABR), architects, urban planners, socialists and geographers submitted contributions on the subject of enhancing diversity, vitality, and viability (known as sustainable qualities) in the built environment. The result, published in '*Open City: Designing Coexistence'*, demonstrated the crucial role of architecture and urban design in enabling access and facilitating coexistence to stimulate the conditions for an open city. Among the contributors, architects such as Kees Christiaanse, Tim Rieniets, Angelelus Eisinger and Dieter Läpple indicated the theoretical dimensions of the

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[1] There are many other instances of the usage of the term 'open city', such as The Open City of Amereida, an experimental project that constructed a way of 'doing' architecture in experimental conditions. Founded in 1971 by the teachers at the Faculty of Architecture of the Catholic University in nearby Valparaiso, Chile, the open city was inspired by a radical approach to architectural research, teaching and practice that used poetry as an inspiration to build. Some other instances are the *Open City Forum* workshop in Berlin (2018) and the *Open City Project*, by University of Warwick, UK (2021-2023) through which issues of migration and displacement are discussed.

[2] *Ville* is 'the solid of buildings and streets' and *cité* is 'the behaviour and outlook adopted by the people who lodge within the physical space' (Sennett, 2020, p.8).

[3] There are other urbanists, geographers and sociologists, among them the French sociologist Maurice Blanc, who use the same concept with different terminologies such as '[social] mix' in order to 'challenge segregation in housing and to strengthen solidarity among citizens' (Blanc, 2010, p.257). See also '*open city', a* novel by Teju Cole, published in 2012, based on a young Nigerian doctor who moved to and worked in New York, and like a skilled flaneur wandered the city alone and learned to deal with complexity and displacement.

Open City, while others, such as the geographer Ash Amin, were concerned with global forces like migration and rising population that challenge the emergence of the open city. This study draws on the valuable and practical dimensions of these earlier research to identify all the different theoretical assumptions about the open city. In what follows, therefore, the work of all the above-mentioned architects is explained.

Eisinger (2009, p.37) believes that 'positioning an adjective in front of a noun demonstrates that 'open' does not simply go hand in hand with 'city' which itself makes the open city 'a fragile and demanding concept''. For him, the open city functions as a space of opportunity that productively channels a choice of options for everyday life. Rieniets (2009) argues that open is a concept that describes cities used and shared by everyone and that have a capacity to integrate social differences. For Läpple (2009) the concept of open city is about hope; hope for a culture of difference, for the city to be the site of civilised coexistence of different social groups. Christiaanse (2009, 2011) argues that the open city is not a clear-cut urban vision, but more a 'set of values' than a real city.

The point here is not to dwell on different definitions of open city; rather, the question is how to design an open city? Is there any design strategy that can create an open city? Or is the open city just a hope, a possibility or an opportunity? All on the same page, the contributors to '*Open City: Designing Coexistence*' believe that the open city is not exactly designable. Eisinger (2009, p.49) argues that 'there is no set of tools for designing the open city'. Christiaanse (2011) believes that the open city is a set of design values, which is a weapon that enables architects and urbanists to *deal* with interventions in urban landscapes that are every day moving towards the destruction of physical and social diversity. Thus, for Christaanse (2009, p.36) the open city has to be produced via active intervention strategies. Considering the open city as a designable goal, it is, in fact, Sennett (2018) who suggests five design interventions that can physically open up cities (open *ville*) in order to improve the quality of social life (open *cité*). But before reviewing his design strategies, it is important to examine the history of the open city, and discuss the work of people who have advocated for it. Sennett (2006) does not say when the open city emerged, but instead dates the emergence of the *closed city* to the birth of the functional city in the early twentieth century. To understand the idea of a closed city, three periods are discussed below: the modern urbanism of the 1930s, the contesting of modernism in the 1960s, and new modes of segregation in the 1970s. Through reviewing the key figures

of each era, this section shows how architects and planners have used the concept in different ways during the last century.

2.2. Open city and closed city; a historical narrative

Starting in Europe and the United States, the late nineteenth and early twentieth century marked the emergence of a new wave of urbanism that involved the *systematic structuring* of the city, in which a group of trained experts planned the city for practical land use and efficient circulation. This was a shift away from the traditional primary preoccupations of urbanism, transcending attempts to design streets, vistas, monuments and buildings in an arrangement calculated to have visual impact (*art urbain*; L'art urbain or street art), in favour of circulation, hygiene, and social welfare (Wolf, 1969; see also Mumford, 1961; Tafuri, 1976). This new wave of urbanism, known as modern urbanism, was a task – or more accurately a mission – that Harvey (2008) describes as a *new way of thinking* about the city on a grander scale, in order to annex the suburbs and redesign whole neighbourhoods based on zoning principles (Harvey, 2008).

Modern urbanism, 1930s
According to Frampton (2007) the emergence of modern architecture – starting with utopianism and the anti-classical movement – was the result of cultural, territorial, and technical transformations between 1750 and 1939 (see also Wolf, 1969). These transformations, according to Harvey (1989), tended to legitimise a *standard language* of development pattern. Since then, the main task of architects and planners has been to consider buildings and cities as the logically coherent and manageable object of planning (Eisinger, 2009). Sennett (2018, p.37-51) points out that it was the great generation of urbanists of the mid-nineteenth century (Cerda, Olmsted, Haussman) who sought to shape the *ville* in order to mobilise the city; as Haussmann sought to make the city accessible, Cerda wanted to make it equal, and Olmsted to make it sociable.

The latter years of the nineteenth and early years of the twentieth century saw the beginnings of the modern urban planning movement, in which, according to Läpple (2009), the major concern was to create a clear distinction between dwelling and workplace, as well as between work time and free time. The strict division of labour appeared first in Henry Ford's automobile factories in the early twentieth century. Then, according to Lefebvre (cited in Chiodelli, 2013), it was the design of the industrial city in the 1890s and the 'birth of modern city outskirts in

the twentieth century' that marked the beginning of class segregation in urban society. Later, however, Ebenezer Howard's Garden City design (1902) presented a fundamental alternative to the inherited *Cité Industrielle* (Eisinger, 2009, p.40). The Garden City addressed the anarchy and neglect which marked the slums of the industrial city, and created the hierarchical planning and enthusiasm for spontaneous ordering and self-organisation that became key features of the work of architects in the early twentieth century.

Architectural and urban movements – including Futurism, Expressionism, Monumentalism, Brutalism and Metabolism – subsequently became agendas to provide a meaningful response to the 'crisis of style and values occurring since the 19th century, a crisis rooted in the Enlightenment' (Mostafavi, 2014).[4] [5] Jencks (2011, p.76) argues that instead of 'building type[s], movement[s], individual or sector[s]' it was basically the 'competitive drama, dynamic and turbulent flow of ideas, social movements, technical forces and individuals' that created map-able and readable cities in the twentieth century. Jencks (2011) also discusses the persistent influence on cities of Mies Van der Rohe, Le Corbusier, Frank Lloyd Wright and Alvar Alto, to whom he refers as 'the big four'. Calling the twentieth century 'exhausting', he believes that its architecture was a response to changes in technology, social forces, style and ideology, or (in wider settings) to the forces of world wars and the internet. According to Spencer (2016), this categorised architecture rigidly into spatial and functional paradigms, and pushed architects to work on self-organisation, spontaneous ordering and hierarchical planning. Spencer says further that as they began to apply hierarchical planning, Howard, Le Corbusier, Garnier and Giedion imagined the city as a blank slate in order to freely divide it into different leisure, commercial, residential and industrial zones connected by highways and roads (Spencer, 2016; see also Hall, 1988, p.87; Frampton, 2007, p.149-160; Parker, 2004, p.61-72; Sennett, 2018, p.70-78). These were, in fact, the initial characteristics of the 'functional city' that according to Sennett (2018, p.74), created a 'closed city' and imposed spatial, social, and functional order on the dissonance of the built environment. [6] In 1934, out of this rhetoric of the functional city, the Charter of Athens was published. This was a set of design strategies to encourage the functional division of the city into fixed zones for dwelling, work, transport and

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[4] Jencks (2011, p.76) indicates 100 trends and technical forces, and 60 movements, many of them 'isms', in the twentieth century.

[5] For example, Bauhaus in Germany, established in 1898, was one of the schools of modern thinking through art and craft for which the task was 'to become pioneers of simplicity…to find some simple form for all life's necessities' (Frampton, 2007, p.124).

[6] The Chicago School's theory of concentric zones in the early twentieth century also tied form and function tightly together, imagining that each place in the city had a specific function, from housing to industry, commerce or culture.

leisure (Frampton, 2007; Mumford, 2000). The Charter of Athens was itself part of the conferences of the *Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne* (CIAM), the National Union of Architecture founded in Switzerland in 1928, which aimed to reform the design of buildings and replace 'the existing urban patterns for widely-spaced high-rises in greenery' (Mumford, 2000, p.58). Created by architects and socialists (including Le Corbusier and Sigfried Giedion) it set up 111 theses for standards in modernist architecture and town planning, guidelines for the 'functional city', in an improvised meeting on a ship from Marseilles to Athens in 1933 (Sennett, 2018, p.74; Frampton, 2007, p.253; Parker 2004, p.61).

However, from the mid-twentieth century on, theorists from a variety of disciplines (from architecture to sociology and history) began to dispute the functional city rhetoric, believing that zoning regulations created fragmented cities in which people were divided from each other based on these characteristics. For example, in *A City is Not a Tree* (1965), Christopher Alexander argues that the functional city works like a tree, where the islands of mono-functional developments are like the leaves, which are connected to each other by traffic infrastructure. Kenneth T. Jackson – in *Crabgrass Frontier; The Suburbanization of the United States* (1985) – claimed that the functional city and zoning regulations ended in 'reliance on private automobiles, upward mobility, the separation of the family into nuclear units, the widening division between work and leisure, and a tendency toward racial and economic exclusiveness' (Jackson, 1985, p.4). Kenneth Frampton – in *Modern Architecture; A Critical History* (1980) – argued that the functional city was a divided city, zoned into separate sections to accord with its class structure. Last but not least, Richard Sennett – in *The Fall of Public Man* (1976) – raised his voice against the official urbanisation of the 'functional city', which owes its existence to Le Corbusier's 'Plan Voisin', designed in 1924. Later, in 2006, Sennett referred to these modern and functional paradigms as a closed system of urban design. Now, it is important to take the argument back to the metaphorical use of 'open' and 'closed' in association with cities to show how, even in the western context, the same metaphor can be used differently in different contexts. For instance, while Sennett calls Le Corbusier's Plan Voisin a 'closed city', it is arguable that Le Corbusier himself had in mind the idea of an open city. Therefore, although his design strategies and urban planning schemes, which aimed to create a so-called 'open city', are not central issues in this research, they are important in so far as they highlight the different uses to which the idea of the 'open city' has been applied by various architects and urban planners throughout the twentieth century.

The Plan Voisin was an attempt to change the medieval quarter of the Marais, which consisted of thousands of haphazard buildings and streets that were dedicated to trucks and taxis (Sennett, 1990; Frampton, 2007, p.155). His utopian vision consisted of a combination of enormous X-shaped towers with a grid plan which could be repeated again and again, as a fresh start to create new and healthy cities (Sennett et al, 2018). He did not intend to promote closedness; rather his socially utopian ideas involved strategies designed to remedy the ill-health and poor, overcrowded conditions of post-war European cities. Frampton (2007, p.155) argues that Le Corbusier did in fact have a concept of 'open city' in designing the Plan Voisin, which aimed to facilitate locomotion in the city, since for him 'a city made for speed is a city made for success'. 'Wall-less open city' was one type of block in the Plan Voisin (Frampton, 2007, p.155) which could be seen, according to Le Corbusier (1927), as a new concept of form and space. Comparing a building to a soap bubble, Le Corbusier (1927, p.167) argued that 'this bubble is perfect and harmonious if the breath has been evenly distributed and regulated from the inside; the exterior is the result of interior'. For Le Corbusier (1927), opening up the city could be achieved by emphasising the importance of movement in modern cities and by the new idea of separating the modes and speeds of travel on the streets. He believed that the post-World War French cities should be as functional, healthy, and coherent as possible, and because of that, he used the most advanced engineering structure to create free-standing columns in plan as domino dots and zigzag pattern of aggregation (Frampton, 2007, p.254). However, Sennett (1976; 1990; 2006; 2018) argues that the impact of Le Corbusier's Plan Voisin was to destroy vibrant street life and replace the high street with the modernist idea of single function areas (zoning) – which had first appeared in the Industrial City. Perhaps the demolition of the Pruitt-Igoe public housing project in St. Louis in 1972 –built, according to the rhetoric of the Plan Voisin, to fix social illness – symbolises, as Jencks (1977, p.9) puts it, the 'death of modern architecture' as a solution to social problems. The next section discusses the emergence of movements that contested the functional city.

Contesting modernism, 1960s

As discussed above, advocates of modern architecture used the concept of the open city to create map-able and readable cities in the early twentieth century based on the organisation of movement. As Eisinger (2009) notes, an unexpected opportunity to achieve a *tabula rasa* was created during subsequent years by the aerial attacks that occurred during the Second World War. The creation of a *masterplan*, in which the city was imagined down to its last detail,

created a large-scale, massive 'blocky' appearance,[7] from Brutalism in Britain to Metabolism in Japan to Suburbanism in the United States (see Frampton, 2007; Tamari, 2014; Zukin, 1998). Eisinger (2009) argues that in response to the post-war housing crisis and lack of a sense of identity housing schemes became sites of encounter within the structure of urban society. He believes that the post-war social reform program promised economic and social advancement not only for those who would benefit from access to resources in the centre of cities, but for all. Although buildings were supposed to be designed – socially – for everyone, Jencks (1977) argues that one of the main issues with modern architecture was its personal language; each architectural style was characteristic of a different architect. By contrast, postmodern architecture and its populist, pluralist art of immediate communicability constituted a better response to the post-war lack of identity (Frampton, 2007, p.292).[8]

However, according to Jencks (2011), giant corporations began to swamp the practices of postmodern architects. Zukin (1998) refers to the creation of gigantic leisure centres and suburban housing schemes, first in American and then in other major cities, in which urban life was channelled into commercially exploitable avenues and prioritised market- and consumption-oriented practices. Harvey (2008) describes these suburbs as isolated places in which an air of exclusivity (in terms of social class and race) and surveillance abounded. According to Zukin (1998), by locating shopping and leisure centres a long way from bus or metro stations and surrounding them with huge parking lots, they were effectively walled off from the outdoor environment (see also Minton, 2012; Parr, 2014, p.78; Harvey 2006; Lefebvre 2003 [1970]; Featherstone, 1995). By the 1980s, due to the expansion of new modes of ownership in cities (Sassen, 2006), and a shift in the value of symbolic power and the cultural capital of the west (Featherstone, 1995, p.13), neoliberalism became a new mode of increasing segregation in cities. These new tendencies toward increasing privatisation, segregation, control and gated communities increased the need for potential planning and design interventions such as open city theory to enhance individual and collective 'skills, experience, creativity, judgment, reflexivity, socialisation, engagement, communication and expression' (see for instance Amin and Thrift, 2002, p.144).

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[7] By 1980s, the concept of the 'generic city', created by Rem Koolhaas (1995), became a model for contemporary urbanisation that propagated the notion of the mobility, where people are always on the move, based on futuristic cities with no history or past and on a transformation from horizontality to verticality (Tamari, 2014).

[8] It is important to note that although postmodernism can be seen as a specific movement in art and architecture, its dimensions, in general, are not consistent with a singular 'movement'. Rather, different scholars – such as Fredric Jameson (1991), Mike Featherstone (1995), or Margaret Rose (1991) – looked at postmodernism as an ideology or another stage/translation of late capitalism.

New modes of segregation, the 1970s

By the 1970s, new modes of economic, architectural and political ownership transformed cities' small private sectors to large corporate modes of ownership so that public spaces were destroyed and replaced by privatisation (Sassen, 2006). Sassen argues that this transition in the nature of the global economy involved the spatially dispersed, yet globally integrated organisation of economic activity in major cities such as London, Tokyo, and New York. She pays attention to the expansion of a key visual element in those cities; mega-projects with large, physically and centrally dense footprints and believes that the overall effect of large corporate private ownership was a reduction in the number of public buildings and 'a thinning in the texture and scale' of public spaces (see also Minton, 2012, p.56-57). The way the architectural environment of these buildings and headquarters occupied the city broke it into gated spaces inhabited by specialised functions and actors.

Moreover, Harvey (2008, cited in Mayer, 2012, p.68) indicates a sharper social division and intensification of sociospatial polarisation in major cities since the 1970s. Mayer (2012) analyses this proliferating mode of segregation in two ways. First she points to the strong prioritisation of the dominant pattern of corporate urban development. Secondly, she depicts the creation of social and labour market policies. The former, as Sassen (2006) puts it, absorbed much of the public tissue of streets and squares. The latter shunted large parts of the urban underclass into (downgraded) labour markets. The ability of the poor to access urban amenities and infrastructures became more and more restricted, and both invisible and visible barriers were erected to separate the poor from the wealthy. Increasingly, therefore, cities were transformed into gated communities (segregation), and privatised and commercialised public spaces which resulted in the intensification of surveillance and policing. Graham (2009) believes that the solution to creating greater opportunities for co-existence in cities is, metaphorically, in the hands of the discipline of architecture, suggesting that it needs to be able to overcome 'the disconnecting logics of superimposed modernistic planning, global network infrastructures, neoliberal infrastructure regimes, and contemporary urban megastructures' (Graham, 2009, p.166). This is doable, according to Hyde (2017, p.349), if architects can more fully develop concepts and arguments inherited from architectural history in association with the adjacent fields [of sociology, geography, urban planning and so on], while retaining their privileges as interpreters of the architectural profession and the built environment. In these terms, Richard Sennett's open city theory can be seen as architectural design interventions that create a complex *cité* by opening up the *ville* in form. In what follows, design interventions are

shown to be tools that enable some theorists, architects, and geographers to confront the segregation and zoning regulations of the functional city and to increase diversity and interaction in cities.

2.3. Open city theory

As discussed, Jane Jacobs' attempt to promote the diversity and complexity of the built environment was one source of inspiration for Richard Sennett, whose theory is the central argument of this research. In her work, she confronted Le Corbusier's rhetoric that conceived planning as a purely functional system, and 'asserted that big master-planning inevitably suffocates community' (Sennett, 2018, p.78). In her book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (1961), she fought against the city as 'functional system' and favoured mixed neighbourhoods for informal, disordered streets that are locally controlled. The functional system that she was against was that of Robert Moses, whose vision of New York, similar to that of Haussmann in 1850s Paris, aimed to destroy slums, since like a 'cancer tissue' slums were also the reason for disease in inner city areas (Citizen Jane, 2016). His plan for the demolition of the centre of New York appealed to landowners, local politicians and private capitalists, who preferred the rigid and certain regulation of zoning, density, and big planning (Sennett, 2018).

Sennett (2018, p.15) was interested in Jacobs' advocacy of face-to-face interaction in the streets. Later, in 1970, 1976 and 1994, he referred to the importance of transforming the over-determination of cities' visual form and the ways that their social qualities can be enhanced. By 2006, because of a shift in his practical activity – he was starting to work on large-scale urbanisation in the Global South for the UN – and also due to the stroke that changed his understanding of buildings and spatial relations, his views started to diverge from those of Jacobs and he began to work with the concepts of closed and open *systems* in urban design (Sennett, 2018, p.15). But his open system design interventions are not the only architectural and urban planning remedies for overcoming segregation and isolation in cities.

Other architects, such as Kees Christiaanse – as one of the contributors to *Open City; Designing Coexistence* (2009) – are also interested in the physical creation of an open society in which every citizen has access to resources and urban infrastructure. Christaanse (2011), for instance, argues that the open city is a multi-directional, anti-hierarchical network in which communities are not isolated from each other but overlap, and functions co-exist to produce a productive

symbiosis (Christaanse, 2011). Emphasising coexistence as a force that produces urban activities, he believes that creating *street grids* can be one approach to designing an open city. It means that pedestrians can take different routes to a single destination, giving them freedom of movement and creating grounds for stimulating a productive coexistence. Transforming the existing city into an open city for him means creating more equal opportunities, and more possibilities to meet.

Moreover, designing *common spaces* is also based on themes such as social interaction, diversity, and complexity. For example, as a supporter of both Jacobs and Sennett, Ash Amin (2008, p.8) has traced the value of public spaces that are non-regulated, 'open, crowded, diverse, incomplete, improvised, and disorderly or lightly regulated'. Paying attention to the value of 'urban commons', Amin (2008) identifies design interventions in public spaces that build on ways of strengthening civic appreciation of shared urban space and tolerance of encounters with strangers. He believes that in this way urban complexity and diversity can be domesticated, and a public culture created based on social experience of public spaces that share a similar pattern of organisation, usage, vitality and inclusion.

It can therefore be seen that there is a visible line that separates advocates of the open city who favour the functional city from those who regarded the open city as a place that accommodates diversity and complexity. While for the former openness was about facilitating rapid movement and zoning regulations, for the latter it appears to be a critique of the negative cycle of speed and gated communities. Even among open city advocates whose ideas revolve around mixity, complexity and experience, it is only Sennett who pays attention to the matter of how cities are growing so fast and so big, and sees slow, cautious and local strategies as inadequate guides for providing mass housing, schools and transport in an open way (Sennett, 2018, p.15). He promotes a way of responding modestly to the larger scale, arguing that the 'open city is full of character due to its markings, its irregularities, its incomplete structures' (Sennett, 2018, p.301). He expands an experimental and open-ended system of design interventions marked by five forms – synchronous form, punctuated-monumental markers, porosity, incomplete form, and seed-planning – which allow the *cité* to become complex. In the review of Sennett's open city theory that follows, his sources of inspiration and open system design interventions are explained.

2.4. Richard Sennett's open city theory

In Berlin in 2006, Richard Sennett drew an image of an ideal city at the Urban Age conference at which – with other scholars such as Ricky Burdett, Joan Clos and Saskia Sassen – he was investigating the future of cities. His ideal city is a clean and safe city that possesses efficient public services, supports its citizens with a dynamic economy, provides cultural stimulation and heals society's divisions of race, class and ethnicity. Sennett proposes a series of design interventions that offer the potential for an open public life built around the values of diversity, disorder, porosity, informality and experience. These design strategies are called 'open system' and involve a set of approaches that can be used in architecture and urban planning. For Sennett (2018, p.8) an 'open city' would work with its complexities, making a complex molecule of experience and interaction. Ethically, an open city would tolerate differences and free people from the fixed and familiar, creating a terrain in which they could experiment and expand their experience. He argues that a democratic and inclusive city is one where the possibility exists to create a forum for strangers to interact; strangers from many different kinds of communities – from work communities, to families, consumption habits and leisure pursuits.

For Sennett this forum is the public realm in which strangers can gather together, where certain kinds of activities happen; activities that cannot or do not happen in the intimate private realm. It is important to note that the discussion of public realm is originally tied to Habermas and Arendt. In her book, *The Human Condition,* published in 1958, Arendt depicts the public sphere as a physical realm found in town centres – like the agora in ancient Athens, the Uffici piazza in medieval Florence, Trafalgar Square in modern London. She believes that in these dense centres, people can gather, discuss and debate freely and equally.[9] Sennett (2011) believes that Arendt's public sphere is political too, in the way that whatever their origins in terms of gender, lifestyle or class, as citizens people's voices should be equal. For Arendt (1958) the measure of urban spaces is related to their density, since, according to Sennett (2011), she believed that density produced the freedom of anonymity. Jürgen Habermas's work is less political than Arendt's, but more practical. Habermasians pay attention to the economic interests of different social classes in society, to the extent that instead of simply mixing together or mixing their activities in public, people take account of others' economic, ethnic, and cultural circumstances in order to learn about their interests and needs. Thus, it could be said that Habermas's public

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[9] However, a critical point of view might questioning the plurality and equality dimension of Arendt's ideal public space, in a context where the slave, the foreigner, the barbarian, or even women were part of the plurality that brought public space into being (see Butler, 2011).

space is more communicational than political, since it is not only tied to town centres but consists of any medium, occasion, or event that leads to an open flow of communication, which itself eventuates shared understandings and common purposes.

Besides the early efforts of Arendt and Habermas to theorise the concept of the public sphere, and how it has changed through the twentieth century, other scholars have also made significant contributions to the nature and regulation of public space in different contexts; from Davis (1992; Sorkin, 1992; Harvey 2008, Sussen, 2006) who focused on issues of the corporatisation, commodification and commercialisation of public space, echoing Lefebvre's account of the right to the city and challenging the definitions of democratic society and citizenship, to Tonkiss (2005) who explored the surveillance and control of public space, to Madanipour (2003) who, by focussing on the accessibility of public space contributed extensively to scholarship on the relationship between society and space in European, Middle Eastern and Islamic cities such as Iran.

Sennett's approach to the public sphere is less political and more cultural (Sennett, 2006). He is interested in 'street clothing, ways of avoiding eye contact, the places people crowd together and the places where they keep their distance, the bodily gestures which excite a stranger's sexual interest and the bodily signals which forbid it' (Sennett, 2011). But how did these points of view lead him to think about open city theory? When did he first imagine this concept?

Origins and inspirations

Sennett first raised the issue of dealing with strangers on a day-to-day basis in the public social sphere, in a western context, in *The Fall of Public Man*, published in 1976. There, he argues that the city should be a site for representation, masquerade and sociability (Featherstone and Lash, 1999, p.3) and that public life should be visual, bodily and non-verbal as well as verbal and theatrical (Black, 2016). He believes that the public sphere should be a worldly theatre, a *theatrum mundi* where strangers have social roles to perform and which detaches people from their private feelings and cultivates in public a playful character that has a desire to live with others.[10]

He had already published, in 1970, *The Use Of Disorder,* in which he suggests a radical solution to 'restructuring the city in such a way that people are *forced* to deal with social and cultural

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[10] Being open to the other the stranger is originally at the heart of Derrida's concept of hospitality, and emphasises the city as a refuge that unconditionally opens the door of the home, the heart, the nation, and all that is 'mine' to the other (see Derrida (2000) *HOSTIPITALITY).*

others in an arena-like social situation' (Leeuwen, 2014, p.6). However, he also admired the role of craftsmanship and working together, and later published his trilogy of books on *craftsmanship, cooperation and building and dwelling* (Sennett, 2008; 2012; 2018) which show how he arrived at his viewpoint on *skilling* people to live with differences. In *Building and Dwelling*, he proposes sets of design interventions intended to heighten the complexity and diversity of the public sphere, inspired by the Microsoft and Media Labs; in the 1980s, both labs were located near his office at MIT. The Media Lab is a place that unpacks existing knowledge to create technological innovations. Sennett (2018) argues that it thinks 'open', which 'implies a system for fitting together the odd, the curious, the possible'. In an open system complexity evolves through taking seriously the unforeseen turn of data, and emerges through the feedback. Sennett (2018, p.5) also depicts a picture of a closed system, based on the work of the Microsoft Lab. Packaging existing knowledge, this lab works on a linear system where experiments are conducted to prove or disapprove a hypothesis, not to examine its ambiguities. Based on the works of both labs, Sennett (2018, p.4-5) creates an analysis of how open and closed urban systems work.

Open system design interventions

In the shadow of the works of the Media lab, based on which his open system design interventions first appeared, Sennett (2018) suggests a system of design that is complex, ambiguous or contradictory in character. He indicates five design interventions, as follows:

The Synchronous Form is the way to plan activities in cities and to invite people to gather and mix by creating spaces where many different social activities are happening at once. Referring to the Agora (bazaar) and Pnyx (theatre or stadium) of ancient Athens, he considers Agora/bazaar as *synchronic* – a place where all the activities happened at the same time – while Pnyx/stadium is depicted as *sequential* space – where activities took place in sequential order. Synchronic spaces become a site for the cultural mixing of people and signs, of exciting, crowded, diverse street life (Featherstone and Lash, 1999). The Agora, like Sennett's example of Nehru place in India (an open-air electronics market in Delhi), is an intense, mixed and complex spot in a city where all castes, classes, races and religions spill over one another. Strolling from one group or activity to another, people can discover what is happening in the city, discuss it, and participate. In a theatre (Pnyx) on the other hand, spectators sit passively to watch activities taking place. Therefore, in order to increase stimulation and make orientation in public places, the space needs to be marked in specific ways.

Punctuated-Monumental Markers are ways of creating distinctiveness and inviting people to pause and reflect on synchronic spaces in the city. Markers can be things like the obelisks and high spires of Rome's medieval urban fabric or the pure décor of the nineteenth century industrial era, which created buildings as visual gesture. Markers can also be created by changing both the scale of, and the activities at, the crossroads of streets, creating a different atmosphere from surrounding areas so that people are attracted to them. Physical 'quote marks' are another form of physical marker. For example, sitting on a bench in front of an ordinary building gives opportunity to people to pause and reflect, which itself marks a form which is at once arbitrary, and value-making.

Porosity-the membrane is a metaphor. Sennett (2018, p.218) believes that a building can be porous like a sponge 'when there is an open flow between inside and outside while yet the structure retains the shape of its function and form'. Referring to cell wall and cell membrane, he argues that porosity works like a cell membrane in the human body – which protects the living organism from outside forces, while at the same time allowing controlled access to the inside in some circumstances and facilitating communication between cells. He also argues that porosity in buildings is not 'a pure void', it consists of open and closed spaces and is accompanied by resistance. He believes that the 1784 iconographic Nolli map of Rome – which was rendered in contrasting black and white – shows the porous relations (in enclosed public spaces such as the colonnades in St. Peter's Square) between solid (buildings) and void (open spaces).[11]

Sennett also refers to the distinction between a border and a boundary in natural ecology, in which a boundary is an edge where things end, whereas a border is an active edge at which different groups interact, such as the point where the shoreline of a lake meets solid land, which is a zone of exchange among organisms. This border has the 'most intense of biological activity'; it is a 'liminal space'.[12] For example, an ecological boundary in nature might be a

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[11] It is worth mentioning that Sennett (2018, p.219) suggests that if the Nolli map was translated in modern terms to make a map of 1920s Paris, 'all of the Plan Voisin would have read as a black patch'. See also the detailed review of Nolli's map (Aureli, 2011, p.106-116) in which he explains how, as an experienced surveyor of the first half of eighteenth century, Nolli promoted a new type of mapmaking called cadastral cartography which 'organically linked the form of region, its economic organisation and productivity, and its social control – its territorial statistics.' In providing the map of Rome, Nolli in fact connected his approach with the new archaeological impetus that developed in reaction to the city's political and cultural decline' (Aureli, 2011, p.106). The result was the first-time north-south geographical convention map, printed on twelve large sheets that represented the city at the scale of 1:3000. Besides recording the city's layers, as topography, the Nolli map is also characterised by the figure-ground technique which distinguishes the architectural features from the rest of built space, which symbolises the difference between architectural space and urban space (Aureli, 2011, p.109).

[12] According to Turner (1969, p.95) it was Arnold Van Gennep, in *Rites de Passage* (1909, translated in 1960) who first introduced the concept of 'liminal phase'; '[liminal entities] are neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial'.

territory guarded by tigers' waste; a territory that others should stay out of. As a result, these boundaries create low intensity spaces where edges are constructed to diminish interaction. In the modern city, boundaries are made either by zoning regulations or by creating different forms of residential development, such as gated communities. However, by considering how a cell membrane or a border on a shoreline operates, a boundary's edge can be redesigned to become a porous urban membrane by creating new spaces, such as a market, at the place where the two different communities meet. Such a market can be seen as a porous edge at which people can mix casually (commercially or physically) on a daily basis. To achieve this, according to Sennett (2018), it is important to think about the physicality of form not as a fixed and complete entity, but rather to approach it as an incomplete form that can be adapted to new conditions.[13]

Incomplete Form amounts to strategies designed to avoid imposing a pre-designed agenda. The Chilean architect, Alejandro Aravena, for example, has created a project in Iquique of incomplete forms; a row of two storey houses, as if 'half the first and second storeys of buildings are walled in', allowing the maximum flexibility in filling in the space. This way the building itself becomes porous, since structurally there are few fixed barriers. Another form of incomplete strategy is designing 'type form' instead of fixed form. The type form takes on different shapes in different circumstances, such as the possibility of transforming an office building to an apartment through its non-structural party walls. One way to scale up this method in the city is to repeat a generic form in different places and circumstances; known as multiple-seed planning.

Multiple-seed Planning refers to the creation of public spaces, such as schools, libraries, shops or parks, with a distinctive character in poor areas, to open up communities, creating a complex image or adding value to them, encouraging others to come. Run by the community, the Parque Biblioteca, for example, is a library (and an architectural 'jewel') built in 2007 in a poor area of Santo Domingo, giving people the opportunity to take ownership of their communities. In the same city, the mayor created other architecturally significant libraries in other slum districts

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[13] It was Walter Benjamin who first wrote an essay on Naples in 1924, and described it, metaphorically, as a 'porous city'; where the distinction between public/outside/street and private/inside/ home, is liminal and ambiguous. In Benjamin's term, in Naples the relationship between private and public begin to interpenetrate: '… as porous as this stone is architecture. Building and action interpenetrate in the courtyards, arcades, and stairways' (Benjamin, 1979, p.169). It is as if for Benjamin the unforeseen constellations and disorder through urban porosity and transitivity are generative of democratic and inclusive cities (Georgiou, 2017). There are other implications of the metaphor of porosity in urban studies, including the 2021 issue of the *Urban Planning* journal on defining porosity in port cities, 'porosity index' study by Pessoa et al. (2015) on threshold areas within the discontinuous metropolitan context of the Latin American cities, or the case of 'porous urban' by (2022) on the multiple experiences of displacement before, during and after the Grenfell fire in London in 2017.

to try to change the image of the area. According to Lynch (1960, p.9) 'it is that shape, color, or arrangement which facilitates the making of vividly identified, powerfully structured, highly useful mental images of the environment'.

In sum, Sennett (2018, p.240) believes that an open city promotes synchronic activities, privileges the border over the boundary with the aim of creating porous relations between parts of the city (and between communities), marks the city in modest ways using simple materials and place markers arbitrarily in order to highlight nondescript places, makes use of type-forms in its buildings to create various urban themes, and develops those themes independently throughout the city (seed-planning). For him, an open city is a site of assemblages, mutual exchanges and ambiguous edges. This is the city that contests modernism's functionality and neoliberalism's 'closed system' both of which aim to integrate, control and order (Sennett, 2013). The question is whether architects, urban planners and people in different cities can work together to apply Sennett's design interventions directly to their cities? In the next section, gaps in his theory are explained, and I discuss how this thesis is an attempt to fill those gaps.

Problematising Sennett

In their discussion of the use of metaphors, discussed earlier in this chapter, Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p.231) suggest that when culture, knowledge, values, and assumptions about a context are not shared by another context, it is important to find the right metaphor to communicate the relevant part of personal experience or highlight shared experiences while de-emphasising others. They argue that to reach a 'mutual understanding', and 'negotiate meanings' with others it is important to diversify cultural and personal experiences and communicate the nature of personal experiences (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Here, it is necessary to pause and reflect on this argument. One key argument proposed in this research is that in order to achieve mutual understanding of the notion of open city theory between planners, architects, sociologists, geographers and people in different cities, it is first necessary to understand the urban, social and political context of those cities. This understanding can be achieved by the use of particular ethnographic methods, including fieldwork experience, which brings with it direct knowledge of the terrain and sufficiently deep exchange with authorities, urban planners, architects, and people. In this research, it is argued that a sufficient level of empirical research is a necessary prerequisite for analysing a theory like open city theory, which has a strictly experimental basis.

It is important to note that Sennett (2018, p.235) emphasises 'there is no one model for an open city'; however, the argument here is that exploring the credibility of his design interventions is impossible without acknowledging things that have been largely forgotten in the analysis of open city, including the Middle East, and empirical studies within a range of institutions, as well as the exchange of ideas with architects, urbanists, planners, and people in those cities.[14] This is to say that while complexity, experience, informality and social interaction in cities are the essence of urban life, according to Sennett, power and hierarchy are, historically, significant characteristics of many Middle Eastern cities such as Tehran. Hence, if the attempt is to read a middle-eastern, Islamic city through the lens of a western theory, the argument, first and foremost, should consider history, which reveals the essence of urban life in those settings. Any given city, as Lefebvre (2003, cited in Vaghefi, 2017, p.54) argues, is an oeuvre of its historical time which, like a book, is being constantly rewritten and revised by its co-authors. Iranian cities are no exception and have their own history of urbanisation and socialisation.

Islamic cities, historically, needed Allah's representatives – namely the prophet Mohammad and by extension, the Caliphs – to become mediators between the two worlds (divine and profane) and the guardians of Islam. This was because the Qur'an indicated that Allah had exclusive rights to rule over all the world (Chapter 57, Verses 2 and 5, in Vaghefi, 2017, p.195).[15] The city, for a caliph or king, was his territory/boundary, through which Islamic sovereignty was stablished and where Islamic rules and regulations were in practice. The shah's political administration was the centre of the kingdom, known as *Dar al-Caliphate* (the realm of the Caliphate) (Vaghefi, 2017, p.196). Here, it is important to note that scholars from Katouzian (1997) to Piran (1997) have begun to conceptualise the role of caliph/king in the production of public space in Iranian cities and come up with theories of the 'arbitrary state' and the 'city of force'. These theories indicate that historically, all the elements of public space in Iranian cities – including neighbourhood centres and alleys, public gardens and cemeteries, covered passages such as Bazaars and Suqs, mosques and other holy spaces such as Imamzadeh (Holy Shrines), open spaces, squares, city gates, entrances to public buildings, bridges and water fronts, stairways connecting streets at different levels, streets, and roundabouts (see

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[14] In his book *Building and Dwelling*, the only reference Sennett makes to the Middle East is to describe the closedness of the prescriptive smart city in Abu Dabi called Masdar (Sennett, 2018, p.160).

[15] See also Augustine's *City of God*, as a theology of history that presents a sweeping panorama of the decline of pagan Rome and the rise of Christianity (Arthur, 2019, p.188). He explains how the church is the mediator between the earthy city or man-made state (city of the world) and the heavenly city (city of God). So the church was the place where human society could find completion in the realm of God in the light of Christian doctrine.

Habibi, 1996; Ardalan, 1980; Pakzad, 2003; Tafahomi, 2007) – exhibited the authority of the shah.

Contrary to the Agora – that 'at least provided the forum for debate and communication and so helped pioneer the principle of democratic citizenship' (Merrifield, 1996, p.57-59) even though women and slaves were excluded – the main square of Dar al-Caliphate, was where the coercive force of the Shah was on display; the more power the Shah gained, the more control he exerted across its territory (see Vaghefi, 2017). The question is whether, by considering the history of the power relations still practiced in Iranian cities today, there is any possibility of adapting open city theory for Iranian cities? Is there any will among the most powerful members of the administration to open up the city at all? Can we simply come to the conclusion that Iranian cities are closed? In a way, Christaanse (2011) raises the same argument by emphasising the importance of considering the city's socio-political context when referring to design strategies for the open city: 'if open city is only a good city for all, then there is no possibility to see its values in the totalitarian cities where people have to deal with the city according to what totalitarian authorities want.' However, he continues 'On the contrary, the open city is a volatile *situation* that can create balance between the forces of integration and disintegration and these totalitarian cities are vivid and active, because of the culture that is being developed by the sub-underground networks that make productive urban districts'.

Nonetheless, Sennett offers five design interventions, explained above, that once implemented, can open up the city socially. The question is: can these strategies heal society's divisions, inequalities, segregation and lack of social interaction just through design? There are urban theorists, among them Brenner (2013) and Harvey (2012), who critiqued the open city. Harvey (2012, p.9) for instance, indicates that 'our political task, Lefebvre suggests, is to imagine and reconstitute a totally different kind of city out of the disgusting mess of a globalizing urbanizing capital run amok'. For Brenner (2013, p.44), 'open city', in general, is 'an ideology which masks, or perhaps merely softens, the forms of top-down planning, market-dominated governance, sociospatial exclusion and displacement'. For both Brenner and Harvey, it is in fact, Lefebvre's right to the city that 'powerfully resonates with contemporary debates among designers on the open city, because', as Brenner (2013, p.45) suggests, 'it likewise envisions a city that is appropriated by and accessible to all inhabitants'. Brenner (2013, p.45) continues to indicate that before initiating design interventions to open up urban space, there is a need for radical transforming of the rules of urban governance, which itself is a 'militant demand for

the democratisation of control over the collective means of producing urban space'. And this is one of the problematics of Sennett's open city theory as it lacks integrating the five design interventions with questions of institutional control and political power.

Take Sennett's first design intervention for instance; the synchronous form. This can be seen, more or less, similar to what is known as *mixed-use concept* in architecture, urban planning and policy today. Although Sennett depicts a clear picture on the social impact of these sorts of design interventions, he does not go any further to analyse how these urban initiatives are 'defined by the naturalised imperatives of growth-first, market-oriented urban economic policy and by approaches to urban governance in which corporate and property-development interests maintain hegemonic control over local land-use regimes' (see Brenner, 2013, p.44). But more than that, the main issue is with initiating these design interventions in authoritarian cities because they can play key roles in the political practice of the authoritarian states. A synchronous form, I argue, can easily create what Bogaert[16] (in Grant, 2019, p.771) calls, the *new contexts of power'* that join together the authoritarian regime with private stakeholders, allowing for local/global redistributions of power which in return, increases the surveillance and control over population. This is because the authoritarian regimes have tight control over the production and appropriation of urban space. A socially vibrant and aesthetically attractive urban space reinforces the need for democratic, socially egalitarian urbanism and that is against the will of an authoritarian state.

The other issue is the case of multiple-seed planning. The suggestion is to 'seed' buildings with distinct architectural character in deprived areas of the city, creating a sense of belonging and helping the community to engage and be part of running and managing the place. At first glance, the rationality of the suggested intervention may appear against the rhetoric of open city theory which is based on informality and inclusion. This design intervention is highly rational, because designing a public space in general, such as library, gallery, museum and so on, is connected to 'the broader system of rules – for instance, regarding land-use, property ownership, financing, taxation, investment and public goods – that govern the city, region and territory in which the project-based design intervention happens to be situated' (Brenner, 2013, p.45). The question is to what degree, and in what ways, can such interventions create informal, and inclusive urban spaces? The history of production of such urban spaces in deprived areas

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[16] Bogaert is a political scientist whose project: *Globalized Authoritarianism: Megaprojects, Slums, and Class Relations in Urban Morocco*, published in 2018, is an attempt to understand the dynamics of democratisation in Middle East and Northern African (MENA) countries.

shows that they have the ability to accelerate processes of gentrification, displacement and exclusion. The issue here is not about the aesthetic elements of the architectural piece or the self-management and ongoing transformation 'from below'. But the main problem is related to general lack of control or influence designers and communities have over investment flows, property ownership structures and political decisions that ultimately can transform the surrounding fabric of buildings, blocks and neighbourhoods. Following this line of argument, I will discuss, in chapter 5, that while the opening of Bahman Cultural Centre in south of Tehran – which can be seen as a 'seed-planning' design intervention – changed successfully, for a specific period, the social mobility of Tehran from rich north to poor south, one still needs to interrogate that to what degree and in what ways these sort of design interventions are implemented in the first place. By discussing the wider political and economic context through which this cultural space became successful for a specific period of time, Sennett's overemphasis of considering the social impact of constructing such public spaces while neglecting the wider context, is challenged.

On the other hand, Sennett has been criticised for his failure to consider gender relations in his discussions of public space. His social analysis generally, as argued by feminist scholars, are conducted from a masculine perspective on public life. Especially in *The Fall of Public Man* (1976), he presupposes a private/public dichotomy through which nature is equated with private realm and thus with women, while the public space is the realm of culture performing by men. This narrow viewpoint, in fact, rarely shows an awareness of gender differences. Feminist scholars such as Ardener (1981), in *Women and Space*, and Wolf (1985), in *The Invisible Flâneuse*, criticise this concept of the public domain, stating that Sennett does not refer at all to gender difference which shows his problematic nature of a particularly careless use of language in the presentation of the public person as clearly male. Going on the same line of criticism, other feminist theorists – such as Boling (1996) who argued from a feminist perspective for a protection of privacy while also demanding a pressing need for participation in public life – began to offer deeper insights into the notion of public and private. In his book, *The Fall of Public Man,* for instance, and in his analyses of the coming together of bourgeoisie in coffeehouses, parks, promenades and theatres, in mid-eighteen century London and Paris, it is not very clear whether Sennett recognised the presence of women working in those coffeehouses as well. On the contrary, there were female cultural theorists, such as Lauren Berlant, who paid attention to the working class women in mid-eighteen century American society. In her book, *The Female Complaint*, published in 2008, Berlant locates gender and sex

at the centre of the shifting configurations of the private and the public. That is to say, in Sennett's work, there is little reference to the structure of political and social relations that contributes to female oppression in cities. For example, in the case of multiple seed planning, he gives an example of an architectural 'jewel' (the Parque Biblioteca) which was built in 2007 in a deprived neighbourhood of Santo Domingo that gives the community an opportunity to run and manage the library themselves. But there is no further discussion about the involvement of those women with care responsibilities, in the process of managing the community inhabited around the architectural 'jewel'.

It is in light of these arguments that fundamental concepts of open city theory, such as openness, closedness, segregation, exclusion, inclusion and interaction, can be challenged. Because once we recognise the gap, which is a lack of political engagement with the gendered-urban contexts, it is then possible to offer a contextual dimension of openness and closedness with respect to the experience of cities. In a way that if in the West, concepts such as segregation and exclusion are used to describe gated communities, surveillance system and privatisation,[17] they describe, in this research, the religious and political discriminatory ideologies that shape the gendered-segregated areas in Islamic contexts,[18] which is particularly common in authoritarian cities like Tehran. Hence, specific keywords, such as closedness, segregation and exclusion should be regarded as a set of unsettled keywords that can be felt, embodied and experienced differently, by different people in different countries/contexts. The approach in this research, however, is not to, simply, introduce new concepts for open city, closed city, segregation, exclusion and so on, but to *open up* existing ones with regard to the socio-political situations, moments and events to which they are going to be applied.

For instance, open city theory defines segregation with reference to the functional city and its impact on the development of gated communities which accelerate the ethnic and class

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[17] See for instance, Sassen (1991, in Blanc, 2010, p.285) which refers to segregation as 'a consequence of worldwide globalisation is the increasing gap between the rich and the poor in big cities such as New York, London and Tokyo'. For Wacquant (2006), segregation can be found in French 'Red Belt' and the US 'Black Belt' which are suburban areas host that 'urban outcasts', i.e. socially homogeneous residents belonging to low and precarious income groups. Calling it a 'forbidden fruit', Maurin (2004) indicates that segregation is neither located at the bottom, nor in the middle of society, but on the top and spreads out into society as a whole (see Blanc, 2010, p.285).

[18] For a detailed historical analysis of the role of gender in structuring the Islamic city, see Janet Abu-Lughod (1987) through which she explains the social patterns of gender segregation in the production of space in Islamic cities. She argues that 'by encouraging gender segregation, Islam created a set of architectural and spatial imperatives' to divide functions and places on the basis of gender (Abu-Lughod, 1987, p.163). Historically, she continues, the most important element of the structure of the city contributed by Islam was the creation of male and female rules of turf; a set of rule in production of space that once applied, could establish visually distinctive or insulated regions, in a way that the object was not only to prevent physical contact but to protect visual privacy. In Islamic law of architecture and urban design, it is called *line-of-sight* distance, rather than physical distance that dictates where to place windows, the heights of adjacent buildings and the mutual responsibilities of neighbors toward one another so as to guard visual privacy (Abu-Lughod, 1987, p.167).

division. Segregation in the urban context of Tehran does not necessarily/only share these features. Here exporting segregation, as a vocabulary, to a very different urban context, that has been historically, politically, culturally and socially structured differently, might seem inappropriate in the first place. But, it is also important to consider that analysing the experience of ideological segregation in Tehran brings a different form of urban segregation into view that can widen the framework of analysis and opens up new lines of inquiry in a way that one would ask why segregation manifests in these different ways. Thus, by considering the fact that the same political situation that came to define the urban landscape of Tehran created the social landscape as well, this study shows that the concept of urban segregation in Tehran describes the ideological separation of women from men in public spaces of the city (see chapters 6 and 7). Consequently, it is suggested that closedness/openness also have no fixed meaning when they are used in different contexts.

In order to elaborate this point and showing the fluidity of the meaning of urban openness and closedness, this thesis uses the feminist approach to show the visibility/invisibility of women in the public spaces of Tehran. This argument is derived from Mona Abaza's account of the visibility/invisibility of vulnerable groups of people in Islamic public space (Abaza, 2001; 2014). The question is what exactly visibility/invisibility means to the advocates of open city theory? Is there any emphasis on women and other vulnerable groups such as gay and lesbian people, in some Islamic contexts where access to public space is gendered-segregated, controlled and disciplined? These lines of argument can be related to feminist urban theories and to the rise in critiques of urban studies since the 1970s (see McDowell, 1997; Massey, 1994; Fraser, 2010 [1990]; Kwan, 2002; Greed, 2019). Since that time, drawing on cultural, post-structural, postcolonial, and psychoanalytic theories, the feminist critique of urban theory and planning has explained the importance of fieldwork to a better understanding of the everyday life and multiple spatial tactics of marginalised city dwellers. Feminist geographers looked at how different ways of producing urban spaces become gendered, and how these affect the meanings of places to gendered people. By focusing on the individual and on social groups of gendered people on the one hand and on the institutional and legal framework of a society on the other, McDowell (1997, p.382) argues, for example, that 'doing feminist geography means looking at the actions and meanings of gendered people, at their histories, personalities and biographies, *at the meaning of places to them...*'. Massey (1994, p.179) argues that the construction of gender relations and struggles to change them are important in feminist

geography studies which can be done by documenting and analysing power relations between different local-cultural space/places.

Moreover, by the 1980s, critical and postcolonial feminism showed the importance of exploring the social construction of *meaning-in-context* (see Mahmood, 2001, 2005; Abaza, 2001; 2014). This means, according to Abaza (2014, p.165), that when it comes to the Islamic urban context, for instance, gender and the study of the visibility/invisiblity and experience of the female urban actor matters in a quite significant way as women are in a 'competition for public visibility and conquering public space'. She draws attention to the unexpected uses of public space by youth and women in these contexts that demand a new way of interpreting social and urban investigations. Using fieldwork methodologies in studying the distinct situated knowledge that emerges in and through Southern livelihood practices, postcolonial scholars delve into local places in order to grasp their particularities and to articulate their differences and divergences (see Bayat, 1997; Dick and Rimmer, 1998; Roy, 2005, 2014). In a similar way, this research also explores the broader question of how to represent the kinds of use of public spaces by women and youth in Tehran that can be invisible to nonlocal observers as well as local planners. The section that follows, as a prelude to the detailed exploration of Tehran through the lens of open city theory in the following chapters, familiarises readers with a sociopolitical context in which some western notions, such as public/private space and freedom, can be interpreted differently.

2.5. Tehran; a brief sociopolitical background

When it first appeared, historically, in an eleventh century chronicle, Tehran was a small village on the north side of the ancient city of Ray, which dates back to Achaemenid (559–330 BC) and Parthian times (250 BC–224 AD). Its first signs of city-ness appeared centuries ago, in 1553, when a Bazaar and square-shaped town walls converted the village to a walled market town. Located geographically at the foot of Mount Damavand, with a height of 5678m. (the highest peak in Iran), and historically at the intersection of the historic east–west Silk Road and north–south trading routes, it was always a strategic and symbolic location (Abrahamian, 1982; Katouzian, 1997; Madanipour, 1998; Tavassoli, 2002; Tafahomi, 2007). It became the capital of Persia in 1786. Tavassoli (2002) indicates that it was the hot and arid weather conditions alongside Islamic culture that influenced the Iranian *urbanism and architecture*. He explains

that while Western [extroverted] architecture creates cities with vivid open public spaces, in Iran, on the contrary, life happens behind the walls of the narrow alleys, within the enclosed spaces of the houses, whose architecture is introverted. Traditional Iranian cities are a combination of hierarchical structure in which the squares and main passages are tied to the city's active nodes: bazaar, main mosque and neighbourhood centres. The introverted house is, in fact, the last component of this spatial configuration. While the main power of the city was in the hands of the *shah* (the king), each neighbourhood was itself a sub-state with its own social, economic and religious priorities. According to Katouzian (1997) the hard kinship ties and tribal roots of the Iranian ruling class, in which each tribe was based in a specific neighbourhood, created a medium of incessant rivalry between different tribes which tried to seize power, creating 'arbitrary states'. He argues that the 'arbitrary state' had a superior position within the state, standing above the law and interpreting it as it wished (Katouzian, 1997). He finds the reason for this in the rights to ownership of land, which had been exclusively in the hands of the government; proprietors could never truly own their own land, which could not be passed down or inherited. The government was, in fact, granting to some individuals, clans and communities privileges that could be withdrawn at any time (Katouzian, 1997, p.53).

But this arbitrary model of ruling changed in the early 1920s, when Reza Shah began to create the image of a unified society by establishing a central army, bureaucracy and government. Tracking modern and Western policies – after visiting Turkey in the reign of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk – he also gave up Iranian traditions and followed Western reforms. Not having any concern for Iranian customs and traditions, he started a process of modernisation, of which one archetype was modern urban planning. Diba and Dehbashi (2002) believe that these modernist design interventions of Reza Shah ignored Iranian vernacular architecture completely, and aimed to build a new modern nation based on Western methods and patterns through radical social and spatial changes. Like his father, Reza's son, Mohammadreza continued the process of modernisation up to the Islamic revolution. This resulted in the creation of an unstable, highly segregated and segmented society in which the army and police force became major agents in guaranteeing the continuity of state modernisation programs (Kamali, 1998; Abrahamian, 1982; Milani, 2004). Pahlavi's 'fundamentalist secularism' created religious and liberal opposition to indigenous civil-society groups, namely the *ulama* (clergy), the bazaris (the tradesmen and merchants of the bazaar), and religious intellectuals, as well as secular civil-society groups including intellectuals and political parties (Abrahamian, 1982). Bayat (2010)

believes that the Islamic Revolution was a reaction to the forced modernisation which had undermined the bases of traditional structures.

This way, the modern rhetoric that conceived the disappearance of religion in modern societies (see Foucault, 1978) was confronted with the 1979 revolution; the emergence of a religious power for societal mobilisation and state transformation. Generally, the aim of the new revolutionary regime was to restore the traditional bases, and particularly society's Islamic roots – roots that the earlier secular regime had tried to do away with (Bayat, 2010). At the same time, due to the institutionalised process of modernising the old regime that was practically engaged in creating a modern culture in society – explained in detail in Chapter 4 – a new modern middle class had arisen with modern ideas and values such as freedom, human rights, justice, and so on. For Bayat (2010), this is a paradoxical image of the city of Tehran which suggests that traditionalism and modernism are two underlying conflicting tendencies in the history of post-revolutionary Tehran. This is because when, based on bureaucratic rationalism and scientism, a new Pahlavi authority was founded, it was the old traditional authority (known as *Olamas*, *Arbab*, *Bazargan*) that was replaced by the new one, while the Islamic Revolution was, in fact, a *return* to the old order as well as keeping the fruits of the Pahlavis. Kamali (2007), also reminds us that although the new Islamic regime rose up against Pahlavi's modern and westernised plans, it more or less continued the shah's economic policy.

Focusing on another paradoxical image, this time in post-revolutionary Tehran, Bayat (2010) indicates that *freedom* was one of the underlying themes on which the Islamic Revolution was based: to build a new, independent and free Iran. However, only one year after the revolution a new interpretation of the notion of freedom became dominant, which suggested that not only should the country be free from the dominance of the West, but that souls should also be free from the marks of sin that remained from the previous regime (Vaghefi, 2017). In Bayat's terms, the purpose of 'Islamic freedom' was also to make people's souls ready for life after death. As a result, diverse ideas and views have remained suppressed right up to the present day, because the Islamic authority has wanted to keep, simultaneously, the values of both Islam and freedom. Islamic ideology, along with the revolutionary forces, became a constitutive component of the new regime to spread the spirit of traditionalism throughout society. In doing so, they began the 'City Islamisation Project', codifying Islamic rules such as *hijab*, gender segregation, and more recently the Act of Islamic Architecture. However, Bayat (2013, p.x; see also Najmabadi, 2005; Amir-Ebrahimi, 2008; Khatam, 2009) also notes the continuous

resistance of Tehranies and Iranian citizens at large; the social forces of both collectives and individuals, and diverse ways in which ordinary people strive to affect change in their society. The question is what those diverse ways are? What are the precise means that people devise in order to change their societies, and can those changes be seen as a potential dimension of openness within Tehran? To answer these questions, and in order to demonstrate the complexity of people's social behaviour in the city of Tehran, specific research methods will be applied to emphasise the value of people's lived experiences in different public, private, and semi-public/semi-private spaces in Tehran. Documents on urban and architectural planning and design on the one hand, and a study of people's lived experiences on the other, will illustrate how the notion of *ville* (the built) and *cité* (the lived) in Tehran align with, or diverge from Sennett's open city theory.

2.6. Conclusion

Through a detailed review of the literature, this chapter has investigated the key concept of this thesis, open city theory. It has attempted to delve into the meanings and definitions of 'open' and 'closed' city. As has been shown, the open city, nowadays, has become the preoccupation of urbanists who choose different paths to tackle the problems of the 'closed' city which, itself, is rooted in the notion of the 'functional city', which emerged in the early twentieth century. Although they take different paths, all of them are advocates of diversity, tolerance, mixity, and complexity. One of the arguments of this chapter has been to show that open city is not always about enhancing diversity, but rather that, back in the early twentieth century, the open city revolved around the notion of speed, easy movement and zoning regulations. An exploration of the attempts of some recent theorists and architects has shown that proposals for a fundamental and practical way to achieve an 'open' city are scarce. For example, in Christiaanse's account, the creation of street grids is, in fact, a micro level solution that can hardly overcome the issue of the massive construction of gated communities around the world. However, Richard Sennett suggests that the issue of designing gated communities and segregation can be resolved if planners, architects and people become skilled at working together. He also suggests that the open city can be achieved if the above-mentioned groups start to practice five types of design intervention in the built environment. As he indicates, his attempt is a response to the rigidness of urbanisation that segregates people from different segments of society. This is, in fact, the key argument of this thesis. The argument is that in a

theocratic city, where political and ideological rhetoric are leading urban forces, Sennett's five design interventions, which seek mixity, interaction and diversity, can be achieved. What does an 'open city' mean for a theocratic establishment? The intriguing question, perhaps, is how to define an *ideal city* for a theocratic establishment?

Thus, by taking Tehran as its case study, this research sought to further investigate potential dimensions of openness in its sociocultural context; new dimensions that may not necessarily follow Sennett's theory but which are effective in opening up the city socially. Via a brief history of the sociopolitical context of Tehran, the importance of re-considering some western concepts, such as public/private space, when reading the city of Tehran under the lens of open city theory were discussed. In so doing, some specific research methods and strategies were seen to be necessary to govern and facilitate the collection of information and data and the theoretical framework. These methods helped to fill the gaps uncovered here in Sennett's theory of the open city: a) lack of consideration of power relations and sociopolitical policies in building and structuring both 'the built' and 'the lived' within a totalitarian context and b) a failure to consider the limited and conditional presence of women and other marginalised groups in some contexts, such as Islamic cities. A variety of methodologies, from documentary to ethnographic, are used to gather data from the field both directly and indirectly.

Chapter 3. Methodology

Taking what was learnt from the literature review, and drawing on a conceptual framework taken from Sennett, this chapter outlines the methodological schemes used to investigate aspects of open city that differ from Sennett's open city theory. As discussed in the previous chapter, this research aimed to examine other possible dimensions of openness in a non-Western city, Tehran. A mixed methods approach is used to examine this theoretical assumption – documentary and ethnography. The chapter begins by explaining the conceptual framework of the study, which is based on a re-interpretation of the French words *ville* and *cité* in the context of Iranian cities. From there, the history of documentary methodology is explained, to show how this method can provide insights into the rules and regulations that apply to the physical, built, and architectural space of Tehran. This part of the chapter also explains that different types of documentary data, textual or visual, from rules and regulations to popular culture and media sources, can all provide a good understanding of people's lived experience of Tehran. Ethnographic techniques such as observation, conversation and photography are then examined for their usefulness in providing a detailed account of the lived experience and everyday lives of people in Tehran. From there, the limitations of conducting fieldwork in Tehran are explained. Then, based on the methodological strategies suggested, the section after that explores the research strategy used and how data and information on people's everyday lives were gathered from different public, private, and semi-public/semi-private spaces in Tehran. The chapter ends by explaining the process of analysing the data and material information collected.

3.1. Conceptual framework

This research attempts to examine, on the one hand, the openness/closedness of the built form of Tehran, and on the other hand the complex experience of living in this city. While there is already a rich literature from various disciplines that offers a substantial understanding of the open city, this research mainly draws on Sennett's approach and his recent development of open city theory to reach an understanding of 'the built' and 'the lived' in Tehran. But to what do 'the built' and 'the lived' refer? As discussed in the previous chapter, the built, *ville*, refers to 'the solid of buildings and streets,' and the lived, *cité*, is 'the behaviour and outlook adopted

by the people who lodge within the physical space' (Sennett, 2020, p.8). These French words, according to Jacques Le Goff (1997 [1964]), come from the medieval west. Sennett (2018, p.I) argues that initially *ville* meant the whole city, while the *cité* designated a particular place. Then in the sixteenth century, *cité* came to mean the character of life in a neighbourhood. Currently, according to Packer (2015) *cité* refers to the 'colossal concrete housing projects built during the postwar decades in the Brutalist style of Le Corbusier' in France. By contrast, Sennett (2018, p.2) believes that since *cité* stands next to *citoynnete*, which is the French word for citizenship, it 'can refer to a kind of consciousness, a collective place-consciousness', a political mentality that expresses how people want to live collectively in a city. He also argues that the English phrase 'built environment' does not do justice to the French idea of *ville*. This is because for him, the built environment is more than a reflection of economics or politics, but also 'the product of the maker's will' (Sennett, 2018, p.2,) which is why he sees a mismatch between the builder's own values and those of the public today. The next step, having clarified the meanings of *ville* and *cité*, is to find their equivalent terms or concepts in Farsi – known as *fazay-e kalbadi* (*ville/*the built) and *fazay-e ejtemaee-shahri* (*cité/* the lived) – to see how adequately they represent the context of non-Western cities.[1]

The spatial organisation of Iranian cities have changed, depending on the era: before or after Islam (Habibi, 1996; Diba, 1996; Falamaki (2010; Katouzian, 2010; Daryaiee, 2012). Before Islam, in the Sassanian era (as the second Persian Empire, 224–650 CE),[2] *'Šahrestān'* meant the whole city, and '*Stân*' – which is the second component of the word *Šahrestān* – designated a particular place.[3] After the Muslim conquest of Persia in the 7th century, land became a valuable asset for its importance in urban productive, commercial and economic relations. Land 'was under the king's exclusive ownership' (Katouzian, 2010, p.139), and because of that the whole city was called *Mamalek* (properties [of the king]) (Bastani-Rad, 2010, p.19). Later, in

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[1] It is worth mentioning that there are many other citations and applications of Sennett's ideas to non-Western contexts, such as anthropologist Pascal Menoret in his ethnographic account of car culture in Riyadh, in *Joyriding in Riyadh*, published in 2014, or the work of Architect Yasser Elsheshtawy who explores Sennett's notion of disorder in Gulf cities in works such as: *No Cricket, No Play: Regulating Public Space in Gulf Cities* (2018).

[2] The first empire was the Achaemenid Persian Empire (550–330 BCE), created in the middle of the sixth century BCE by a southern Iranian people called Pars or Persians. It was a conglomerate of Median and Persian rule and profoundly influenced later cultures, becoming a model or foundation for the cultures of the Hellenistic, Parthian, Sasanian, and Islamic states (Shahbazi, 2012).

[3] But it is important to note that, according to Falamaki (2010, p.146), Ancient Iranian cities were, in fact, institutions under the direct function of the governmental and governmental-administrative systems which had a direct impact on the shape of its physical space; in other words, *Šahrestān* was the king's territory (boundary). Inside this boundary was an enclosed space, containing four other enclosed spaces to which specific groups of people were allocated: *Kohandezh* (Tabas Citadel) the residence of kings, rulers and courtiers; *Sharestan* where prominent families lived, and the main site of city life, since bazaars and squares were also in this enclosed space; and *Rabz/biroun* (outer boundary) which in comparison with the above-mentioned spaces was less important, and occupied by residents from lower classes who were involved in the production of agriculture and provided the manpower required for the other two sectors (Fakouhi, 2007, p.380).

the Safavid era (1501–1722), different words were used to describe the whole city, among them *Madineh* – which was a reference to Madinah, a city located in Hijaz, where Prophet Muhammad first established the Muslim *Madani* society (civil society) – and *Velayat* – which comes from the Arabic word *wilāyat,* referring to the state under the sovereignty of the *wāli,* the governor. Today, the word 'Medina is not intended to be a geographical locus, and instead refers to certain characteristics and traits of society' (Mukri Aji et al. 2020, p.1386).

In Iran today, *Madani* society can be seen as one part of the political mentality, discussed by Sennett, which indicates how people want to live collectively in a city. But people also adopt specific/different behaviours and outlooks in the physical spaces of their cities, towns, neighbourhoods, streets, alleys, and houses. For instance, before the emergence of the Pahlavi dynasty in Iran in 1925, it was not physical space that affected the ways of life, but 'living space' that ruled over 'built space' (Falamaki, 2010, p.211). This was directly related to traditional Iranian architecture, which had a direct effect on the mind, body and soul by developing architectural space based on human dignity and the sanctity of physical space.[4] So at this time, place-consciousness was based on environmental and cultural understanding in the creation of physical space, built space, and architectural space. This means that instead of architectural and building rules and regulations, built form was shaped according to 'implicit contracts' between people, such as combining building volumes in residential areas to create coexistence based on mutual responsibility (Falamaki, 2010, p.212). In Iranian cities today, by contrast, in line with western societies, physical, built and architectural space is marked, plotted out, and restricted according to specific rules and regulations, such as space/non-mass-form/mass rules in residential areas. However, because these rules and regulations are different in different cities, there is also variation in the extent to which the forms and shapes of physical space, built space, and architectural space contribute to shaping people's place-consciousness and behaviour. This research, therefore, was designed to highlight these differences in the city of Tehran.

To create a concrete research strategy, different theoretical and experimental approaches were applied. The research strategy helped to answer the research questions which were based on exploring the city of Tehran through the lens of open city theory:

- Which aspects of open city theory could possibly be implemented in the city of Tehran?

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[4] See also Pirnia (2001) who explains the five principles of traditional architecture as follows:
1) Introversion 2) Autonomy 3) Human-conformity 4) Structure and Modulation 5) Purposefulness.

- What are the elements and characteristics of openness in Tehran?
- How might the concept of 'openness' in Tehran be different from that of open city theory?

3.2. Theoretical framework

Because of the nature of the research questions, and considering the theoretical and qualitative nature of the research itself,[5] a set of techniques and attitudes are applied, ranging from documentary data collection to [ethnographic] pilot work in Tehran. However, it is worth noting that 'the selection of particular methods does not determine everything and many decisions that need to be taken in the course of a research project still remain open' (Titscher et al. 2007, p.13). The first research question, mentioned above, aimed to explore areas through which Sennett's five design strategies can be applied or rejected in Tehran. Since these include Sennett's five design interventions, the architectural and urban policies, rules and regulations in Tehran needed to be investigated. This was done by collecting data from local authorities' existing official resources, and from archival texts and photographs, as well as from other academic research. The aim was to explore the possibility of implementing Sennett's design strategies in Tehran, given the sociopolitical reality of the city. Attempting to answer the first question brought the second question to the fore: if Tehran's architecture and urban planning failed to address these five design strategies, could we simply conclude that Tehran is a closed city? If not, what were the other possible areas that ought to be examined in order to ascertain whether the city is an open one? The second question therefore, involved theoretical concepts that needed to be tested. Methods likely to be useful would be more exploratory in nature and based on ethnographic methods such as fieldwork. However, given the political complexity of the field, which is explained in later sections, the ethnographic observation in this research was based on direct observation in the field on the one hand, and on the other on second-hand data related to other researchers' observations in the field.[6] The third question was then to explore the differences and contradictions between what Sennett means by open city and how openness can be experienced in the city of Tehran. Answering the third question therefore entailed

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[5] According to Creswell (2003) qualitative research is an approach used to explore and understand the meanings that individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem while quantitative research is an approach for testing objective theories by examining the relationships between variables. Data collected by qualitative research are usually descriptive while quantitative data are numerical and statistical.

[6] Those resources exist in documentary form – (research theses, papers, books in libraries and archives) and include many popular forms (radio, song, television, film and internet video, blogs) that provide quasi-documentary sources to use alongside more formal and official resources.

finding ways to re-think open city theory by describing complex social behaviours in the sociopolitical context of Tehran; these might be temporary modes of openness that could not necessarily be created by design, but by people. Thus, the nature of the research strategy needed to answer the final question was rather descriptive, based on the stories of individuals or events that happened in public, private, and semi-public/semi-private spaces in Tehran. Mixing all these methods together, as Titscher et al. (2007, p.7) indicates, can go beyond description and explain the rules that determine those behaviours. Two main methodologies were therefore indicated for this research: documentary and ethnographic. What follows, before explaining the data collection strategies based on these two methods, is a historical perspective on these two methods.

Documentary method; A historical perspective

In the early decades of the twentieth century, and concomitant with major developments such as the spread of urbanisation and industrialisation, the growth of social institutions such as schools and hospitals and the encroaching power of the State, there emerged bureaucratic nation-states which produced copious records of their own development and of their dealings with different interest groups (see Clark, 1996; McCulloch, 2004; Potter and Hepburn, 2012). Clark (1996) shows how the transformation of communication systems led to the massive distribution of letters, daily newspapers, magazines, books and other textual materials. People started to write and record their own reactions and responses to these contemporary changes in the form of memoir, diary, or imaginative writing (McCulloch, 2004, p.12). McCulloch (2004) argues that the benchmark text of documentary-based studies written at the time of the First World War is *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, by William I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki (1918– 20/1927). This major work set out to trace the effects of emigration to the United States on the Polish community. Not only that, Scott (1990, p.1) shows that documentary investigation was a key research tool used by Marx, Weber, and Durkheim; Marx made extensive use of factory inspectors' reports, Weber utilised religious tracts and pamphlets, and Durkheim employed official statistics on suicide.

Historically, many sociologists used interdisciplinary approaches to understand modern communities and individual social relationships, and how they were influenced by modern institutions and the state (McCulloch, 2004). However, by the 1940s the pre-eminence of this method started to decline as face-to-face interviews and observation became key resources of social research, while documents provided additional material (ibid). Many theorists, among

them Webb et al. (1966) and David Silverman (2001), have criticised documentary-based studies, claiming that they appear better suited to the study of the past than the present. Because they are the bureaucratic records of the modern state, they are essentially top-down in nature. Others have criticised documentary methods on the grounds that they are mysterious, frustrating and boring (McCulloch, 2004, p.22).

On the other hand, many scholars – including Atkinson and Silverman (1997), Atkinson and Delamont (2005), and Potter and Hepburn (2012) – have begun to question the credibility of qualitative research based *just* on interviews or surveys. Potter and Hepburn (2012, p.555, cited in Silverman, 2016) indicate that 'interviewing has been too easy, too obvious, too little studied and too open to providing a convenient launch pad for poor research'. Atkinson and Silverman (1997) argue that the interview is a narrated experience that studies people's perceptions rather than how they actually behave.

Today, documentary research methods are often marginalised in social and cultural studies – considered to be the professional method only of historians, librarians and information science specialists (Mogalakwe, 2006). However this research takes into account the fact that documents are literally all around us, as most documents are now digitalised, including text, letters, photos, images and so forth, and the world is crammed so full of human, personal and public documents that they have become inescapable (Plummer, 2001). As McCulloch (2004, p.1) indicates, 'documents are an integral part of our daily lives and our public concerns'. There is a wide variety of documents, from administrative records to personal documents such as diaries, letters and autobiographies, to fictional books, virtual documents available on the internet, and films and documentaries. However, documentary research relies not only on textual or visual extracts from all resources; rather, as McCulloch (2004, 5) puts it, it is also related to the context of the study. This is because documents are produced by individuals and groups in different places for a purpose, based on particular assumptions and presented in a certain way or style. It is therefore important to pay close attention to the context in which they are produced, and their origins, purpose and the original audience for whom they were intended.

It is important to mention here that it is not true to consider documentary resources only as secondary data. Marwick (2001) rejects the idea that documents should be treated as a single category of 'text' and indicates that they can be divided into primary and secondary data. Any 'basic, raw, imperfect evidence' such as archival materials, memoirs, diaries, letters, diplomatic/political/official reports, or any sort of original narratives that are produced from

eye-witnesses can be counted as primary. McCulloch (2004, p.27) also highlights the significance of documentary primary data when he refers to the different ways that documents can be read; documentary data can be counted as secondary if they contribute to a specific field or approach a specific problem, but the same data can be read as primary if they reflect attitudes to issues in a particular context or period.

When it comes to the virtual world, online documents also constitute a source that is potentially of immense significance for documentary research. But it is also important to pay close attention to the credibility and originality of the resources. For instance, McCulloch (2004) questions the reliability of government departments and other organisations that have established their own publicly accessible websites; he indicates that the information on such sites tends to cast a favourable light on the official policy of a department and its ministers. However, visual materials and documents from films (documentary, soap opera, and pop-culture) to photographs and maps, can all be used as means to reveal the historical, cultural, social, political context of a study in more detail. Therefore, especially when access to certain sensitive data is avoided, visual documents can play a significant part in the process of data collection.

Ethnography fieldwork; a historical perspective

The origin of the term ethnography, according to Hammersley and Atkinson (2007), lies in nineteenth-century Western anthropology, which was a descriptive explanation of a community or culture, usually in a non-Western location, also known as classical ethnography. Up to the twentieth century, ethnography has transformed itself into what is today known as fieldwork; 'first-hand empirical investigation and theoretical and comparative interpretation of social organisation and culture' carried out to document and interpret a different society's distinctive way of life, their beliefs and values (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007, p.1). Schutt (2008, p.47) describes the study of other people in any field as 'observing social interactions and/or interviewing social actors [which] is followed by developing an explanation for what has been seen and found in the field'.

Among nineteenth century anthropologists, including Sir Edward Burnett Tylor, the primary assumption about studying people in the field was that compiling, organising, and classifying data into an evolutionary timeline was more important than data actively collected by anthropologists (Helm, 2001). But not all nineteenth and twentieth century anthropologists agreed with such 'armchair theorists'. The pioneers of ethnography, including Franz Boas and

Bronislaw Malinowski (cited in Helm, 2001, p.38) believed that 'without direct ethnographic field research, data was essentially useless'. The development of ethnographic fieldwork in sociology itself is inextricably linked with the rise of the Chicago School. Their task, according to Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) was documenting different patterns of life and investigating how urban ecology affected those patterns. Between 1892 and 1942, according to Sennett (2018, p.64), researchers from the Chicago School were 'systematic *flâneur*[s], working street by street, conducting pawnbroker conversations in each'. Apart from being influenced by the social forces transforming modern cities – such as industrialisation, immigration and migration – the Chicagoans were also influenced by Robert E. Park's famous quote to go and 'get the seat of your pants dirty in real research' (cited in Madden, 2017, p.51).

The Chicagoan method was a multi-method 'case study' approach that used observation, personal documents, autobiographical life histories, and maps (Ocejo, 2012).[7] According to Sennett (2018, p.87), influenced by John Dewey's account of 'experience-based' knowledge they explored the narrating of personal experience as a way of thinking about society. In doing so, they spent long periods of time with participants to get close to them and understand what kind of meanings and relations they construct and attach to their behaviour. This method was called participant observation. Boas and Malinowski believed that participating in all daily activities with the people under study would give a true understanding of culture. Classical works that used this method included Robert Lynd and Helen Lynd's *Middletown* (1929), William Whyte's *Street Corner Society* (1943), Herbert Gans' *Urban Villagers* (1965), and Maurice R. Stein's *The Eclipse of Community* (1960), all of which made significant contributions to societies' understanding of the power of ethnographic fieldwork to create more concrete findings about the numerous social groups, neighbourhoods, and deviant behaviours in the modern city.

Nevertheless, Emerson (2001) criticises early twentieth century ethnography by indicating that socially, these ethnographers were too detached from the people they were studying and relied too much on their own pure observations, the personal documents of their participants and their analysis of data. Another criticism of the work of the Chicago classical sociologists was, for Deegan (2001), their white, male, middle-class perspective which ignored women. However, through the late twentieth century and into the twenty-first, ethnographers have become more

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[7] Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) argue that 'case study' was the label that Chicagoans used from the 1920s to the 1950s, and that this was, in some key respects, the same approach to studying human social life as in anthropological research.

reflective and self-conscious about their role in the field and in the lives of the more diverse groups of people they have studied (Ocejo, 2012). According to Gregor and Campbell (2002, p.123) ethnography is a qualitative research approach that deliberately sets out to place the researcher within the setting of the study with his/her emotional and affective experiences, as well as his/her personal experiences of research subjects. According to Marcus (1986, p.166) this can happen through an open-ended 'dialogic' interchange between the ethnographer and 'the other' in the field. Clifford and Marcus (1986) indicate that through a dialogue the researcher first observes and then tries to make sense of the social actions and phenomena observed by allowing the questions to be derived from the situation itself. In this way, ethnography will not rely merely on the taken-for-granted perceptions, categorisations, and generalisations about social life of the group under study but will rely on the full (bodily and sensory) emplacement of the ethnographer, who is researcher, learner, participant, translator and critic at the same time. This simultaneous and constitutive embodied presence of the researcher in the actions, talk and understanding of the social world, has become ethnography's signature method, also known as reflexivity (Pollner and Emerson, 2001, p.2).

Reflexivity, according to Pollner and Emerson (2001, in Atkinson, 2001, p.121), refers to the endless, ongoing contingent accomplishment, through which participants make sense of their environment, which is at the same time both constitutive of the setting and informed by it. The model is to enter the field of study as free as possible from prior theory and to participate and experience the same activities as participants without 'disturbing' the field. This theoretical openness in the work of ethnographers has been influenced by diverse movements and models, among them the 1970s feminism that was concerned about male-oriented and heavily masculine subject-matter and topics (Hall, 1980). This, according to Kwan (2002) was due to the expansion of awareness of gendered identities across multiple axes of race, ethnicity, age, sexuality, religion, and nationality – that targeted the absence of women in ethnographic studies. In this research, the researcher took her own culture and identity as a tool for connecting with participants in a flexible, dialogic, and responsive approach to a range of situations in Tehran. Being an Iranian woman researcher was helpful here, not only to bring her own personal experience to bear on the study of Tehran but also to analyse other women's urban lives and their potential differences from men's lives (see McDowell, 1997, p.383).

Inspired by the documentary and ethnography field work techniques described above, this research set out to find potential elements of openness within the city of Tehran other that those

described by Sennett. Documentary methods were used to explore and examine official rules and legislation on how built form, on the one hand, and social life on the other, should operate in Tehran. Secondly, ethnographic methods were used to find out how people in Tehran, especially women and youth, make sense of the physical, built and architectural environment and define the use of public, private, and semi-public/semi-private spaces. Before exploring these methodologies in more detail in the following section, the limitations of the data collection are explained below. This shows the complexity and difficulties that face female researchers who want to collect data in the sociopolitical context of Iranian cities.

3.3. Limitations of data collection in Tehran

Considering the political climate of Iran, one of the main challenges to data collection was the reliability of official documents, as well as their credibility and accessibility, due to a high level of censorship that does not allow critical points of view to be published in newspapers, magazines, online government websites, books and so on. In this context the most accessible information sources are those that favour the government. This is similar to what Jiang and Xu (2009) have described on Chinese government websites. They argue that the Chinese government manipulates online structures, codes, algorithms and data to maintain state domination over resources and the representation of data to skew them in favour of the government. As Jiang and Xu (2009, p.188) indicate, the lack of political information on government websites actually reflects the exclusion of citizens from local political processes. Khan et.al (2012, p.283) have also investigated the adoption of technology and quality of service of government websites in Afghanistan, and argue that when accessing government e-services online, users suffer from a lack of trust, financial security, information quality, time and money. In Iran, for instance, using governmental websites to systematically review or analyse the so-called sensitive data – relating to poverty, prostitution, non-binary gender identities and so on – cannot create a true awareness of the research process and findings. One example can be related to people who identify themselves with non-binary gender identities, including gay, lesbian, and bi-sexual. They are usually subjected to compulsory therapeutic, hormonal or surgical procedures to change their gender identity both mentally and physically, or else to 'honour killing'. It is worth noting that honour-killing is also performed under the banner of Femicide in Iran to target wives and female family members who are perceived by male family members to have brought dishonour upon the family. Fatemeh Hassani, a women's

rights activist, in a France 24 report published last year, said that 'there are between 375 and 450 honour killings in Iran every year' which according to the Iranian official statistics forms some 20% of all homicides. 'However', she continues, 'we are convinced that the real number of honour killings is higher, because many of these murders are counted as suicides or accidents.' Other crimes are even forgotten because no one files a complaint or follows up with the case' (Ershad, 2022). Considering these sort of limitations, one solution used in this research was to collect data from different viewpoints by a comparative approach. In this regard, reading government accounts alongside critical non-government accounts (produced both inside and outside Iran, and especially by scholars in exile) was useful. The other difficulty related to accessing archives. State departments such as the parliamentary archive usually make many documents confidential and do not permit researchers free access to material, especially if the researcher is based at a foreign university. In mitigating this challenge, some information and documents were gathered from online archives, such as *Zen-E Emrooz Magazine Archive* and *The National Library and Archives of Iran,* and existing accessible data was drawn from previous studies, research and more general sources such as newspapers, magazines, bulletins and so on.

Nevertheless, while the above-mentioned challenges were predictable to some extent, especially for an Iranian student, there are other, unpredictable, challenges imposed on Iranian researchers by their own university. It is important to note that considering the complex webs of political and ethical conditions before, during and after the fieldwork in Tehran, this research was prevented from using ethnographic methods by the Departmental Ethics coordinators at Institute for Creative and Cultural Entrepreneurship, Goldsmiths University of London, in 2019. The top-down ethical procedure relating to ethnographic fieldwork in Iran can affect any ethnographic researcher who wishes to carry out fieldwork in what Andersson (2019) calls 'No-Go' areas.[8] In what follows the process and its impact on the fieldwork is explained in more detail.

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[8] No-Go Areas are referred to Red-tinted risk maps that, according to Andersson (2019), are prepared by private global security industries, located usually in green zones. Reading the colonial history of the British Empire, he shows how the contemporary remote-control empire, or the American empire, which is based on the extension of corporate power, is now distanced from our direct experience of imperialism by technology, media, remote management, and private security apparatuses (see also Alison J. Williams et al. (2016) on gaining access to and collecting data in military and war zones, through which they pay attention to the located, situated, and constitutive natures of military power and its effects on transparency, accountability, and awareness of the multiple and complex politics of academic inquiry. See also the research methods of Forensic Architecture group that uses architectural techniques and technologies to investigate cases of state violence and violations of human rights around the world.)

In 2017, US President Donald Trump imposed a travel ban on the citizens of seven Muslim-majority countries, including Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen.[9] As part of the ethnographic fieldwork, that supposed to be conducted in 2019, three methods and techniques were planned to be applied in Tehran:

- Participant observation: through participating and observing the social life in selected public and private spaces in Teheran.

- In-depth interviews with: a) authorities, developers and other stakeholders, b) scholars, architects, and academics, and c) people in public spaces.

- Documentary methodology: gathering texts and documents such as official legislations on the use of public spaces before and after the 1979 Revolution from libraries, archives, newspapers, and magazines.

But, when it comes to the process of ethical approval, a much broader geopolitical considerations are impinge on the autonomous decision-making practices of universities. The departmental ethic committee rejected the first attempt of ethical approval, stating that: '…g*iven the research setting being in an 'unpredictable space', we may have to send this case to the 'college level' for further scrutiny and approval...*' It is important to note that '*the college level*' here is not simply referred to the Goldsmiths risk assessment offices, such as *Health and Safety Risk Assessment, RSA medical assistance, travel insurance, Foreign Travel Advice, Iran's travel advice, sanction's territory risk assessment*, or *Consolidated List of Financial Sanctions Targets In The UK*. But above all, it is referred to *Goldsmiths Research Ethics and Integrity Committee*, as well as the *Financial Crime Team* who later advised the Goldsmiths' Special Risk Committee that *"in line with US legislation, Gallaher[10] prohibits any acts of facilitation, which includes assisting or supporting, by a US person, of an act by a non-US person in sanctioned countries, with DP/SDNs, or a sanctioned activity that, if committed by a US person, would itself be a violation. We can therefore not assist in finding alternative cover*

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[9] Iran has been, more or less, under US sanctions since 1979, when a group of revolutionaries seized the American Embassy in Tehran and took hostages which were lifted in January 1981 after the hostages were released. However, new sanctions were re-imposed in 1987, which were expanded in 1995. The new round of sanctions were imposed in December 2006 pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1737 after Iran refused to comply with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1696, which demanded that Iran halt its uranium enrichment program. The claim is that by heightening the costs and increasing international isolation resulting from sanctions, Iran will be forced to change its nuclear and foreign policies, such as its position on the Palestinian issue, its support for Hezbollah in Lebanon and for the Bashar al-Assad regime in Syria, its policies in the Middle East, and last but not least its policies relating to Persian Gulf security (Fatollah-Nejad, 2014). It is worth noting that in reality, sanctions empowered those with access to state resources (e.g. those economic actors connected to the IRGC's economic empire and those engaged in businesses with China), while imposed the main pressure on Iranian civilian citizens both inside and outside the country.

[10] Gallagher is a UK-based global business insurance, risk management and consulting services company.

for our client." Which means that if US legislations change the next day, different forms of cartography that sustain the 'no-go-world' will be applied to the map of Iran. This shows how US plays a crucial role in making visions of danger tangible for British universities on the one hand, and Iranian civil society on the other. As a diplomatic tool, the red map of Iran here, which is provided by The Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), for dual national Iranians, is in a fluid position between suspicion of the so-called dangerous geographical territories and qualitative changes in Iran-US relations (Figure 3-1).

Figure 3-1: Travel Advice for British-Iranian Dual Nationals (Source: Foreign & Commonwealth Office)

Ultimately, any form of ethnographic, systematic participant observation and interview was prohibited to be carried out in this research. However, by taking into account specific concepts and notions – among them Michel Foucault's 'security apparatus'– [11] this research has

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[11] The notion of security apparatus is important to consider here as it structures the function of space and territory. According to Foucault (1977-78) the security apparatus was, historically, the architect of the disciplined space and the regulator of a milieu, which not only was able to establish limits and frontiers or to fix locations, but above all the security apparatus was able to guarantee and ensure the proper circulation of people, merchandise, air, and so on. In order to implement their political reasons, the contemporary governments, however, preserve, maintain, and develop new dynamics of forces known as mechanism of security. Mechanism of security, according to Foucault (1978, p.7), are based on two great assemblages: a military-diplomatic apparatus and the apparatus of police. Considering the fact that students who wish to carry on field work need to submit a detailed itinerary of their activity in advance to the Risk Assessment jury – including research questions, timeslots, places of visits, number of interviewees, name of interviewees, the modes of accessing the field and so forth – it can

benefited from a wide range of non-systematic observations, conversations and data collection in the field, all conducted before 2019.

This is to say that, although empirical data collected from the field are imperative to this research, we still need to take into account the elements of power relations, institutional and disciplinary roles in the production of knowledge. This is because both political and ethical dilemmas of conducting ethnographic research challenged the positionality of the researcher as a participant-observer in the first place. In this study, the most challenging task is related to the analysis of power in relation to open city theory; from institutional regularities to the arrangements of power within the public and private spaces of the city. The main source of power here is located in the field, and consisted of [Islamic] policy actors and their role in limiting access to sites and data in Iran, and interfering in the process of encountering, participating, observing, listening, and recording people's experiences in public and private spaces in Tehran. As a result of the controlled and disciplinary research setting of this study, this research relied on the researcher's own previously conducted ethnographic studies and as well as those of other researchers. Apart from showing the acceptance of risk by the researcher, this approach was to safeguard information from possible self-censorship, or from providing alternative narratives to the true urban policies and lived experiences of people in Tehran. This is not to claim that conducting field work in Tehran is always dangerous for Iranians studying in Western universities. On the contrary, there is a tremendous amount of research on women, including Nazgol Bagheri's PhD thesis *Modernising the Public Space: Gender Identities, Multiple Modernities, and Space Politics in Tehran*, that is embedded in and dependent on [feminist] ethnographic fieldwork in Tehran. However, considering the political challenges of maintaining *direct and sustained* social contact with all agents in the field (Willis and Trondman, 2000, p.5) – including urban policy makers, Islamic policy makers, scholars and others – the integrity of that research is questionable due to a fundamental lack of criticism of

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be said that UK universities work as part of a wider network of police apparatus. The reason is that while on the surface the university's duty is to protect the researcher her/himself, research participants, conflicts of interest, and local populations through the hierarchical ethical procedure (see Mosse, 2006), it, at the same time, provides a setting to enact a wider web of relations between different forces such as home office, risk assessment teams, insurance groups, university ethical committee, departmental ethical committee, and so on. Therefore, the ethical procedure becomes a tool to develop the internal forces of each element and link them together as a whole (see Foucault, 1978, 7). The concept of *parrhēsia* (truth-telling), as Roof et al. (2017) argues, is important to note as well, when the discussion is based on the interplay of ethics and critical inquiry in academic research. They argue that proceduralisation of ethics as a technocratic approach to methodology has increasingly governed academic research. In a way that by pointing out the consequences for truth-telling, the ethical procedure is in place to silence the meaningful insights in critical inquiry. However, they continue, this kind of approach to indicate the consequences of truth-telling is often based on simplistic answers, dogmatic beliefs and exaggerated dichotomies between oppressors and oppressed, victims and persecutors, or characteristically dominant and subordinate identities. These approaches to critical inquiry often rely on naïve populism and assumptions of an ideal society of how a society should work and live (Roof et al. (2017, p.83).

top-down, disciplinary and hegemonic action against women in public spaces in Tehran. Rather, by only reflecting on how women attach their own meanings to the use of public space in Tehran, that sort of research in fact attempts to appease and not offend the country's political actors and rulers. This research, on the contrary, sought to understand both closed and open aspects of Tehran, and because of that some people will find it offensive. Instead of relying on inadequate ethnographic ethical standards in the current political conflict in Iran (in terms of informed consent, personal safety and access to data), therefore, this research combined documentary and informal ethnographic methods to access, interpret, and analyse data.

3.4. Research strategy

Considering all the limitations, this section explains the strategies used to collect the data and information needed to answer the research questions and to fulfil the aims and objectives of this research. The possibility of collecting data from various available resources ranged from openly available public sector documents, to documents in the private sector. In this research, government publications – such as *Alam-E Nasvan* Magazine (in the National Archive and Library of the Islamic Republic of Iran), Acts of Parliament (from the online website of the Islamic Republic of Iran Parliament), policy statements (from The Plan and Budget Organisation), census reports (from the Statistical Centre of Iran), reports of commissions of inquiry, ministerial or departmental annual reports (from the Tehran Municipality website), consultancy reports, so on – were used to examine how far Sennett's five design interventions are applicable to the official architectural and urban framework of Tehran. A further data collection resource consisted of the annual or seasonal official textbooks on architectural and urban regulations, including: the Supreme Council of Urban Development and Architecture of Iran; the High Council of Urban Planning Case Codes and Regulations, Titles and Codes of Construction and Development plans; the Laws and Regulations of Architecture and Urban Planning Criteria; the National Building Regulations, and so on. Moreover, as periodicals such as journals and newspapers also collate a lot of information regarding urban projects and regulations, these were also used.

On the other hand, socially produced documents and different state/non-state sponsored visual materials – among them TV dramas, posters, murals and state propaganda (such as cultural forms produced during the Iran-Iraq war), graffiti (associated with defiant youth culture) – are also discussed in this research. Needless to say, using visual materials such as photographs and maps helped me better understand some of Sennett's concepts, such as feeling crowded.

Photographs were collected from different websites, magazines and archives, as well as the researcher's public Instagram page (*Citiestale*). By focusing on the naturalistic power of the photograph on the one hand, and the construction of geographical knowledge on the other, achieved by means of mapping techniques, attention was given to various times and spaces at which people experience higher social interaction. On the other hand, this thesis also set out to explore how people in Tehran use public, private, semi-public/semi-private spaces which can be different from what is dictated to them. Non-systematic ethnographic fieldwork here helped to show how far it is possible to consider their acts to be yet another potential dimension of openness. This was done by resisting methodological simplification regarding systematic interview and so forth but to be more reflexive about various positions people take in creating a moment of openness against the top-down rules of conduct. This kind of critical scrutiny – that helps negate forms of academic and political control – was a result of deliberate and democratic form of participation or engagement with participants within a dialogical space. So on methodological level, the dialogues are intervened simultaneously, by the researcher and participants, to describe the classifications and explanations regarding openness and closedness, both in open city theory and in Tehran.

In the process, some supplementary research forms, such as vignettes, were also used to reflect on specific socio-urban materials in more detail. Used extensively by different scholars, including Pierre Bourdieu in *Distinction* (1979), and drawing on popular and consumer culture sources, plus newspapers and so on, vignettes are short scenarios or stories in written or pictorial form that participants can comment on (Bradbury-Jones, et al., 2014). In this research they take the form of written narratives taken from observed scenes and conversations (in the metro, on the bus and in Tajrish Sqaure), from earlier literature (*Homosexuality and the communal bra shop in Tehran*, Aghasifar, 2021), and films (*Ferrari*, 2018; *Marmooz,* 2018). By focusing on specific elements of a complex situation, vignettes in this research illustrate complex processes and cut through multifaceted issues that would otherwise require lengthy interviewing or questionnaire completion.

Ethnographic data collection
Ethnographic fieldwork helped answer two of the research questions: *What are the elements and characteristics of openness in Tehran?* and, *How might the concept of 'openness' in Tehran be different from that of open city theory?* This research benefitted from the

researcher's previous experience of living, working and researching in Tehran, as well as other researchers' ethnographies. Some of the ethnographic techniques that were used to collect data, were carried out before the process of ethical approval began in 2019. These included observations, informal conversations with people on the streets, and in cafés, taxis, buses and on the Metro, recording voices while walking in the city, and taking photographs as well as memorising and taking notes.

Contacting Tehran municipality (Regions 1, and 12) on different occasions also helped with the collection of maps, census data and municipal regulations regarding the design and use of public and private spaces in the city of Tehran. In the field, the process of observation, conversations with people, note taking, and photography were not pre-coded, as is expected in research that uses a lot of ethnographic field work. The ethnographic research done earlier and used here consisted of two different case studies carried out in Tehran – one in Tajrish Square located in the north of Tehran, and one in the Grand Bazaar in the south. Two visits were made to the square and bazaar in the summer and winter of 2017. These visits consisted of time spent there during the early morning, at peak hours, and in late-night walking, driving, shopping, sitting, eating, and accidental/informal talking. Another visit was paid in September 2018, during the Muharram procession, which is an extraordinary time to explore the everyday lives of people in Tehran. The case studies were accessed by different means of transport, from walking to private car, and depending on the time of day or night, all or part of the Metro and bus routes were explored. All the data gathered during these three visits were based on unobtrusive and open observation to gain an understanding of how interaction was accomplished, and the visits were long enough (three weeks) to detect the openness/closedness of built form and the complexity of social behaviour in Tehran.

In doing these ethnographic studies, the positioning of the researcher was an important tool in encounters with places, people and subjects and to look at the different means people employ to occupy and use public spaces in Tehran. For instance, when in Tajrish Square or the Grand Bazaar, it was important to understand how access to these places impacted on the later positionality of the researcher and other people in different places – such as shopping areas, seating areas, cafés, religious sites, historical or cultural centres – and also on their later sociabilities. In the case studies, for instance, I explored how each type of public transport, – bus, taxi, metro or motorcycle – was a specific position that invited people to see themselves differently and 'further to embody certain subject regimes appropriate to the specific context'

(see Gray, 2003, p.5). It is important to note here this positionality in the case study, as it could lead to or prevent accidental and informal sociability with others, or to observing or missing specific activities/performances at specific time and spaces. On the other hand, accessing the case studies was itself part of the process of data collection and interpretation, extracting meaning and analysis. For instance, using the women-only section in buses and both women-only and mixed coaches on the metro – observing, listening and accidentally falling into the middle of a debate or discussion – provided a rich ethnographic account of people's experiences of public spaces in Tehran. But this goes further to show how in this city, some of Sennett's strategies – such as porosity, which promotes a blurring of edges between two states – are resisted by women (such as when sitting in shared taxis), who were observed creating temporary boundaries to improve the quality of their access to the city. Nonetheless, observing these cultural codes and conventions was possible only because of the researcher's own gender identity as an Iranian woman raised in Iran for nearly three decades.

Being an Iranian woman on the one hand and a researcher on the other, created 'a diverse set of reflections upon both the practice of ethnography and the concept of culture' (Gray, 2003, p.10), which emphasises to some extent the centrality of the researcher to the research process. This, in fact, opened up new potential for reflexivity in this research that actively interrogated the research categories of gender (a woman), class (as a middle-class woman), and ethnicity (as an Iranian middle-class woman), through the process of data collection, interpretation and analysis. Reflexivity here offered the possibility/ability of paying close attention to social actors (especially marginalised groups such as women and youth), to cultural codes (such as the norms of being a modest/immodest young woman) and to social processes (such as socialising with the opposite sex in public, private, and semipublic/semi-private spaces). In return, the process of data gathering, interpretation and analysis remained open and exploratory, as the researcher constantly entered into dialogue with a) the subjects of her research, through less formal conversations, b) with different theoretical perspectives or frameworks, through the research data, and c) with her colleagues and supervisors, to have the possibility of reflecting on the knowledge produced (see Gray, 2003, p.10).

Fieldwork

In reflecting on how fieldwork can be a good technique for understanding the lived experience of people in Tehran, it is important to consider the peculiar nature of the researcher's position – as a woman – in the field. In Tajrish Square (discussed below in chapter six), which is the

case study of this research, particular locations are allocated to the morality police. I therefore avoided taking the positionality of researcher in those places, especially when dress code was different from compulsory Islamic codes. To [western] readers, this could be seen as damaging to the sustainability of the data collection process, since I avoided positioning myself in the presence of the morality police. In reality, these sorts of instances actively helped with data collection, as I found myself accidentally entering into dialogue with others and discovering some *specific* pathways that women and youth use to bypass the morality police. Among women and youth in Tehran, and in Iran at large, these dialogues were not only verbal, but also sensory, and could only be understood by observing, seeing, sensing, and hearing others' body languages, demeanour, body gestures, clothing and so on. Reflecting on these sorts of instances helped me to better understand some of Sennett's concepts and categories such as 'street-smart' or 'tacit-knowledge'. Moreover, this provided a great understanding of how people, especially women and youth, employ/de-employ, construct/deconstruct the Islamic codes and conventions to create new forms of access to the city.

However, it is also worth noting that although growing up as a woman in the sociopolitical context of Iran helped me to better understand the meaning of vocabularies, repertoires, and the employment of codes and conventions, the fact that a researcher has a specific point of view when gathering data, extracting meaning and analysing data could be problematic, unless she is able to detach herself from the field to some extent when conducting observation, interpretation, and analysis. This was specifically important when participating in a youth sub-culture (such as *dor-dor*) in Tehran, in which I could be counted as both an 'insider' (as an Iranian woman) and an 'outsider' (as a person coming from abroad) at the same time. In this instance, I was able to make a sociocultural interpretation of some of Sennett's concepts, such as porosity, by paying attention to how the edges between the insides and outsides of cars were temporally blurred when boys and girls exchanged numbers and socialised through the solid boundary of their cars. At the same time, the study of this particular case went beyond understanding the social and cultural codes from an 'insider' perspective, to include the consumerist culture of these youngsters in the better off neighbourhoods of Tehran. Moreover, exploring this social phenomenon helped me identify particular types of private car use in Tehran that contradict top-down Islamic values.

However, this research also paid attention to middle-class youths who by creating art in poorer areas of Tehran and through innovative ways of using urban materials rather than through their

consumerism, manifested particular forms of youth culture in Tehran in the shape of political and social graffiti, as well as climbing up utility boxes and Parkour dancing. This was done in two ways. The first of these involved reflecting on the closedness of the structure of power, over which young people have no control. Secondly, by browsing the virtual sphere and accessing public social media platforms and news agency forums, this research represents specific symbolic forms using the physical, built and architectural space of Tehran. For instance, by reflecting on meaning production, and the traditions, practices, demeanour and language used by young people, I was able to show what openness *might* mean when an urban object, such as a utility box, is used temporarily to protest against compulsory hijab. This approach not only helped me to better understand the everyday lives of women and youth in Tehran, but by providing an answer to the question of why these individuals, groups, sub-cultures and performances emerged in the first place, I was also able to understand how closedness means something different in Tehran.

Analysing the data

Quality control and extracting meaning (interpretation) are among the main techniques for analysing textual documents, as well as visual data such as photographs, maps, and screenshots of films (see Scott, 1990; McCulloch, 2004; Perkins, 2004; Gray, 2011). Quality control, according to Scott (1990) involves authenticity (being able to identify forged or falsified legal documents, diaries and letters), credibility (regarding the researcher's sincerity in the choice of a point of view), representativeness (which refers to whether the evidence is typical of its kind or not) and meaning (whether the evidence is clear and comprehensible to the researcher). Extracting meaning, according to McCulloch (2004, p.39), involves both interpretive and critical techniques. The interpretive outlook stresses that social phenomena such as documents are socially constructed, whereas the critical tradition is heavily theoretical and overtly political in nature, emphasising social conflict, power, control and ideology. So, for example, an interpretive approach to analysing municipal policy on widening/narrowing the pavements in the streets of Tehran could be related to a 'technical-empiricist' view of policy-making, while a critical approach would ask why the pavements of this popular square are narrower than those of less-crowded streets (see McCulloch, 2004, p.39). In this research, extracting the meaning and interpreting the conversations, in a dynamic and descriptive format, gave the empirical knowledge its character.

Moreover, any form of visual representation can itself serves as an analytical technique and communications tool, so that while the representation of visual data, such as photographs, on their own can show the innovative ways that people use public spaces in Tehran, they can at the same time be seen as technologies, practices, and codes that problematise the power structure and governance of the urban built environment (see also Perkins, 2004, p.387). For instance, in the case of representing maps of the case study based on Sennett's notion of 'feeling crowded', a comparative analysis of map designs in different genres – such as social clumps, narrowness/width, street line/building line – was carried out, which focused on comparing different designs of the same map (Zeigler, 2002). The research thus not only examined the social dimensions of the physical, built, and architectural space of the square, but as a result of imposing different designs on the same map, the map itself became part of the argument of the research and helped me re-think open city theory. Moreover, as can be seen in chapter six, by constructing and de-constructing the same map to evaluate the porosity of the architectural space of 'the old core' of the case study, the map, instead of being an objective tool, became a subjective analysis of porosity in the square.

3.5. Conclusion

Specific strategies and data collection methods can help with devising a hypothesis, answering the research questions and fulfilling the aims and objectives of research. In building up the hypothesis of this research, first and foremost, it was necessary to find alternative terms for *ville* and *cité*, as Sennett's aim is to open up the *ville* so that it makes *cité* complex. As much as these French words can adequately describe the built and the lived in the western context, they might not adequately fulfil the aim of this study. Therefore, instead of using them directly in the context of Tehran, this research considered the historical, cultural, social and political forces shaping the physical-social space in Tehran (which is known as '*fazay-e kalbadi-ejtemaee*' in Farsi) and uses physical space/the built (*fazay-e kalbadi*) for *ville* and the modes of life and the attachments place to which urbanity gives rise/the lived (*fazay-e ejtemaee-shahri*) for *cité*. In doing so, documentary methods were used to reveal the rules, regulations and power relations on which built form in Tehran is based, as well as the complexity of the experience of living in that city. But to get a better understanding of the experience of everyday life in the physical, built and architectural space of Tehran, an ethnographic approach was also used to explore the field and case studies in more detail. A series of ethnographic studies was

carried out in 2017 and 2018, which explored a range of public, private, semi-public/semi-private spaces using the techniques of informal observation, conversation, photography, and map designing. Some of these descriptive and visual techniques are themselves analytical tools that can offer alternative angles in reading the physical and social environment of Tehran. This shows how openness can also be experienced in temporary modes, when people, and not design interventions, re-define and attach new meanings to the use of physical spaces in Tehran.

But exploring the myriad ways people experience potential openness in Tehran today could not be done without reflecting on historical moments such as the emergence of new architecture and urbanisation in 1925 that dramatically changed the hierarchical organisation of space in Iranian cities. This is exactly the time that Le Corbusier's Plan Voisin changed the language of architecture and urban planning to the functional one that has had an impact on physical, built, and architectural space up to the present. In Tehran, before the de-construction of the city walls and the construction of new roads in 1925, it was environmental, social and cultural codes that ruled over physical form, while after the emergence of Pahlavi, it was urban rules and regulations that impacted on social life in Iranian cities. The next chapter therefore explains the physical changes that took place in the Pahlavi era and their social consequences.

Chapter 4: The modern city in the making: Tehran before 1979

The purpose of this chapter is to set out the context against which 'the built' (*ville*) and 'the lived' (*cité*) of modern Tehran were configured in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As discussed in the previous chapter, physical/built (*fazay-e kalbadi*) and socio-urban/lived (*fazay-e ejtemaee-shahri*) space are used to investigate the openness and closedness of the city through the lens of open city theory. This chapter explains how Tehran became the center of power and modernisation in the Pahlavi era. By introducing some urban projects, namely the transformation of architecture and urban fabric, in the first Pahlavi period, the openness/closedness of the city is examined, showing how, in comparison with his predecessors, the first Pahlavi king created an open built form and intensified the north-south binary in Tehran.

From there, I move to the second Pahlavi era and explain how this period is marked by the closedness of the built environment through the rhetoric of the functional city, which found its way to Tehran through the city's first Comprehensive Plan. I explain how as a result of this plan, the urban poor were pushed outside the [official] boundaries of the city. I also show how people's social lives were affected by the king's western-model ambitions, in such a way that the traditional and religious sectors of society, and especially women, were excluded from public space. By contrast, the upper middle class did to some extent experience openness during this period, as both architectural and social spaces welcomed the western way of life (consumerism), style (clothing and fashion), bodily performance (walking, sitting, talking) and personality. I also discuss in this section, therefore, how this condition produced its own dissidents, people from a variety of backgrounds, from Islamic ideology and leftist guerrillas to the poor classes and religious/traditional women, who shaped the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

4.1 Opening up a closed city; the Pahlavis' 'quasi-modernism'

In the modern history of the urban transformation of Tehran, the1930s was marked by the Pahlavis' far-reaching and vigorous redevelopment schemes, which changed the morphology of entire areas of the capital by destroying the *city wall* and its 12 gates and replacing the moat

and wall with wide boulevards (Madanipour, 1998).[1] The demolition of the wall and the elimination of physical limitations to the city was hailed as the 'modernisation of the city' (Zaka, 1970, p.16), which opened the way for expansion towards the northern mountains (Grigor, 2016). Reza Shah's (1925-1941) priority was the outward appearance of built form, which was manifested in carefully planned streets and squares – as the main channels of transportation and roundabouts – and imposing buildings (Madanipour, 1998, p.37). But before looking into the details of the Pahlavis' schemes for the socio-urban reform of Tehran, it is important to know what the city of Tehran looked like when the Pahlavi dynasty began its reign.

A walled urban structure

In 1786, Agha Mohammad Khan Qajar chose Tehran as the capital of Persia. Some forty years later, Abbas Mirza Qajar (1789–1833) introduced *Naẓm-I Jadīd*, (literally meaning 'New Order'), which was about the reformation of the educational and administrative systems (Shirzai and Falahat, 2019, p.30). By 1796, when the new order had been fully imposed and the three square kilometre walled city had a population of 15,000 inhabitants; within a decade, 50,000 people were living in 12,000 houses. Enclosed within the Safavid era walls,[2] the city had an axial layout and a functional structure consisting of a political authority (royal compound), an economic centre (the bazaar), a religious focus (Friday mosque) and townspeople's homes (including the four quarters) (Madanipour, 1998, p.29-30).

The polygon-shaped city wall was punctuated by six gates and enclosed by a moat. Made from mud and flanked by circular towers, the wall was 6 metres high, while the moat was 12 metres wide and 6 to 9 metres deep to defend the wall (Curzon, 1892, in Madanipour, 1998, p.30) (Figure 4-1). Not only was the city itself walled, but the rectangular citadel (*Arg*) inside the city also had its own walls and moats.[3] The city's two main squares were located on either side

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[1] At its earliest historical appearance in an eleventh century chronicle, Tehran was a small village on the north side of the ancient city of Ray, which dates back to Achaemenid (559–330 BC) and Parthian times (250 BC–224 AD). Located historically at the intersection of the historic east–west (Silk Road) and north–south trading routes, and geographically at the foot of Mount Damavand, its location was always strategic and symbolic. Mount Damavand, in fact, is the 'crowning glory' of Tehran for many visitors as it is the source of many ancient legends; Curzon (in Madanipour, 1998, p.28) indicates that '*what Fujiyama is to the Japanese, Damavand is to the Persian landscape, both are ever-present, aerial and superb, both have left an enduring mark upon the legends of their countries*'.

[2] The first signs of the city-ness of Tehran appeared in 1553, when a Bazaar and square-shaped town walls turned the village into a walled market town in the Safavid era; a circuit of the wall took 6000 steps, and there were 114 towers with four gates and a moat (Semsar, 1986, in Madanipour, 1998, p.28).

[3] Arg (citadel) is the royal compound consisting of a *chahar-bagh* (four gardens) and a *chenarestan* (plane grove) in the northern part of the town which was separated by walls from the rest of the city (Zaka, 1970).

of the citadel gate. The gate and the wooden bridge over the citadel's moat constituted an in-between zone that connected the two squares to each other, where townspeople could gather to meet with one another as well as with the ruling authorities. *Meydan-e Arg* (Citadel Square) was inside the gate and *Sabzeh Meydan* (Herbs Market) was outside it (Madanipour, 1998, p.30).
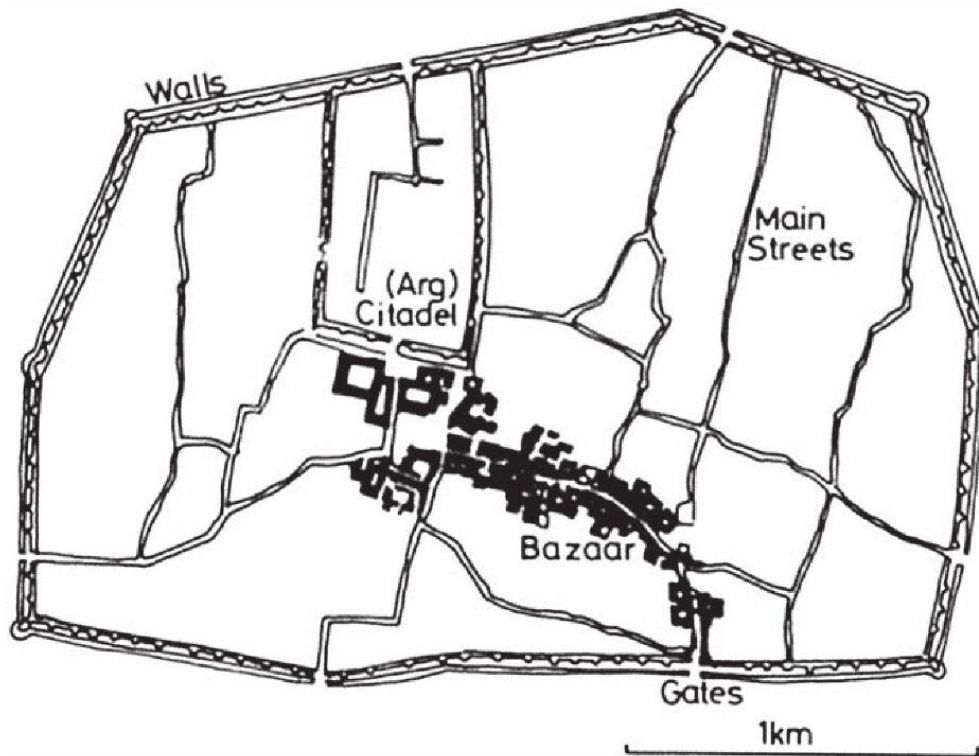

Figure 4-1: Tehran in 1858, enclosed inside a polygon-shaped wall, opened by six gates to the outside boundary (Source, Madanipour, 1998, p.30)

Tehran was a city of blank clay walls; it was described by European travellers, including Fraser and Curzon (in Madanipour 1998, p.31), as a town full of narrow, twisting, dusty streets and unpretentious buildings with flat roofs and blank facades. Although this negative image of the city was partly transformed by Nasser al-Din Shah Qajar (1848–1896), the *wall* remained a major component of its image. Apart from improving the streets of the royal compound for the movement of vehicles, and laying out a large new square to its northern boundary (Tup-Khaneh, or Cannon Square), one of the first attempts of the reformist vizier Amir Kabir was to restore the walls of the royal compound, so that it was now properly walled.[4] Moreover, in 1868, when the shah decided to expand the city – which, with 150,000 inhabitants, could

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[4] Tup-Khaneh square was a large quadrangle enclosed by two storey arches with cannons on the first storey and artillery staff on the second, which itself was a symbol of the new order of power, referring to the modern military (Shirzai and Falahat, 2019). The Imperial Bank of Persia with its international connections was located in this new square vis-à-vis the traditional economic institution of the bazaar in the market square (which was located towards the south) which itself embodied the city's somehow open-armed welcome to global progress (Madanipour, 1998, p.33).

expand no further within the old walls – its walls did not disappear, but only changed in shape and size. This time, the old walls were torn down and the moat filled in; new, perfectly shaped octagonal walls were built 1.6 kilometres from their ruins, and 58 spearhead-shaped bastions, pierced by 12 gates, made formal reference to the old fortifications of Paris and other French cities (Shirzai and Falahat, 2019, p.32) (Figures 4-2 and 4-3).
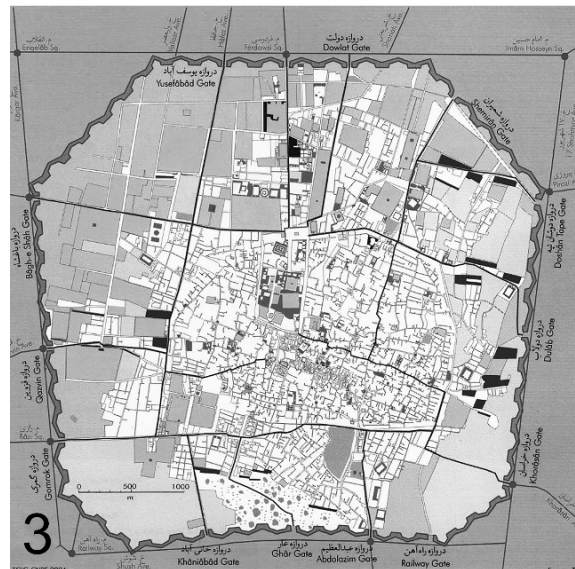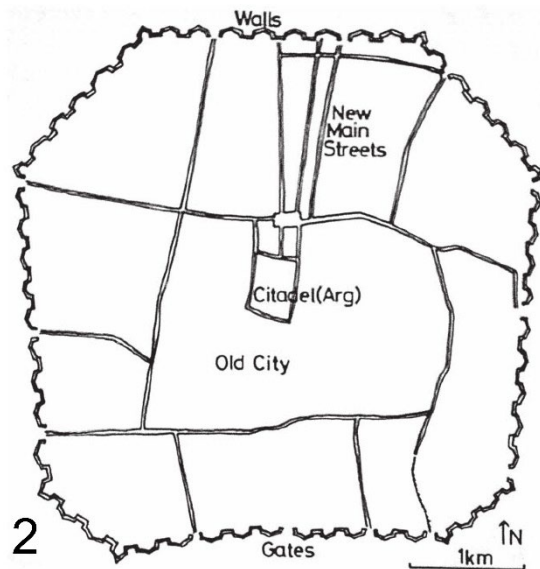
Figures 4-2: City Wall: a perfectly octagonal-shaped wall, with 58 spearhead-shaped bastions, pierced by 12 gates, 1890 (Source: Madanipour, 1998, p.32)

Figure 4-3: The walled city, Tehran, 1890 (Source: Shirzai and Falahat, 2019)

Apart from the wall's function as a physical structure that demarcated the city's boundary, the system of 'gate tax' introduced by the government created socio-urban segregation between the inside and outside of the city's walls (Grigor, 2016, p.353).[5] Unskilled workers from the surrounding countryside were attracted by the construction activities in the newly developed suburban areas inside the city walls, and gradually began to settle in the moats outside the southern wall and the four gates that flanked it. Moreover, there emerged for the first time a visible, clear-cut case of marginalisation, in which marginal and excluded groups, from dervishes and gypsies to thieves and prostitutes, began to settle in this zone.

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[5] This is similar to Weber's account of the [ancient] urban wall, which was a boundary, a legal idea rather than a physical presence (see Sennett, 2018, p.221). While the military boundary of the wall had to keep misfits outside the city, the development of unregulated activities on both sides morphed the wall into social spaces. The architecture of these walls was different from the military walls around Beijing, for instance, that were thick (60 feet at the base, 40 feet at the top), tall (40 feet) and completely impenetrable.

Reading this in the light of Sennett's theory can create a positive image of the city wall as a porous edge at which people could mix and share casual everyday commercial or physical contact (like the ancient Aix-en-Provence wall, that apart from being a military wall was also an active zone of unregulated development). The negative point is that while the poor settled outside the wall to the south of the city, the gardens and villas of the rich were developing outside the walls towards the north. Not only that, areas north of the city generally housed the newly established quarters of wealthy Tehranies as well as the foreign embassies and European residents (Grigor, 2016). The primary outcome was a north-south division that transformed the space to accommodate a polarised social structure and spatial segregation of social classes that continues to the present day.

An intensified urban transformation

While demolishing the first city wall and erecting the second in the Naserid era marked the first urban transformation of Tehran, Reza Shah's demolition of the Naserid wall is seen as the second phase of Tehran's urban transformation. The first phase had led to the commodification of urban space, while the second opened up the whole fabric, extended the market economy in urban space and set a pattern for the future (Madanipour, 1998). Unlike the weak influence of the state on the economy in the Qajar era, Reza Shah's administration took a major step towards industrialisation.[6] In so doing, the proportion of the country's economy dedicated to agriculture declined significantly, from 80-90 percent of GNP at the turn of the century to 50 percent by 1950, while plans for urbanisation intensified (Madanipour, 1998, p.14).[7]

While the whole country had no more than 2,000 miles of road in 1925, 14,000 miles of new road were built by the early 1940s, which opened up the country for internal trade and the movement of imports (Abrahamian, 1982, p.146-147). According to Abrahamian (2008), the primary purpose of building these new roads was military; they later laid the infrastructure for economic, especially industrial, development. By 1941 (the year of Reza Shah's abdication),

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[6] The nineteenth century witnessed the connection of Iran to the western world (their 'northern' (Russians) and 'southern' (British) neighbours), through different political and economic concessions. By 1900, the annual governmental budget was only 2 percent of the GNP and any tax that was collected was used to support the army and royal family, which is itself a mark of the arbitrary nature of the monarch's power (Katouzian, 1997). Although the Constitutional Revolution (1906-1911) aimed to establish a constitutional monarchy with classic separation of powers between the executive, legislative, and judiciary, in practice it left an era of strife that brought the country close to disintegration (Abrahamian, 2008, p.34).

[7] This decline was, in fact, the result of the changes in land proprietorship that Reza Shah applied through economic development and the establishment of a centralised bureaucracy which reduced the state's dependency on land (Moghadam, 1996, p.53).

the number of industrial plants had grown from fewer than 20 in 1925 to 346, leading to a corresponding growth in employment in large modern factories, from fewer than 1,000 workers in 1925 to more than 50,000 workers in 1941 (Abrahamian, 1982, p.146-147). Not only did the number of modern industrial plants increase, but by 1945 both small and large industries had also grown to 635, of which 378 were concentrated in Tehran, where the best location was the south of Tehran, which was the city's 'industrial zone', inhabited by the emerging industrial working class (Madanipour, 1998, p.14-15).

At this time, the 1930 Municipality Law regulated the street landscape, and the Street Widening Act of 1933 imposed a network of streets on the urban fabric to facilitate motorised transportation (Esfahani and Pesaran, 2008).[8] This was, as Grigor (2016, p.356) puts it, the legal basis of Reza Shah's harsh urban renewal policy, presented to local deputies under the rubric of preservation and modernisation, but which in practice brought a decade of demolition, so that only in nine years the number of residential structures demolished by the state grew from 15,000 to 30,000.[9] Calling it 'physical surgery' of the urban fabric, Madanipour (1998, p.121) argues that space became unified and homogenised as a result of the old urban fabric being torn down, and the imposition of new order on the city.

At this time, Tehran's appearance changed – from the enclosed, walled city of Qajar filled with dusty and twisting streets – into a kind of open city with 'wide streets intersecting each other at right angles, some paved with cut granite, others with asphalt and concrete' (Grigor, 2016, p.357). But as Shirazi and Falahat (2019, p.33) argue, it was mainly the 'destruction-construction' dialectic of Reza Shah's urban agenda – also referred to as 'quasi-modernisation' (Katouzian, 2007, p.149), and 'pseudo-modernisation' (Bani-Masoud, 2011, p.190) – that set out to transform the streetscape, cityscape and spatial configuration of urban components. It can be said that Reza Shah's opening-up of the urban fabric was not about inclusion and mixing, but rather served as a tool to 'overcome the divide between urban quarters and their factionalism, in line with his ambitions to create an integrative nationalism' (Madanipour, 1998, p.121) (Figures 4-4, and 4-5).

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[8] The Road Widening Act passed by parliament is known as the first urban planning law in Iran (IPI - *Islamic Parliament of Iran*, 2020). With the improvement of transport and the industrial sector, the mid-1930s marks the intensification of rural-urban migration increasing the annual rate of population growth in urban areas by 2.3 per cent, compared with 1.3 per cent in rural areas, so that by 1939 the population of Tehran reached 540,000 and 58.5 per cent of all domestic capital investment was made in the city (Keddie, 1981, in Madanipour, 1998, p.16).

[9] Like Hussmann in 1850s Paris, the *street* became the key symbol manifesting the practice of modernisation for Reza Shah who replaced old structures with wide and pointless boulevards for military purposes (Bani-Masoud, 2011). Historians Banani and Lockhart (1939, in Grigor, 2016, p.357) describe Reza Shah's modernisation as follows: 'the Tehran of 1941 bore no resemblance to the Tehran of 1921'.
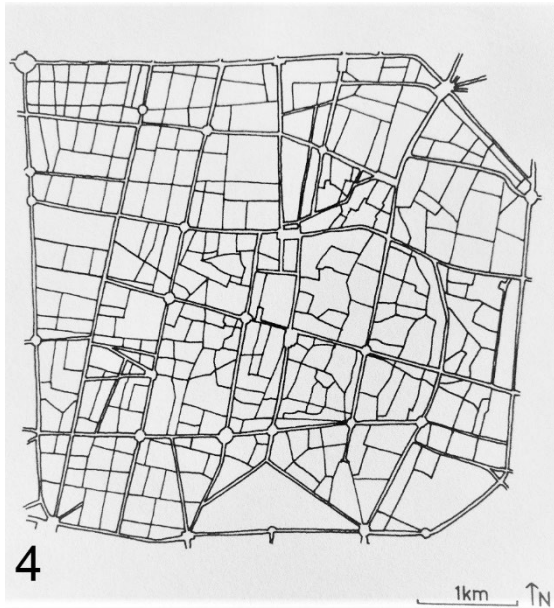
Figure 4-4: *Naqshih-yi Khīābānhā-yi Jadīd* (Plan of the New Avenues), created by Reza Shah, 1937 (Source: Figure 4: Madanipour, 1998, p.38)
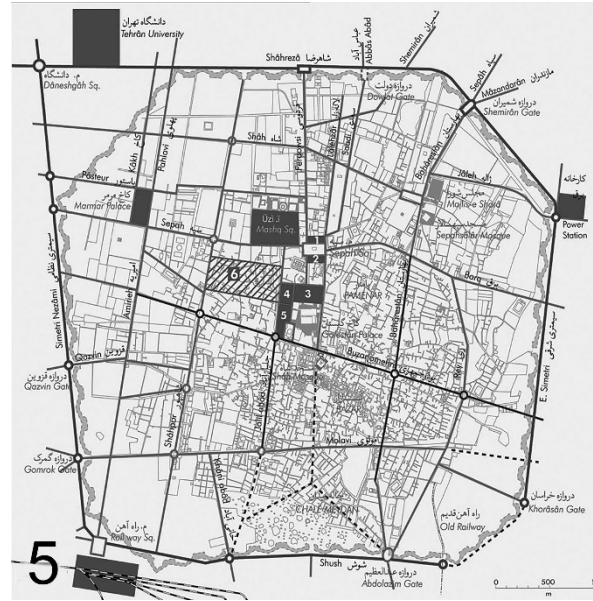
Figure 4-5: The open matrix street pattern, created by Reza Shah, 1937 (Source: Shirzai and Falahat, 2019, p.31)

4.2 The planned city

Reza Shah's modernisation programme continued right up to World War II, during which Britain and Russia occupied Iran because of the considerable number of Germans who were in Iran for industrial developments that used German machinery, technical support and technicians (Bakhash, 2016). Because he was pro-German, Reza Shah Pahlavi was forced by the invading allies to abdicate, and his twenty-two-year-old son Mohammad-Reza took the crown. In 1945, the Soviet Union proposed a concession on oil extraction in the northern provinces that was rejected by *majlis* (parliament) in 1948, even though the agreement gave Iran an equal share of profits, management and distribution (Abrahamian, 2001). The *majlis* also rejected a supplement to the 1933 agreement with the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, which by 1949-50 owned, in Iran, the world's largest refinery and the third largest oil reserves, and which was the second largest exporter of crude petroleum (Abrahamian, 2001, p.185).[10]

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[10] While the supplementary agreement gave Iran too little – it offered to increase Iran's royalties from four to six shillings per ton and therefore increase Iran's share of the company's profit from 17 to 24% – the British treasury share was 24 million pounds sterling in taxes and 92 million pounds in foreign exchange; supplied 85% of the fuel needs of the British navy and gave AIOC (Anglo-Persian Oil Company) 75% of its annual profits (Abrahamian, 2001, p.185).

The prime-minister, Mohammad Mosaddegh, rejected the Western dominance of Iran and reasserted the authority of parliament, reducing the shah to a constitutional monarch and nationalise the oil industry. In turn, the American CIA and the British MI6 together orchestrated the 1953 coup d'état against Mosaddegh. As a result, the prime minister was overthrown and the then weakened shah reinstated. Under his reign, oil revenues increased considerably, especially during the 1970s, rising from $1.2 billion in 1970 to $20.9 billion in 1977 (Clark, 1981, in Karampour, 2018, p.93). He implemented a linear developmental model of western industrialisation and social modernisation, which at the time was viewed by many as 'the blind imitation and idealisation of Western model by the ancient regime' (Keshavarzian, 2009, p.4).

Functional city in the making

After the overthrow of the nationalist government, the political elite and technocrats who were part of Mossadegh's government (bureaucrats who were educated in Europe and came from old land-owning and capital-holding families) began to plan and implement development projects. Founded in 1941, the 'Plan Organisation' became 'Iran's technocratic headquarters' to monitor the national budget, and prepare national development plans, as well as supervise their implementation (Mashayekhi, 2018, p.5). Between 1948 and the 1979 Islamic Revolution, the Plan Organisation produced two seven-year plans and three five-year plans for the development of large-scale, prestigious and capital-intensive projects – including dams, airports, major railways, highways, ports and telecommunications. In order to escape the undignified condition of 'underdevelopment' as fast as possible, the ruling technocrats drew on the power of science, technology, and rational planning to increase industrialisation and development in urban areas through urban infrastructure projects.

From the mid-1950s, and relying considerably on the economic surplus from oil extraction to expand urban infrastructure projects to become relatively independent of the economic surplus of the countryside, an industrialisation drive created many new jobs in big cities, particularly in Tehran, which in turn increased rural-urban migration from 1.5 million by 1956, to 3 million by 1966, to 4.5 million by 1976 (Vezarat-e Barnameh va Budgeh, 1987). The shah's Land Reform,[11] attracted the new class of wage labourers to large cities in search of a better life, who

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[11] The shah devised the Land Reform programme (the White Revolution) to extend the state's authority in the countryside and abolish the traditional agriculture system in favour of a shift toward capitalism (Khatam, 2015). While on the surface the land reform was to benefit the villagers as they were frequently transgressed upon by large landowners, in practice a significant amount of land remained under the control of a relatively small group, since land speculators began buying agricultural land cheaply from indebted peasants who had decided to instead seek employment in cities (Hooglund, 1984).

were absorbed into the new industries such as the construction sector, services and the constantly growing public sector bureaucracy. Bayat (2010) indicates that as a result of this enclosure movement, some three million landless peasants were released from the countryside into the big cities, especially Tehran, and these became the 'marginals' (*hashiyenishinan*).

Then, in order to maximise profit by making land affordable to the emerging urban middle class, landlords in Tehran created a new type of land plot and street pattern, which was regarded as a 'rationalisation' of form (Madanipour, 1998, p.121) (Figure 4-6). The result was that, by the 1960s, not only had social division intensified along the north-south axial, but the city had also grown in a disjointed manner in all directions along the outgoing roads (Figure 4-7). The Plan Organisation therefore commissioned private firms, architects, and engineers to introduce a model for urban development, as well as a means of controlling the rapid and unregulated growth of Iranian cities. Under the supervision of the Plan Organisation's technocrats and economists, architects and urban planners became 'technical experts' as urban planning was seen as an architectural and engineering exercise at a city-wide scale (Mashayekhi, 2018, p.13).
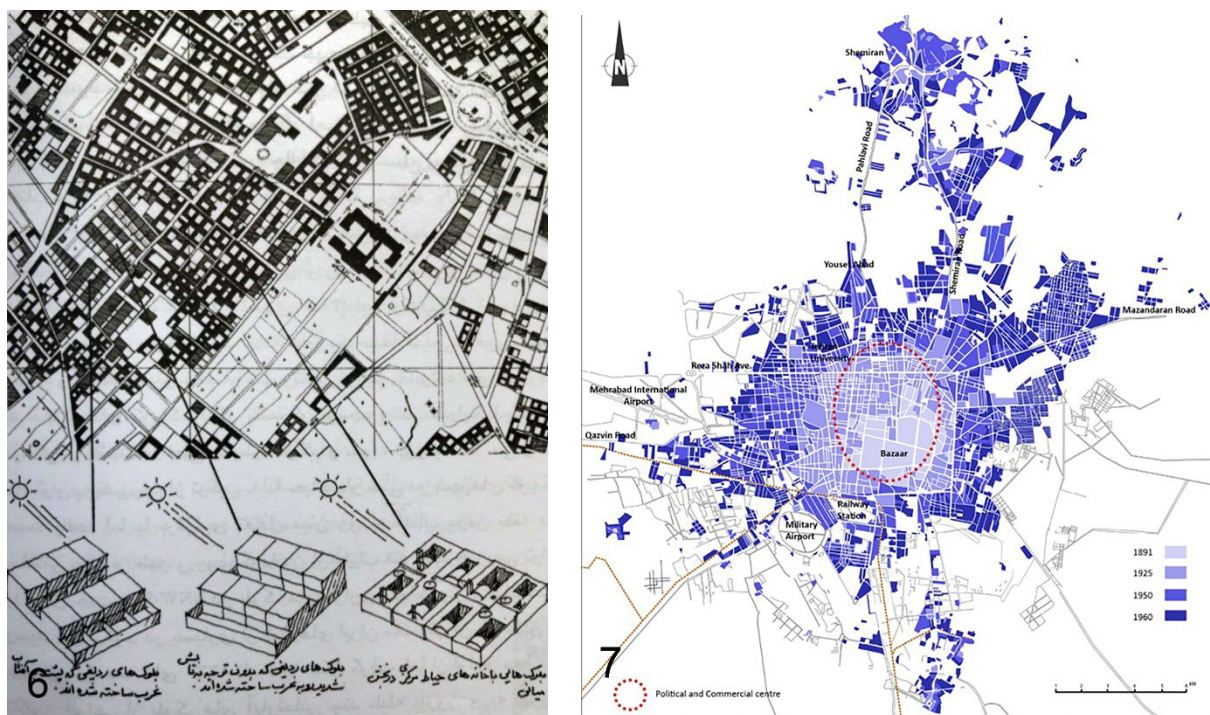

Figure 4-6: The changing pattern of urban blocks in Iran, from inward looking, low-rise courtyard houses to an outward-looking row housing (medium to high-rise houses and apartments) with a courtyard either in front of or behind the building (Source: Tavassoli, 2011, p.172)

Figure 4-7: Map of Tehran's urban growth, 1960 (Source: Mashayekhi, 2018, p.11)

Tehran's Comprehensive Plan was designed in 1968 to bring *new order* to the irregular urban expansion of the city, in response to the growing number of rural migrants and the congested city centre. The TCP (Tehran Comprehensive Plan) was inspired by a western European post-war modernist idea of planning that sought to create an 'ideal city' through 'comprehensive', 'systematic' and 'strategic' development (Mashayekhi, 2018, p.15). The aim was to reduce the density of the city centre by proposing a linear decentralisation, stretching the city westward (Figures 4-8 and 4-9). This plan predicted that 5 million inhabitants would be living in Tehran in 25 years, expanding the city from $180km^2$ in 1966 to $650km^2$ in 1991, with rigid boundaries and carefully defined districts and neighbourhoods connected by super-highways (Farmanfarmaian and Gruen, 1968).

The TCP was inspired by Clarence A. Perry's notion of Neighborhood Units and Ebenezer Howard's Garden City. However, in reality, Le Courbusier's functional city zoning regulations applied in Tehran and divided the city into ten districts; the old core became a zone for commercial buildings and office use, the west and southwest became the industrial zone, with the northern and eastern areas mostly containing residential uses. As discussed above in the literature review, according to Sennett (2006) this sort of pre-planning and the proliferation of zoning regulations creates closed cities in which the form of the built environment loses a sense of adaptive capacity and environmental vitality. Then, as money flowed from public to private sector organisations such as development agencies, and also as a result of the commodification of land, private developers invested in large-scale, mass housing projects across the city for the middle and upper-middle classes, in the form of homes with 'modern amenities', western-style furniture, secure gates, and janitors (Mashayekhi, 2018, p.23). The result, which has continued to the present day, was that the dominant pattern of urban development in Tehran became a closed system of neighbourhood units that were effectively class-segregated suburbs connected by motorways (Figures 4-10 and 4-11).[12]

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[12] Among them *Ekbatan* - a mass high-rise residential complex designed by American, Iranian, and South Korean designers for 15,500 middle-class families on a plot of 240 ha, located to the east of the Mehrabad International Airport. Similar to the uniform X-shaped buildings of Le Courbusier's Plan Voisin, Ekbatan was designed as a series of U and Y shaped towers containing ultra-modern apartments with various floor plans and sizes, from one bedroom flats to four bedroom penthouses, in different densities from 12-storey apartments to 9 and 5-storey apartments, around a linear centre that would provide all the residents' needs (Mashayekhi, 2018, p.22).

Mountains

Desert

مراکز منطقه — REGIONAL CENTERS

منطقه جمعیتی — POPULATED ZONES

شبکه سریع السیر — RAPID TRANSIT

شاهراهها — FREEWAYS

جاده های اصلی — ARTERTALS

0 1 2 ... 10 Km.

T.C.P. CONCEPT
ایده کلی طرح جامع تهران
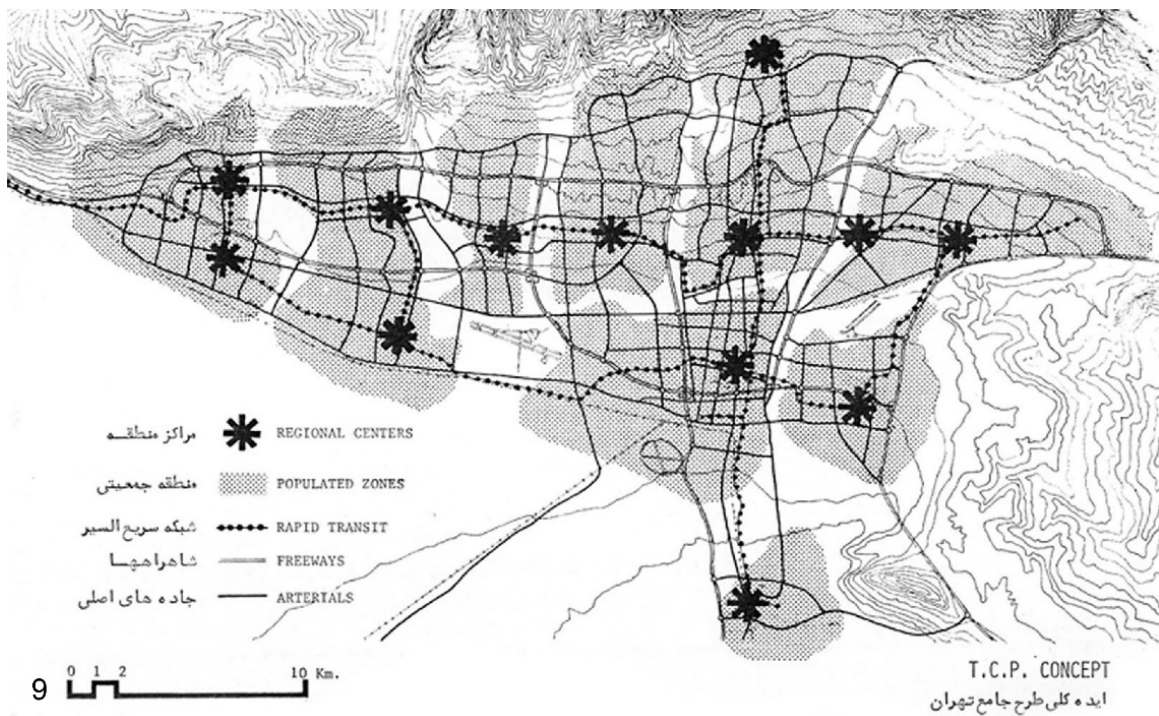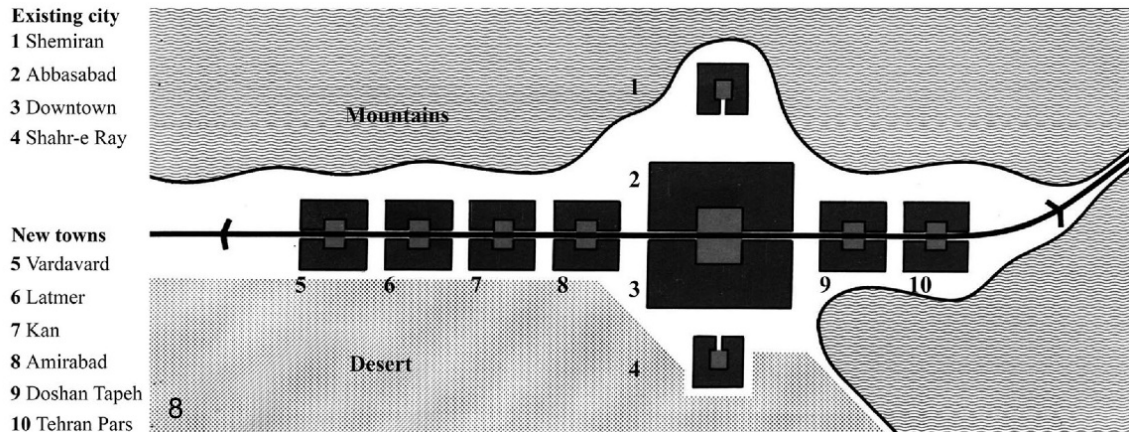
Figure 4-8: Comprehensive Plan of Tehran, 1968, proposed by Victor Gruen and Abdolaziz Farmanfarmaian which shows the diagram for the linear urban growth for Tehran (Source: Jafari & Hein, 2020, p.14)

Figure 4-9: The concept design for rejecting the centripetal urban form of Tehran (Source: Jafari & Hein, 2020, p.14)

Figure 4-10: Ekbatan residential complex, Tehran, 1972, designed under the leadership of Rahman Golzar Shabestani, a young Iranian architect (Source: Honar-e Memari, no. 27 (2011), in Sadighi, 2018, p.18)

Figure 4-11: Le Courbusier's Plan Voisin, 1925 (source: Le Courbusier Foundation)

Porous architecture

In parallel with other changes in physical and built space, there has also been a change in architecture.[13] The TCP lacked adaptations suitable for the hot arid climate of Tehran, and along with changes in the urban fabric (from compact to wide streets) and street system (from pedestrian to vehicular) this meant that the desirable orientation for buildings was along the north-south axis for maximum exposure to the sun (Bani-Masoud, 2011). This contrasted with traditional architecture, which was both adapted to the climate and consisted of hierarchical settings that emphasised the demarcation between public and private space. Moreover, houses (the ultimate principle of privacy) were built based on another form of hierarchical setting in traditional architecture with an outer part (*biroun*) and an inner part (*andaroun*) to *control* the movement of bodies wishing to commute from outside to inside the boundaries. The rationale was to keep women's bodies secure and safe from being seen by the *na-mahram* (stranger).[14]

The introverted architecture of old houses bore no openings to the outside world; rather they were oriented inwards, opening onto a courtyard where only family members were allowed.[15]

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[13] In terms of architectural style, it can be said that while Reza Shah favoured the combination of European neoclassical architecture – which was also the style beloved of other dictators such as Hitler and Mussolini, and which manifested a sense of eternity and absolutism (Bani-Masoud, 2011) – over those of ancient Iranian motifs in transforming the traditional architecture, it was the Iranian social, religious, and traditional context that obliged the European-educated Iranian architects in the Pahlavi era to be never fully committed to those principles of modern architecture prescribed by the CIAM (*Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne)* (Tavassoli, 2000). Contemporary architecture of the second Pahlavi era holds an in-between position between the Western and Iranian style which was exhibited in two styles: an International Style (1941-79) – with cubic architecture and Modernist big box-light metal structures, glass, travertine facades, and flat roofs – and a dialogue between tradition and modernism (1965-1979) – with regard to local characteristics and identity such as the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art.

[14] It is worth noting that within the Iranian context *na-mahram* (a stranger) is related to Islamic regulations (*Sharia*) and societal norms (*Urf*). For a woman, a stranger (na-mahram) is someone who is not her *mahram* since *mahram* can be anyone 'whom it is permanently forbidden for her to marry because of blood ties, breastfeeding or marriage ties' (Khan, 2012). Whereas for Western scholars the notion of stranger is always tied to the city and public realm. For Balzac for instance, refers to a stranger thus: 'a provincial young man comes to the big city, full of hope; the city then either disappoints his desires or renders them self-destructive' (1837, in Sennett, 2018, p.26-27). For Sennett the notion of the stranger in *The Fall of Public Man* relates to the *visual publicness* and the creation of a social bond with other people in public space, especially with those who do not hold an intimate and private familiarity (Sennett, 1977; 2008). He argues that strangers can gather together in the public realm in which a certain kind of activities happen; the activities that cannot or do not happen in the intimate private realm (Sennett, 2001). Unlike Sennett, who praises the notion of the stranger, for Heidegger the stranger was equal with the Other, the Jews, that led him to flee the city to live in a hut in the mountains (Sennett, 2018, p.126-127). And for Simmel the over-stimulation of the modern city resulted in people wearing a blasé mask in the public realm to display cool, like a stranger (Simmel, 1950; see also Sennett, 2018, p.55).

[15] Space in Iranian-Islamic architecture is divided into the introverted and extroverted, in which the extroverted space is dealing with naturalistic, materialistic, pluralistic and diversity seeking aspect of the human (outside the house in the material world), while the introverted space aims to create privacy and one's inner self that deals with the human state of self-awareness (inside the house in the spiritual world) (Noghrehkar, 2008). The outside world is where the human is separated from the inner self, while the inside world is a place to connect to the inner self, to the spiritual world and to the God. The architectural components of Iranian-Islamic architecture are therefore designed to fulfil the aim of connectivity between humans and God through the secure confines of the house. The entrance, at edge between these two worlds, is a means to pause and pass from the outer world. Then the *hashty* and corridor (vestibule), is an in-between zone where architectural components create movement and stillness, guidance, orientation, and curiosity (Ghanaati et al. 2015, p.207). The architectural components of the inner world – similar to Sennett's description of Medieval cities that were open inside the confines of the city wall – offer openness, a sense of belonging, sincerity, concentration and relaxation as the ultimate aim of the house, from an Islamic point of view, is to rest: 'God has made your houses a place for your rest' (Verse 80, Surah Nahl in Quran). The physical experience and spiritual

This way, the combination of windows, courtyard, ponds and trees cooled the air (Tavassoli, 2000).[16] However, as a result of the Pahlavis' modern design rhetoric, the introverted architecture of Qajar began to become extroverted, with the high clay walls of the house replaced by iron, brick, stone, and glass with windows and balconies overlooking the streets (Bani-Masoud, 2011). As can be seen in the typical plans of Qajar and Pahlavi houses below, while the wall of traditional domestic architecture was a sealed impermeable edge at the boundary between private (house) and public space (city) (Figure 4-12), this morphed in the Pahlavi period into a porous edge full of openings (Figure 4-13). Through these holes one could look out without being seen or another could look in at ground level; as Sennett (2018, p.220) puts it, the porous edge became 'an active zone of exchange'. Like the human body, the walls of a house with windows and balconies, also function like a skin, to [partially] permeate the air, light, and sounds inside.[17] The window, as an architectural element here, becomes a sign of human life, where glass becomes the means to expose the human body inside the house to the outside world.
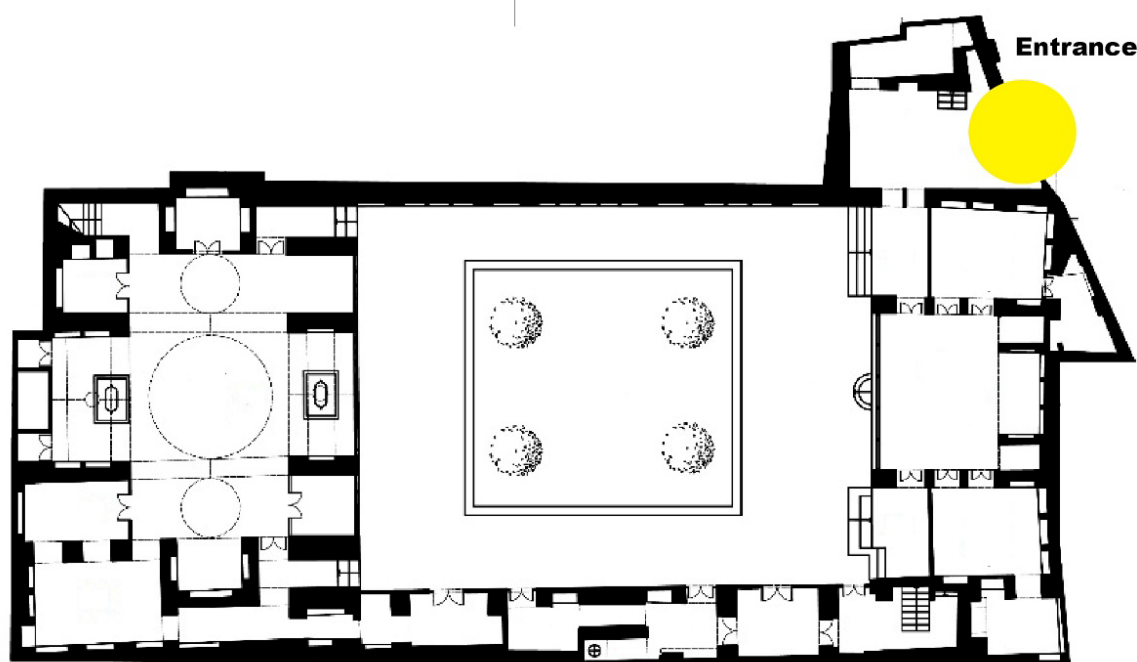
Figure 4-12: A typical Qajar house in which the main entrance is the only access to the outside and vice versa (Source: Ghasemi et al. 2015, p.80)

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implications, as with the mosque and bazaar, are based on Islamic values in architecture: 'geometric order, rhythm, spatial fluidity and continuity, hierarchy, symmetry, and light' (Ghanaati et al. 2015, p.203-5).

[16] Placing most of the large openings and windows in the southern part of the building and protecting them from the summer sun by canopies or porches is a feature of most traditional and new buildings (Ghobadian, 2010, p.4).

[17] See Schroeder and Borgerson (2018, p.110) on how skin is counted as a liminal zone between the self and other, the person and the outside world.

Figure 4-13: A typical Pahlavi house in which the wall has morphed into a porous edge full of openings to the outside and vice versa (Source: National Archive and Library of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Architect Magazine, Number 6, 22, June 1948)

Against this background, it can be said that through the emergence of extroverted architecture, the rigid distinction between public/outside/street and private/inside/home began to blur. Although some scholars, 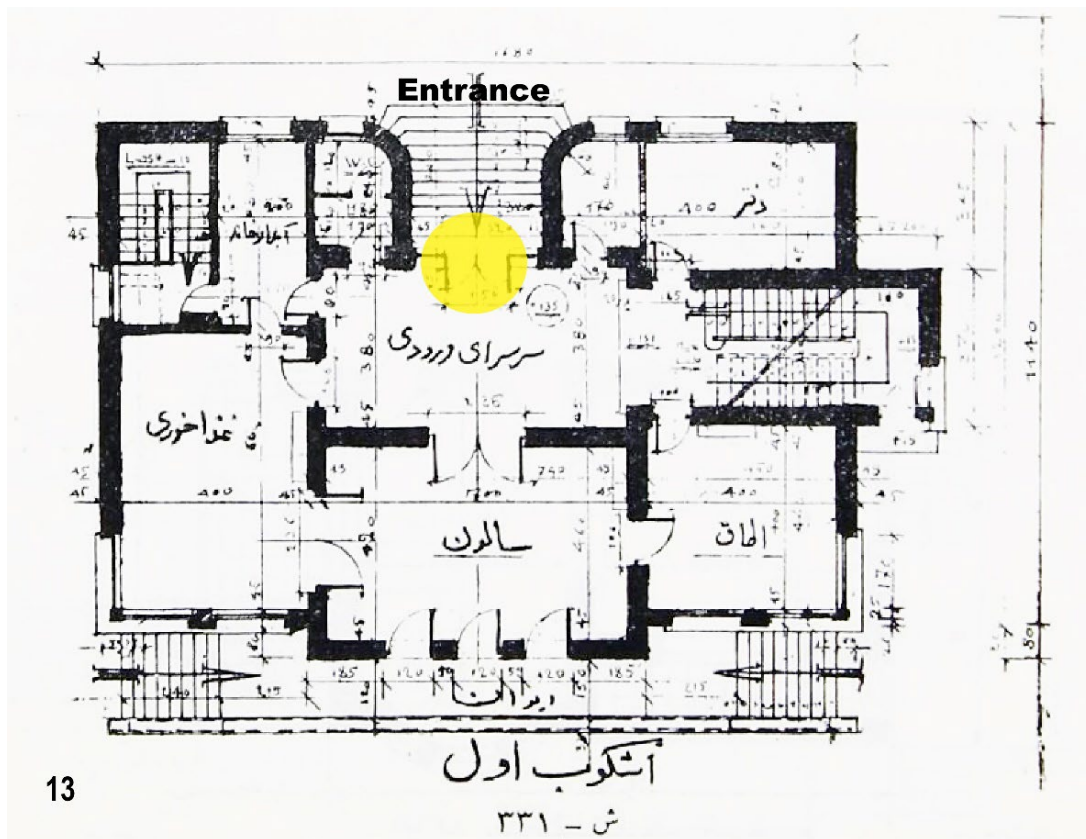such as Amir-Ebrahimi (2008), indicate that the still-in-practice Islamic and traditional laws and norms led people to use thick curtains to block the possibility of being seen by strangers, other scholars, such as Avenssian – a pioneering Iranian modernist architect – believe that Reza Shah's modern architecture, like his 'unveiling' program that freed the female body from *hijab*, opened up the house to the city. He points out that Qajar architecture was the same as women's black veils; like the female body hidden in *andarouni* inside the building and wrapped in *chador* while strolling in the city, the building was also hidden behind the tall, monotonous, clayed walls, without any opening to the streets (Avenssian, 1962, cited in Bani-Masoud, 2011, p.195) (Figures 4-14 and 4-15).

It is worth noting that the sudden transformation in the physical boundaries and hierarchies of the introverted organisation of domestic space removed some of the components of the

traditional house that, if preserved today, would support Sennett's discussion of 'boundary and border' (Sennett, 2018, 220). *Hashty* for example, was a small enclosed transitional space between the city and the home (between *inside* as private space and *outside* as public space), where within the intimate ties of *mahalleh* (community) women could meet their neighbours, or strangers could sit and wait before entering the more private spaces of the house (Bani-Masoud, 2011, p.288).
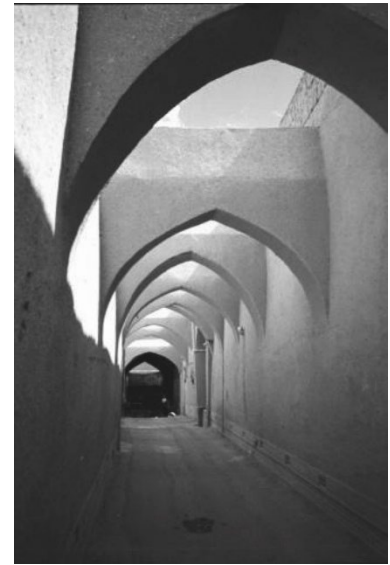
Figure 4-14 (left)*: A typical Qajar dress code for women in public space, published in 1966 in order to celebrate thirty years of women's unveiling in public, stating that: '7th of January marks the Unveiling Day and the founding of The first cornerstone of Iranian women's liberation.'* (Source: National Archive and Library of the Islamic Republic of Iran, *Zan-E Rooz* Magazine, issue 45, January 1966)

Figure 4-15 (right): Qajar architecture: Narrow, clayed, tall walls with no openings towards outside, Yazd (Source: Tavassoli, 2011)

4.3 A disciplined society

Alongside the boom in oil prices and revenue, the expansion of consumer culture turned the new forms of socio-urban spaces into the means of class segregation. The progressive western ways of life – cinemas, theatres, cafés, restaurants, sports clubs and hotels – were promoted to centres of social life for the middle classes, intellectuals and the upper classes that fulfilled their desire for a modern, mixed-sex, non-traditional, and European life style (Rezvani Naraghi, 2016). Western ways of life were also configured in streets and signs; in the architecture, mise-en-scène, material, lighting, and in the names of cafés, restaurants, cinemas and hotels.[18] On

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[18] 'New cafés and restaurants took [mainly] non-Iranian names such as Continental, Vuka, Imperial, Mikado, Modern, Lausanne, Luna Park, Lotto, and Bristol café' (Rezvani Naraghi, 2016, p.291).

the other hand, for Pahlavis, the street was the key symbol of the practice of modernisation. One well-known street that practiced the western lifestyle was *Lalezar* Street.

Class segregation

Lalezar Street was well-known as Iran's avenue to the modern world, the centre of cultural life in Tehran and the place where political affairs were discussed by famous intellectuals, among them Sadegh Hedayat, Jalal Al-E Ahmad, and others (Alemi, 1996). Originally built by Nassir al-Din Shah in 1873 as the first modern boulevard in Tehran, where shops, cafes and smart restaurants dotted both sides of the street, *Lalezar* has continued to represent the 'high' cultural life of the entire city, and is occupied by the best theatres, print journalism, cinemas, cabarets and cafes (Lewisohn, 2015). Functioning as an oriental replica of the Champs-Élysées, it was well-known as 'the Lovers' street', where the relation between buildings and the street was unique in comparison with other parts of the city (Alemi, 1996). At different times of day, people would start drifting towards *Lalezar* to go to the restaurants, hotels, cinemas or theatres, but the street was also busy for window shopping, meeting friends, having a chat, and showing off the latest styles (Alemi, 1996, p.22), not to mention the emergence of burlesque dance shows, cabarets and liquor shops, which transformed the face of *Lalezar* into a theatrical stage of open, free and western lifestyles (Lewisohn, 2015).[19]

This was a new representation of social life in the streets of Tehran – a meeting ground for the populace as a whole – based on a mutually constructive interrelation between space, power, and practices. The street, home to cultural and political apparatuses, represented, in fact, sovereign power, the focused surveillance and routinisation of disciplinary power.[20] The apparatus of high-culture in this neighborhood led its users to conform to a certain level of discipline and self-control which can be related to what Maffesoli (1996, p.12) calls 'solid social arrangement' among the social bodies of the rich and intellectuals and in the cafes and cabarets, such as the famous *Café Naderi* in *Ferdowsi* Street nearby. This can be seen in the act of 'wearing a mask' to create a sense of togetherness and of 'we' as a community among the middle and upper class. It is as if these groups of people, *Farhikhtegan* (intellectuals) or *A'yan va Ashraf* (aristocrats), contrive the mutual gestures of close social relationships – known

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[19] It is important to note that although, as Sennett argues (1977, p.78), similar to early eighteenth-century London and Paris theatre became more and more accessible to the public and more of a focus of social life in the city, this in no sense amounted to a democratisation of public performance. This is because the tickets sold at the building's entrance excluded those who could not afford the fee. Moreover, the architecture of the building itself – with its royal boxes and so on – marked the hierarchy in social ranking.

[20] See Foucault's state apparatus that includes the powerful processes of ordering, security and stratification, cited in Legg, 2011, p.129).

as habitus or 'the unspoken, the residue underlying the being-together' (Maffesoli, 1996, p.21-44)[21] – in order to find common ground for their daily routines and to escape or at least relativise the institutions of power (Figure 4-16). Like Sennett's description of eighteenth-century London and Paris (Sennett, 1977, p.65), here also dressing up and making up one's face turned the body into a mannequin that carried the codes of this communal and stable identity. As a result, a local intimacy was established among this class to exclude those who were different: a sign of a closed society.

However, while *Lalezar* represented a cultural apparatus for governing and normalising the regularity of [European-style] everyday life,[22] the lower class also learned how to appropriate the high-cultural space of this street.[23] In a context in which more than 15,000 vendors had spread out in both the southern and central areas of the capital by the mid-1970s, it was the presence of this sector (the street vendors and hawkers) that became the most salient feature of street life in this high-culture neighbourhood (Bayat, 1997, p.136). The sidewalks of the busy thoroughfares and local marketplaces led the urban poor to distribute goods in informal ways and to interact on a daily basis in spaces shared with the middle and upper classes (Figure 4-17).

Figure 4-16 (left): Naderi Café, near Lalezar Street, which was one destination for intellectuals, among them Sadegh Hedayat and Jalal Al-E Ahmad. (Source: Hamshahrionline, 2017)

Figure 4-17 (right): Lalezar Street in the 1950s (Source: Mardomnameh, 2017)

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[21] Habitus is a key concept Bourdieu uses to describe the continuous formulation and reproduction of class distinction. Habitus, according to Bourdieu (1990, p.53) functions 'as a structuring structure'…'an objective relationship between two objectivities, enables an intelligible and necessary relation to be established between practices and a situation, the meaning of which is produced by the habitus through categories of perception and appreciation that are themselves produced by an observable social condition' (Bourdieu, 1984, p.95). In contrast to the idea that people are what one is naturally born with, cultural habituses – including people's 'attitudes, bodily habits and cognitive competences' (Prior, 2005, p.125) – are what one becomes to have.

[22] See Lefebvre's concept of 'representation of space' as a planned, controlled and ordered space (Lefebvre, 1991).

[23] See Lefebvre's concept of 'representational space' or 'lived space' as a space of freedom and resistance (Lefebvre, 1991).

Although on the surface the mixing of poor and rich in the same geographical space can be seen as an ideal image of *open city* for Sennett, this question remains unanswered: Can these physical encounters in *Lalezar* Street meet Sennett's ideal image of inclusion, complexity and tolerance?[24] Here, it is argued that answering this question is not possible without considering the condition of the urban poor in cities in the Pahlavi era.

As discussed above, land reform, soaring oil revenues, industrial development, and rapid urbanisation turned Tehran into a destination for massive waves of immigrants, which accelerated change in the morphology of the city from the 1960s onward. One of the first results of this was the expansion of the peripheries and the construction of new neighborhoods to accommodate low-income inhabitants. In the 1970s, as a result of speculative activities along with the financialisation of housing, the lower working classes were expelled from the city to live in informal (pseudo-urban) settlements within a 50 kilometre radius of Tehran (Vaghefi, 2017, p.148). As a result, by the mid-1970s Tehran had some fifty slums and squatter communities including caves, tents, hovels, shacks, shanties, and urban villages that lacked even very basic urban amenities (Bayat, 1997, p.26). Moreover, 'by 1980 at least one million poor lived in the slums of Tehran and an estimated 400,000 resided in the squatter communities' (Bayat, 1997, p.29) (Figure 4-18).

Bayat (1977) pays close attention to how the urban poor, as the peripheralised segment of society, survived the hardship of these modernisation programmes and coped with the processes that *excluded* them from the urban built environment on a daily basis. As discussed in the literature review, to improve their lives, the urban poor engaged in a series of 'street politics'. Bayat (1997, p.7) calls this 'the quiet encroachment of the ordinary' – a movement which in most cases lacked ideology, structure, and leadership – and where ordinary people, individually and based on necessity, began 'a silent, patient, protracted, and pervasive advancement…on the propertied and powerful' which were highly dependent on possibilities

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[24] After publishing *The Fall of Public Man* in 1976, Sennett himself was criticised by some, including the British historian John H. Plumb, who saw as a major fault in Sennett's account its failure to grasp social change based on economic growth, on the nature and conflict of class and on the pressure both of the possession of property and its lack. For Plumb (1977), the commercial exploitation of increasing affluence was an important aspect of social life that was missing from Sennett's view of urban life in eighteenth century Paris and London. For a different vision of social life in eighteenth-century London, for instance, see Thomson and Smith (1877) and Charles Dickens's (1851) writings on crime, prostitution, homelessness and the children of the urban poor. For example, about London's Covent Garden, Thomson and Smith (1877) say that in the early 1870s, basket-women and bouquet-girls could catch anyone's attention, specially 'loiterers who were their best customers' (Thomson and Smith, 1877). There was also a list of names, called *Harris' List of Covent Garden Ladies* which was the interest of late Georgian Londoners. 'Names disguised by splashes of asterisks' alongside the addresses, the prices they charged, and any special services they offered (Kennedy, 2015) was the reason why many men were attracted to Covent Garden to have a joyful time.

intrinsic to the urban. Their informal lives in the shanty towns and poor areas both outside and within the boundary of the city, contained a degree of constant resistance, not as a form of 'deliberate political struggle' against the state or private landowners or the system of private property. Rather, their resistance was reflected in their struggle over 'the use of public space, community development, and cultural autonomy' – by, for example, 'unauthorised land takeovers, illegal siphoning of electricity and running water, demanding basic amenities, extending private domain into the public space, sputtering the public thoroughfares, using streets as markets, assembling in the communities' (Bayat, 1997, p.57) (Figure 4-19).[25]
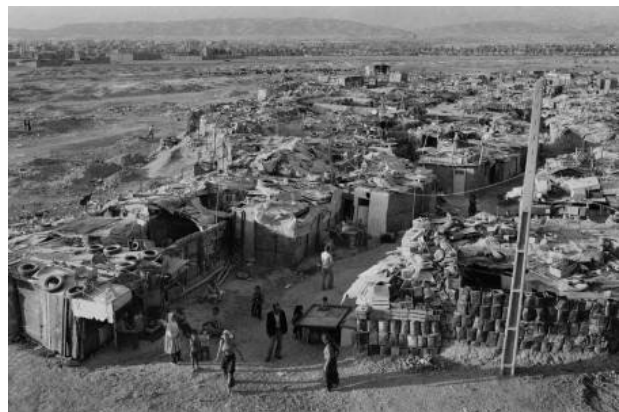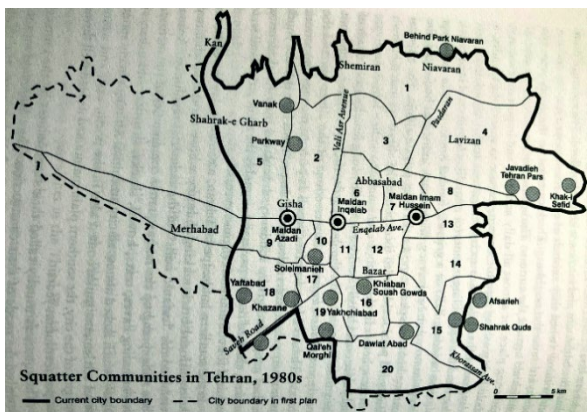

Figure 4-18 (left): Map of squatter communities in Tehran in 1980s (Source: Bayat, 1997, p.28)

Figure 4-19 (right): Halabi-Abad: Tehran's squatter communities in the south of the city, 1977 (Source: Social Lens Magazine)

New [female] body image
The rise of the Pahlavi dynasty coincided not only with the polarisation of society and with the prevention of mixing between classes through the transformation of urban morphology, but also with a new era of gender policies in Iran. In addition to medical, educational and legal reforms,[26] in 1928, parliament (*Majles*) passed a new dress code requiring all men working in

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[25] Going back to the literature review and the discussion of postcolonial scholarship on the urban poor in Latin American cities (like Chile) or Iranian cities (like Tehran), it can be said that the urban poor – leaving in peripheries, informal settlements, shanty towns and favelas – are neither marginal (i.e. essentially traditional and isolated) nor fully integrated, but seek autonomy from the state and from the modern institutions. Bayat (1997, p.11) indicates that they are against the discipline of institutions that impose time, behaviour and appearance on them, and yearn to be free from official surveillance and modern social control, seeking flexibility and negotiation. See also Ash Amin's (2014, p.140) study of organised land occupations by the poor, favelas and informal settlements of Brazil in which he indicates that the invisibility of provisioning from trunk infrastructures has allowed the favela's residents to hesitantly lead fuller lives and exercise their citizenship.

[26] The number of schools for girls was increased and women gained some rights such as divorce under certain conditions. The minimum marriage age was set for girls at 15 and boys at 18. By 1933, 45,000 girls, nearly 23% of all students, were attending 870 girl's elementary and high schools (Afary, 2009, p.151). With rising demand for involvement in the public affairs of society, Reza Shah initiated the development of a government-controlled women's organisation called *Kaanoon-e Baanovaan* (The Ladies Centre), in 1934, which was headed by his daughter Ashraf Pahlavi. This organisation began a series of welfare activities designed to both depoliticise the women's movement and to create an image of women's involvement and participation in society as a sign of modernity (Mahdi, 2004). During this period, apart from expanding their participation in sociocultural affairs, women also began to organise their appearance in political activities. Calling for freedom, education, and the abolition of polygamy and the veil, they began a 'close and inalienable association with various political parties' and

government institutions to dress like Europeans (except the *ulama*), which was followed in 1936 by the forced unveiling of women by order of Reza Shah (Mahdi, 2004). As traditional architecture with its clay walls began to disappear from the urban fabric, the veiled female body was also prevented from appearing in public in the city; from public baths, theatres, stores, bus stations, and shrines. Transformed into a western model of self-representation, women found new grounds for public visibility and were expected to conform to western corporeal aesthetics – from dress codes to bodily movements and gestures to how to walk, talk, and interact in a modern Western way (Figures 4-20, 4-21, 4-22 and 4-23). Suddenly a woman's body (her gestures, height, and bodily dimensions) came under closer scrutiny and was exposed to the public sphere, including in newspapers, on television, in the cinema, on billboards, and in the fashion industry, popular magazines and novels (Figures 4-24 and 4-25). [27]
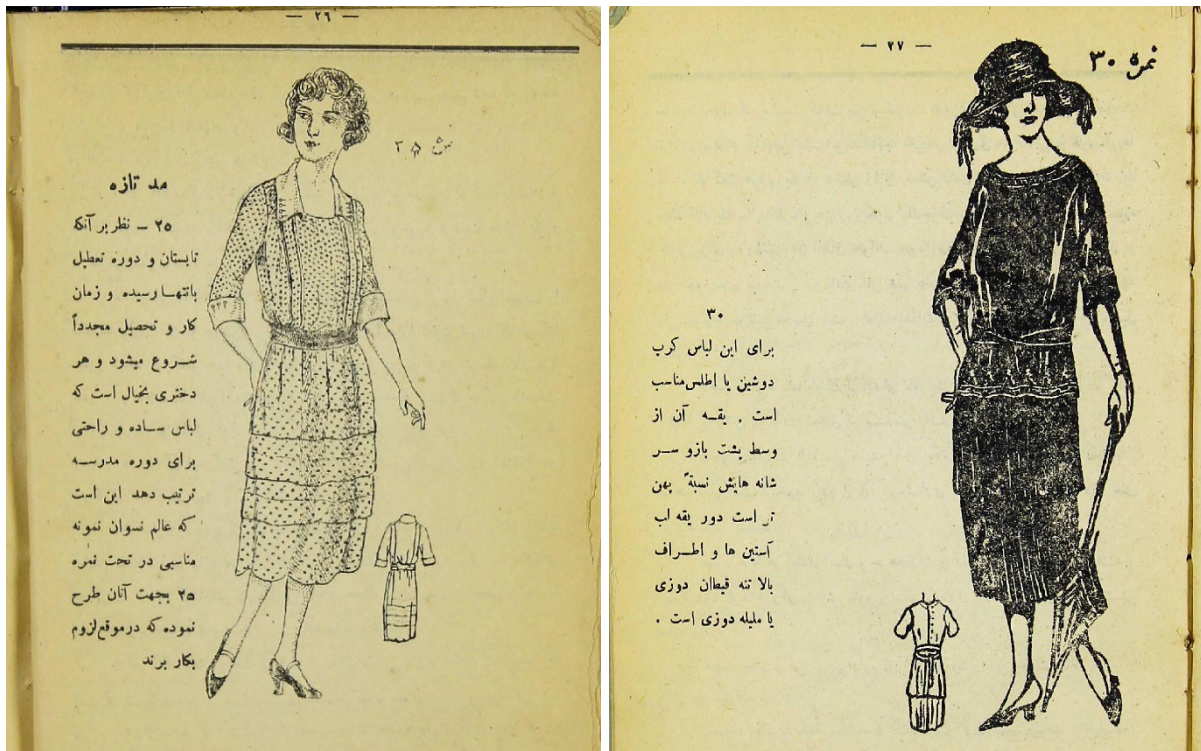
Figures 4-20, 4-21: *New Fashion*: copy of new trends from other countries among them United States and Japan in 1921 (five years before Reza Shah began to rule the country) by using key words such as *targh'i* (progress), *tajad'od* (modernity) (source: National Archive and Library of the Islamic Republic of Iran, *Alam-E Nasvan* Magazine, Number 1, September 1921)

organised political organisations such as: the *Sazmaane Demokraatike Zanaan* (Women's Democratic Organisation) of *Tudeh* Party, *Nehzate Zanaane Pishro* (Women's Progressive Movement) of the Society of Iranian Socialists, and *Komiteh-ye Zanaan* (Women's Committee) of the Nation's Party of Iran (*Hezbe Mellat*) (Mahdi, 2004, p.431). However, their presence weakened after the 1953 coup, as the King gained power and foreign support to suppress all political opposition. It was during this era that the presence of SAVAK (*Sazman-e Amniat va Etelaat-e Keshvar*, which literally means *Country Security and Information Organisation*) eliminated all oppositional and independent political parties and organisations and brought the dictatorial arbitrary state once again to the fore.

[27] By the 1960s, with the expansion of consumer culture, both the new and old urban middle class started to purchase television sets, and portable projectors showed documentary and feature films about the lifestyle of the rich and famous in the West in many schools and small villages (Afray, 2009, p.221-222). Romantic love, erotica and soft pornography became prominent in literature; in popular magazines, journals, novels (namely in R. E'temadi novels) and films (influenced by Indian, Turkish, and Japanese cinema) (Afray, 2009).
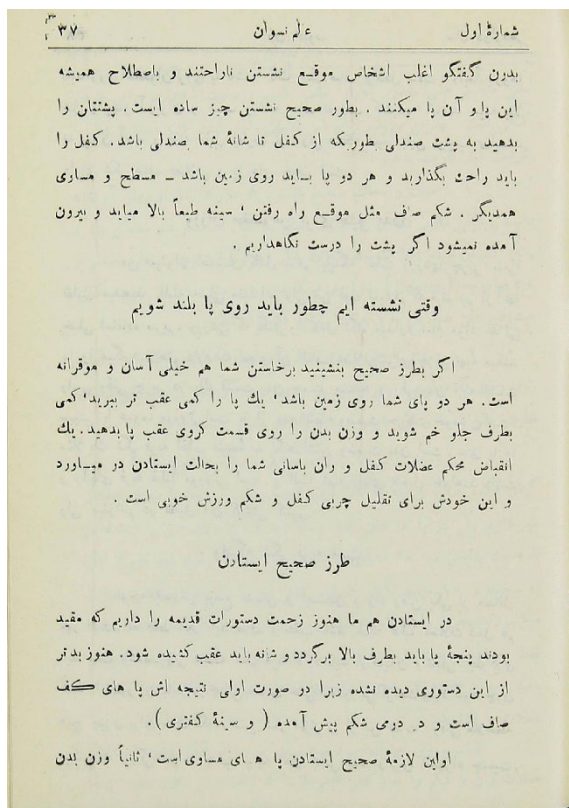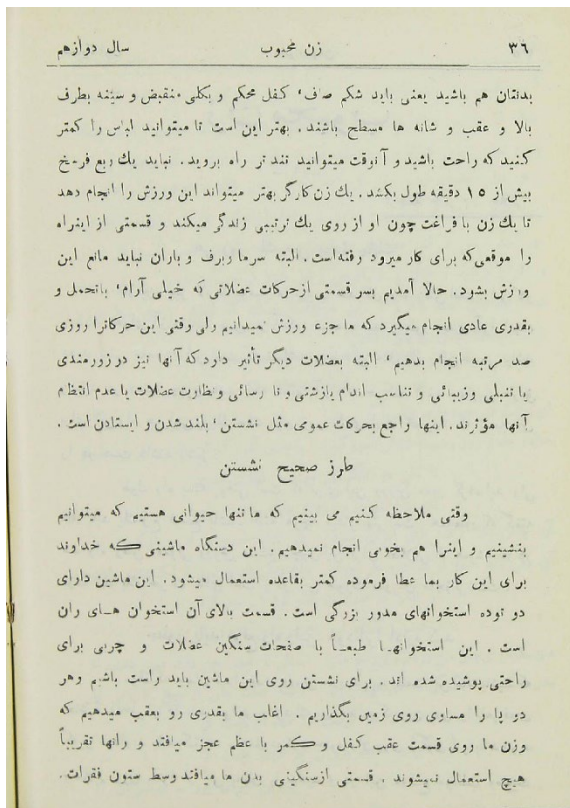
Figures 4-22, 4-23: '*Zan-e Mahboob*' (A Loveable Woman): a piece published in *Alam-E Nasvan* Magazine in 1932 (seven years after Reza Shah began to rule the country), indicating how women should internalise the new codes of behavior. The article indicates the right ways to sit, to change position from sitting to standing up, and to stand still – such as how to put feet next to each other, how to keep shoulders back, and how to hold the stomach tight (source: National Archive and Library of the Islamic Republic of Iran, *Alam-E Nasvan* Magazine, Number 1, Year 12, January

Figures 4-24 (left): Woman's body in advertisement (left) (source: National Archive and Library of the Islamic Republic of Iran, *Khandaniha*, 21 April 1972)

Figure 4-25 (right): Women's body in cinema posters (right) (source: National Archive and Library of the Islamic Republic of Iran, *Ettelaat*, 21 March 1971)

Like the traditional domestic wall, that was perforated in order to create a dynamic relation between outside and inside, the new clothing also partially exposed the female body ensuring the visual accessibility of women's bodies in public spaces. It is as if, through the conscious process and bodily procedures of Pahlavi's modernisation programme, a modern Iranian woman was formed and a moral self was produced which stood in opposition to traditional norms.[28] Thus, newly born Western virtues (such as grandeur, independence, and autarky) were acquired through the coordination of outward behaviours (e.g., bodily acts and social demeanour) with inward disposition (e.g., emotional states, thoughts and intentions), via the repeated performance of acts that entailed those particular virtues. Later, the female body entered into the economic cycle through education, health services and the performance settings of cabaret dancing stages and theatres, or in *filmfarsi* (Meftahi, 2016).[29] This time, the advertising industry relentlessly propagated images of a more modern feminine body and a western lifestyle, while satirical magazines (such as *Towfigh*) began to feature half-naked women in order to lampooning the freedom of the modern woman, their market and advertising products.

This is to argue that while public spaces opened up to include urban middle-class and upper-class women, they were also simultaneously closed to traditional and religious women who never wished to be included in the mixed gender spaces of education, employment and other opportunities, and who even if they did were forced to stay at home, by either their male guardians or the rigid cultural norms that were in practice in the southern neighbourhoods of Tehran. But what did this openness/closedness for women mean, exactly, and how far can it be related to Sennett's concepts of openness and closedness? The 1963 land reform programme that was about the redistribution of lands between landowners and peasants, also had another social impact. It can be said that this impacted on *the built* – by equating the meaning of urban space with development and progress (See Vaghefi, 2017, p.138) – and on *the lived* by increasing women's presence in social and political decision-making, including their own enfranchisement. Not only that, but through various educational and developmental projects, including an increase in literacy and employment, as well as in women's legal rights through

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[28] This at the same time that the 'modern girl' emerged in Japan between 1923 and the early 1930s (Tamari, 2002, p.322). The characteristics of this type of new woman were visibility, resistance to the conventional women's ideology – that was largely targeting her appearance and lifestyle pursuits, rather than her political commitment – and attempr for greater independence and rights for women.

[29] According to Partovi (2017), *fīlmfārsī* [literary, Persian film] is an epithet to describe the popular commercial cinema of the Pahlavi era, which its application has had an overwhelmingly negative connotation from its earliest references to the present. It is argued that *fīlmfārsī* did not constitute a cinematic genre as understood in Western film discourse, rather, it is only a blind imitation of the Hollywood and Bollywood commercial industries.

family and welfare programs, the Pahlavis brought other drastic institutional changes. Women's education played a crucial part in the process of these changes. For instance, in the thirty years from 1946 to 1976, the number of female students leapt from 94,000 to 1,800,000 at primary level, from 7,000 to 824,000 at secondary level, and from 500 to 43,000 in higher education (Encyclopaedia Iranica, 2012). Since this educational progress combined with the rapid economic growth of the 60s and 70s, employment opportunities increased, which opened women's way into the labour market, from highly skilled professional positions to all levels of government bureaucracy in parliament, the universities, army and police forces, as MPs, mayors, ambassadors, judges, pilots, engineers and so on. (Moghadam, 1994, pp.80-97). For instance, in the late 1970s, as Najmabadi (1991, p.61) has shown, 22 women were in the Majles and two in the senate, 333 women (20 percent of the total) had been elected to local councils, and five became mayors, one woman was a cabinet minister, three were deputy ministers, one was an ambassador, and another one was a governor.

Yet, the traditional sector of society, located mainly in the *bāzār* and the southern neighborhoods of Tehran, sharply disapproved of the living conditions of the masses of working class people, and opposed women's emancipation, gender relations, and their role in the family. Here the argument can be traced back to Sennett's description of the ethics of an open city which is about inclusion and tolerance towards those who are different, but can also go further and ask whether he also considers the *visibility* of women in public space to be an ethic of the open city? (Figure 4-26).

4.4 Pre-revolutionary Tehran; new ethics for the city

It has been argued that the Pahlavi regime sought to build a modern Iranian nation comparable with contemporary western Europe. As part of its modernising agenda, from clothing to musical taste, reproduction to hygiene and education to the military, the state aimed to discipline the human body to create a civilised society. Like Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, as described by Alemdaroğlu (2005, p.63), the Pahlavis' goals were also creation of an independent nation-state, rapid industrialisation and the construction of a modern secular national identity, to create 'a unified state with one people, one nation, one language, one culture, and one political authority' (Abrahamian, 1982, p.142). The Pahlavis' attempt, in fact, was to formulate a definition of an 'authentic' Iranian identity to present itself as a homogeneous entity.

چرا دخترها و پسرها از وقت‌گذرانی در فضای
تاریک و دودگرفتهٔ «تریا» لذت می‌برند؟

بحث «تریا» در میزگرد دختران

تریا

چند جواب از دختران:

* ما به تریا می‌رویم چون زمین ورزش و کتابخانه مجهز در مدرسه
نداریم

* تریا گریزگاهی است که به ما امکان می‌دهد ادای بزرگترها را
در بیاوریم...

* در تریا چای گران عجیب گواراست!

* دختر و پسر اگر در تریا همدیگر را نبینند کجا با هم آشنا
شوند؟

گریزگاه نسل جوان!

بحث «تریا» در آخرین هفته‌های سال
گذشته یکی از ماجراهای جنجال‌آفرین بود که
در خانواده‌ها از یک‌سو و در میان جوانان از
سوی دیگر بازتاب‌های قضاوت بوجود آورد.
بخصوص ماجرا هنگامی اوج گرفت که
مقامات انتظامی برای کنترل تریاها مداخله
کردند و چند تریا دانسینگ را که در ساعات
درس مدارس پاتوق دختر و پسرهای فراری از
مدرسه بود بستند.

اکنون با اینکه چند هفته از این ماجرا
می‌گذرد، هنوز جر و بحث موافق و مخالف در
این باره ادامه دارد. عده‌ای می‌گویند: در هیچ
جای دنیا حتی کشورهائی که اول‌بار دست
اندرکار تریاسازی شدند، تریا به این شکل
وجود ندارد که از ساعت ۱۰ صبح نوشابهٔ
الکلی سرو شود و دخترها و پسرهای دبیرستانی
بجای رفتن به مدرسه و کلاس درس، در
فضای دودگرفته و محیط ناسالم آن
درجستجوی آرامشی دروغین برای روح
ناآرامیشان باشند...

اما جماعتی دیگر اظهارنظر می‌کنند که
با قراردادن تابلو «ورود ممنوع» جلو در تریاها
مشکل نوجوانان حل نمی‌شود و حتی این
ممنوعیت ممکن است آنها را به روگشودن
بسوی بیراهه‌ها حریص‌تر کند. باید درد را از
ریشه شناخت و علل و موجبات آنرا برطرف
کرد.

البته این هر دو عقیدهٔ بزرگترهاست و
جالب‌تر است اگر بررسی کنیم و ببینم جوان‌ها
چه می‌گویند؟ چرا به تریا می‌روند؟ چه خواصی
در این سالن تاریک و دودگرفته وجود دارد که
آنها را بسوی خود می‌کشد؟ آیا همهٔ آنها به
تریا می‌روند و باتریارفتن موافق هستند یا با
تفریحات و سرگرمی‌های دیگری هم هست که
برایشان جالب‌تر و لذت‌بخش‌تر است؟

درجستجوی پاسخ این پرسش‌ها با
تعدادی نوجوان که داوطلب شرکت در
مسابقهٔ دختر شایستهٔ ایران هستند و می‌توانند
سخنگوی دخترانی به‌سن‌وسال خود باشند به

Figure 4-26: Teria [Café]: a piece published in 1974, indicating how students are enjoying mixing and socializing with the opposite sex in cafés, which were referred to as Teria at the time. The red headline at top-right reads '*Why do boys and girls enjoy spending time in the dark and smoky atmosphere of Teria?*' (Source: National Archive and Library of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Zan-E Emrooz magazine, 1974, Issue 415. p.16-17)

Westernised Iranian identity

One collective embodiment that was a target of power was individuals as a 'species', 'whether in the form of an entire population or a specific group of [women], school children or [soldiers] who were subjected to specific types of administration and regulation' (Hewitt, 1991, p.232). During this era investment in the body concerned social well-being and required constant and detailed policing and regulation. It can be said that through regulating the body in a way similar to that described by Foucault in his work on discipline and biopolitics, the Pahlavis began to unite social, organisational, architectural and administrative features into a disciplinary institution. As a result, new orders, rules and ideals began to be internalised, and westernised manners, taste and aesthetics began to be adopted by the upper strata of Iranian society, which themselves became symbolic of that specific social status.

This new symbol was the modern *person* as a representation of a westernised, consumerist and forward-looking individual. Warren Susman (1979, cited in Featherstone, 1982, p.188) discusses how in the early twentieth century, new practices of consumer culture replaced the notion of *character* with *personality,* which was associated with adjectives such as fascinating, stunning, attractive, magnetic, and so on. With the emergence of consumer society, according to Susman (1979, cited in Featherstone, 1982, p.188) personality handbooks such as O.S. Marden's 1921 *Masterful Personality*, and (through its 'personality stars') Hollywood provided many models of how one should look, and the ideal gestures and bodily demeanour for a [Christian] persona, by discounting many other traditional religious bodies and the hidden body that was covered by non-revealing clothing. At the same time, the physical transformation of the human body in the Pahlavi era – not only by wearing clothes like Europeans but by walking, talking, sitting and acting like them – and the concomitant perception of beauty and aesthetics, led to the emergence of a new urban personality which in return intensified the dichotomies between traditional and modern, civilised and uncivilised individuals among the rich and poor living in *Bala Shahr* and *Pain Shahr* (the upper and lower city).

At this time, the social and cultural backgrounds of the urban poor – mainly those who had come from rural or other smaller cities to Tehran (mostly Azeri and speakers of other Turkic languages) – were stigmatised as *dahati* (rural backward) *Shahrestani* (town backward), *amaleh* or *hammal* (labourer, inferior) by the westernised urban rich, which had disparaging connotations and reinforced their lowly status on the periphery of urban life (Bayat, 2010). On the other hand, the European appearance of the urban middle class was also not always praised;

rather, it became a target of humiliating terms used by the traditional strata: *fukulī*, *mustaffarang*, *ghirtī* (dandy)*, farangīmaāb* (Al-e-Ahmad, 1979, p.43). Against this background, it can be said that the result of the Pahlavi's moral regulation of the overpopulated city of Tehran, was, in fact, to rationalise both the body and the city in order to strengthen people's national identity, and national order and harmony in the city. Now that the new body has been unveiled and wears modern clothing, participates in team sports and socialises with the opposite sex in public spaces, the old/traditional/religious ethics of public life and centuries-old traditions of gender segregation within the Iranian cities seemed to be violated (Figure 4-27).

Figure 4-27: '*How the Social Relations between Men and Women Changed',* is an article which claims that 'there existed a three-hundred year old wall between men and women before the unveiling programme' (source: National Archive and Library of the Islamic Republic of Iran, *Zan-E Rooz Magazine*, 1966, Issue 45, January)

A new Iranian-Islamic identity

At this time, while the upper class modern men and women could enjoy socio-economic advancement, people from lower-middle-class and traditional patriarchal families (especially women) gained a new sense of purpose and identity by joining oppositional Islamist movements or secret religious cells. The alliance of traditional, marginalised women with highly authoritarian and patriarchal opposition movements allowed them to gain a measure of personal power, to exercise leadership over others, and to live more gratifying personal lives. On the other hand, popular satirical magazines such as *Towfiq* (1922-1970) began to condemn modern social/moral relations in public space, easing the way for the emergence of different opposition measurements (Figures 4-28 and 4-29).[30] Consequently, many intellectuals and religious figures sought to create alternative forms of government to the monarchy of Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi. These opposition movements included underground leftist guerilla organisations (among them the Marxist-Leninist *Fedaiyan-e Khalq,* formed in 1971), the Islamist leftist organisation of *Mojahedeen-e Khalq* (which emerged in 1965 from within the more religious wing of the Mosaddeq movement), a clandestine Islamist circle (that supported Ayatollah Khomeini after 1963), a leftist intellectual circle (with its prominent figures: Jalal Al-e Ahmad and Ali Shariati), and anti-establishment women's movements (among them members of the secular left and religious opposition groups, as well as individual and independent secular women, particularly writers and poets like Forugh Farrroḵzad, Simin Daneshvar, and Simin Behbahani) (See Abrahamian, 1982, p.446-8).

At this time (the 1960s and 70s) there was a strong emphasis among religious thinkers on an 'Islamo-Iranian' culture and identity to legitimise the concept of Iran and Iranianism as an equal focus, with Islam, of national loyalty and a component of Iranian cultural identity (Keshmirshekan, 2013, p.146). Ruhollah Khomeini was one of the most influential figures in shaping this new Islamic-Iranian identity. In 1941, he published one of the most influential publications to shape the current theocracy of the Islamic Republic; *Kashf al-Asrar*. This book, according to Algar (1981, p.15), is 'a detailed, systematic critique of an anti-religious tract, [and] includes numerous pages that are overtly political and critical of the Pahlavi rule'.

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[30] The modern urban woman appeared in *Towfiq* in semi-pornographic cartoons, similar to those in men's magazines in the West and Japan (Afray, 2009, p.223). Blaming modern urban women for male aggression in the public sphere, as well as excessive consumerism and the nation's economic woes, the magazine featured the female body in exaggerated cartoons of young women with protruding busts, small waists and voluptuous lips, wearing miniskirts.

However, his major contribution to anti-shah movements was in 1963, at which time the shah promulgated the White Revolution to reshape the political, social and economic life of Iran.

Of all the opposition, he was most successful at inflaming the public by targeting the massive social corruption and economic dislocation as well as the regime's political oppression through SAVAK (see Algar, 1982, p.19). Becoming a charismatic leader, Ruhollah Khomeini finally claimed his revolution in 1979.[31] In its wake, however, another despotic state (this time in the form of the Islamic Republic) began to rule over the country.
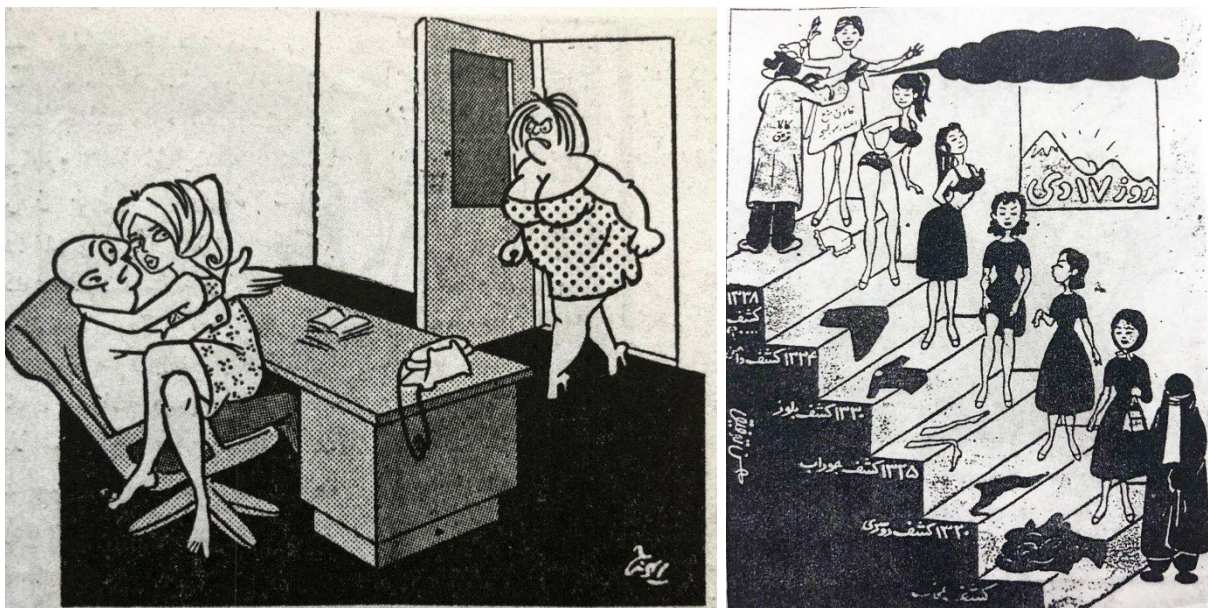
Figures 4-28, 4-29: *Pre-revolutionary* satirical magazines: these magazines such as *Towfiq,* began to question the modern social/moral relations in public spaces through semi-pornographic cartoons of the female body (source: *Towfiq* 1966, in Afray, 2009, pp.225-226)

4.5 Conclusion

The history of modern Tehran began with the constitution of a novel consciousness among Iranians that, after the defeat of the Iranian state in a series of wars against the Russian empire in the18[th] century, emphasised a sense of backwardness (see Vaghefi, 2017). Later, with the advancement in transport systems and the development of communication technologies, Iran

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[31] The term 'charisma', for Weber (1978, in McDonnell, 2016, 721-22), applies 'to a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities'. The charismatic relationship here, between the leader and followers, exists on the basis of 'absolute trust in the leader' and 'unconditional comply with the leader's directives for action' (Willner, 1984, in McDonnell, 2016, 722).

began to become incorporated into the world system. After becoming the capital of Iran in 1786, the built environment and social life of Tehran changed considerably. In this chapter, I have tried to show the socio-urban transformation of modern Tehran up to 1979, when tradition and religious rhetoric once again found their way into every aspect of life in Iranian society.

The argument here has used the interrelationship between Sennett's ideas of *ville* and *cité* to examine the openness/closedness of modern Tehran. Two stages of the radical transformation of Tehran's physical, built, and architectural space have been explained, from the building of the city's wall in the 1860s-1870s to its demolition in the 1930s. Put another way, I have analysed how different types of space were created in the different eras: a closed built space in the Qajar era, and an open built space in the Pahlavi period. The transformation of architecture – from introverted to extroverted – and urban fabric – from compact *mahalleh* to wide streets – were among the Pahlavis' sudden changes in the built form of the city. Reza Shah's transformation of Tehran can be seen as similar to the ideology of Baron Haussmann, in the sense that for both, the twisted and irregular streets of the city needed to be straightened out in order to lay down the network of roads and to meet the political and military requirement for easier surveillance. However, unlike Haussmann's rebuilding of Paris, which was full of 'positive social purposes' (Sennett, 2018, p.32),[32] Reza Shah's rebuilding of Tehran had many 'negative social purposes', including the intensification of the north/south binary with the rich located in the north and the poor in the south.

With Reza Shah's abdication in 1941, Tehran's physical space underwent another transformation, this time at the hands of his son, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, who engineered the overpopulated city to improve the quality of urban life. The Austrian-American city planner Victor Gruen and his associate Iranian-American planner, Fereydoon Ghaffari, in collaboration with the Iranian architect Abdol-Aziz Farmanfarmaian, prepared Tehran's Comprehensive Plan in 1968, dividing the city into ten zones. The plan was, in fact, 'a collision of modernist total planning, social engineering, postwar American suburbanisation and consumerism, and segregated communities' (Mohajeri, 2015). For Sennett, this sort of imposition of a fixed form of urbanisation (zone planning) by an outside power is related to the emergence of the 'functional city' in the early twentieth century, based on Le Courbusier's Plan Voisin; a closed

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[32] The housing system that lined Hausmann's boulevards was also a mixed system that catered to the rich, respectable, but less wealthy tenants, new middle class of Paris, and servants. Cafés in Hausmann's boulevards were invaded by crowds that the bourgeoisie had once feared. The giant department store, located on the grand boulevard, enabled people from all over Paris to come to the city centre to stop and stare at its big windows, which were like a commercial theatre (Sennett, 2018, p.32-4).

city that erased the past in the interests of working out the most efficient way of living. As Sennett (2018, p.73) puts it, the sort of plan that denies the *cité* for the sake of the *ville*.

One of the immediate results of this plan, in which the boundaries of Tehran were officially configured, was that the city worked, as Sennett (2018, p.138) puts it, as a 'centrifuge' that increased class spatiality and intensified the centre-periphery binary. The urban poor that once lived inside the boundaries of Tehran, were pushed further out, to live in squats and informal settlements outside Tehran. Here, the *exclusion* of the urban poor and working class from the urban life of the city can be seen to align with Sennett's description of a closed *cité*: 'the inability of those who live in the built environment to manage complexity' (Sennett, 2018, p.17). Nevertheless, in elaborating the open/closed *cité*, Sennett never tried to explain how his theory applied to Middle Eastern cities where, as I discuss in the chapters that follow, a large proportion of those who are excluded from urban/social life are women. This research, has therefore studied the exclusion/inclusion, visibility/invisibility of the female body from the experience of social life in the physical, built and architectural space of Tehran, which adds a new angle to Sennett's notion of the *cité* when applied to Middle Eastern cities.

In the Pahlavi era, the female body underwent a major transformation, from being veiled to being forcibly unveiled, in public spaces. Like the wall that became a porous membrane between inside and outside at this time, clothing also became porous, to reveal the female body hidden behind the *chador* (veil). Unlike the first Pahlavi period in which this partial openness of the female body was forced, women found more freedom to choose what to wear in the second Pahlavi era. However, this western-model society pushed traditional women back into the confines of their homes in their conservative neighborhoods, as the city's main public spaces became filled with western signs, symbols and ways of life. Not only were both female and male bodies turned into mannequins that carried western/European symbols, but modern women and men were also expected to change their personalities to think, walk, talk and behave like westerners. The result was the 1979 Islamic Revolution that attempted to reject western Imperialism, and to include everyone, including the marginalised groups, in the political, economic and social life of the city.

Chapter 5: Post-Revolutionary Tehran; the Islamic city in the making

The last chapter described the context in which Tehran underwent a tremendous socio-political and urban transformation to become a modern city during the Pahlavi era. This chapter is based on another period in which Tehran underwent socio-political and physical transformation; the Islamic Revolution of 1979. It begins by explaining the nature of the Islamic state and goes on to show how other revolutionary institutions emerged in the years that followed, to fulfil the aims of the revolution. Some of the most important semi-independent revolutionary institutions are explored in this section, and the process through which they came to be involved in the making of the city is explained. The chapter goes on to discuss how at the same time, some other organisations began to control social behaviour in both public and private spaces, and moves on, after demonstrating the emergence of the 'Islamic city', to discuss the reformation. This section explains how the reformation era brought some degree of openness to a society rigidly controlled by revolutionary forces. From there, the emergence of enclosed semi-public spaces (including shopping malls, cafés, underground spaces of music studios and galleries) is explained, which shows how people have found alternative spaces for social interaction and to create moments of openness. The chapter ends by explaining the need to experience and explore people's everyday lives in all these spaces through ethnographic fieldwork, to uncover other possible dimensions of openness that may differ from those applicable in more democratic contexts.

5.1. Who owns the city?

According to Fisher (2017) three factions led the Islamic revolution before 1979: nationalists who sought a Western-style republic; Islamists who favoured a sort of populist theocracy; and communists (the most powerful of the three groups). Ruhollah Khomeini, the Islamists' leader, conspired with nationalists to block the communists and established an Islamic republic which in theory would satisfy both Islamists and nationalists (Abrahamian, 1982). But why did a revolution occur in the first place? There are many studies on the roots and logic of the Iranian Revolution, which show that Iran has a natural history of revolution similar in nature to China, France, or Russia. Here, two lines of arguments are explained briefly. One (by Arjomand) is related to the emergence of the revolution as a response to modernisation and the decline of traditions and the other (by Skocpol) is based on the notion of *social revolutions.* In making

his argument, Arjomand (1986) refers to the decline of religious and traditional values in the modern age that led to a loss of political authority in 18th century Europe, which eventually resulted in the collapse of the French state in 1789. He then points out that the emergence of [parliamentarianism and] puritanism, in the English Revolution of the sixteenth century and Jacobinism in the French Revolution of the eighteenth century became the classic forms of modern revolutionary ideology that paved the way for the emergence of constitutional representation and national sovereignty. However, he also argues that the source of any revolution's *legitimacy*, as it progresses, drifts from the representation of states to the *symbolic embodiment* of the will of the people as a single homogeneous entity, and suggests that like fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, the Iranian Islamic revolution was also intended to integrate all classes (including the working class and the poor) into a national community (1986, p.404). However, the difference between what happened in Iran and those two fascist states was that instead of substituting 'nation' for 'class' and developing the concept of 'the proletarian nations', the revolution went one step further and Islamic ideology replaced the nation with the *umma*, the Muslim community of believers. Also, as with Puritan moralism's reaction to the moral laxity and sensuality of Renaissance culture, and Nazi moralism's reaction to the decadence of the Weimar period, the Islamic revolutionaries also reacted with intense and repressive moralism to the moral laxity and disorder of Pahlavi Iran. But in contrast with the Nazi 'Revolution of Nihilism', Arjomand (1986) argues, Khomeini was more systematic and successful, with his determination to extirpate Western cultural pollution and to reject any other alien political ideologies by vigorously affirming Islamic religious and cultural traditions and establishing an Islamic moral order.

The other line of argument is related to Skocpol's concept of the social revolution and the fact that the major features of the Iranian Revolution did indeed fit the terms of her definition of a social revolution (Little, 2014). However, the urban base of Iran's revolution was different from the social revolutions of France, Russia, and China, to which she refers, as peasant unrest and uprisings were crucial in those cases, while opposition to the Shah was centred in urban communal enclaves where autonomous and solitary collective resistance was possible; in fact, the traditional urban communities of Iran played an indispensable role in mobilising and sustaining the core of popular resistance (Skocpol, 1981). She also points out that the ideas and values of Shi'a Islam were crucial to the making of the Iranian revolution, a dimension that does not have a valid counterpart in China, France, or Russia.

This is to say that religious ideology was a key factor in mobilising the social revolution in Iran which created the Islamic Revolution in 1979. In January 1979, Khomeini made a speech in which he guaranteed the ultimate freedom of the Iranian people in the establishment of an Islamic Republic which he claimed would ultimately make the country independent and achieve social justice. In March 1979, he indicated that the Revolution was the equivalent of the *political Islamification of society* (see Algar, 1981). This is at exactly the time that Foucault, who thought of the Islamic Revolution of Iran as a 'political will, a political spirituality' in 1978, declared: 'I am summoned to acknowledge my errors' (see Afary and Anderson, 2005, p.118).[1] He acknowledged the 'troubling and dangerous aspects' of how an Iranian Islamic government was conceived and conceded that from the moment Iranians aim to reorganize their society 'as a religious state, or as a state religion, there's a risk of fanaticism' (Bremner, 2020, p.118). It is believed that after 1979, according to Bremner (2020, p.119), 'Foucault never again invokes the term *political spirituality.'*

Velayat-e faghih; the ultimate power

On the eve of 1979, a revolutionary group led by radical clergy and fundamentalist Islamists seized political power in Iran. Two months later, by referendum, a two thousand and some hundred years old political system of monarchy was replaced by an Islamic Republic. The revolution, for Khomeini, sowed its seeds in the ideological basis of the 'state of dispossessed' (*Hokoomat-E Mostaz'afin*) (Khomeini, March 1979). However, once the Shah left and Khomeini returned to Iran, the promise that had kept the diverse millions of the masses united against the monarchy began to collapse and the establishment of the Islamic Republic created a new era of political dictatorship; the result was the beginning of one of the most substantial attacks ever made on either opposition from indigenous civil society groups, or (even more fiercely) on westernised civil-society groups.[2]

In the case of Khomeini's Islamic government, it was in fact the fundamentalism of the *Shi'a* religion that as the cornerstone of this new government rejected western imperialism and imposed a set of fixed and immutable obligations and laws that dictated what was permissible

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[1] See Foucault's Response to Claudie and Jacques Broyelle First published in Le Matin, March 26, 1979, under the title 'Michel Foucault and Iran.' (in Afary and Anderson, 2005, pp.249-260).

[2] According to Abrahamian (2009), in 1979, immediately after the revolution, the Islamic Republic executed 757 – many of them members of the Shah's regime; in 1981-1985, the new regime crushed an uprising of the quasi-Marxist *Mojahedin-e Khalq* by executing 12,500; and in 1988, immediately after the eight-year war with Iraq, it hanged another 2,000 prisoners – most of them, again, *Mojahedin*.

and what prohibited (Rahnema and Nomani, 1996).[3] According to Islamic law and in the absence of the hidden imam (the Messiah who will return at a time of grave injustice to Muslims), it is the mission of the Islamic jurist (*faghih*) to demonstrate the efficiency of the Islamic system in uniting a socially stratified and class-ridden society under the banner of Islam. But it is also important to consider that what made Khomeini fundamental in interpreting the Shi'a ideology of Islam is that he extended the general judiciary authority of the jurist (*faqih*) to allow direct clerical rule of society (Arjomand, 1986, p.408).[4] In order to simultaneously suppress any form of tension, incongruity and confusion among the people and stabilise the powerful public position of the new government, Khomeini declared that laws that violate shari'a would be binding, as long as they serve the interest of the governing elite – known as *ulama* (Muslim scholars) and *mujtahids* (religiously trained scholars who interpret the Islamic law) (Baktiari, 2012). Moreover, he also introduced a new doctrine known as *The Rule of the Jurisconsult*. The jurisconsult, or supreme leader, is a highly esteemed cleric chosen by his peers on the 86-member Assembly of Experts in recognition of his knowledge of fiqh, or Islamic jurisprudence, and his other religio-political credentials (Baktiari, 2012, p.36). According to this theory, in the absence of the hidden imam, the clergy were the true guardians of the state. As discussed in the methodology chapter, *Velayat* comes from the Arabic word *wilāyat,* which refers to the state under the sovereignty of the <u>wāli</u>, the governor. By 1970, Khomeini had published *Velayat-e Faqih: Hokumat-e Islami* (The Jurist's Guardianship: Islamic Government) in which he gave reasons for the theocratic rule of religious judges (Abrahamian, 1993, p.24-5). Later, by 1979, the executive power of *velayat-e faqih* was demonstrated in the following document from the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, known as Article 4. Article 4 declares that '*all civil, penal financial, economic, administrative, cultural, military, political, and other laws and regulations must be based on Islamic criteria. This principle applies absolutely and generally to all articles of the Constitution as well as to all other laws and regulations, and the fuqaha' (jurisconsults) of the Guardian Council are judges in this matter*.' It was, in fact, this philosophy of *velayat-e faqih* that gave Khomeini a

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[3] Islam is, in fact, an unswerving system about obligations incumbent on believers, who have to find faith in the unity of God, the prophethood of Mohammad, and the day of resurrection (Rahnema and Nomani, 1996, p.65). However, Shi'is add two more fundamentals of faith - *emamat* (the belief in the Twelve Imams), and *adl* (justice). As long as the Prophet was alive, 'he' was responsible for leading Muslims to become worthy of God's vicegerency on earth. After his death, it was the responsibility of his representatives to keep the territory under control (Vaghefi, 2017).
[4] Arjomand (1986, p.407) indicates that the Islamic ideology was [not developed in Iran, but] developed by publicists and journalists like Mawdudi (d. I979) in Indo-Pakistan and Qutb (d. i966) in Egypt. Its essence consisted in presenting the secular state as an earthly idol claiming the majesty that is God's alone'.

bifurcated structure of executive power that aimed at the Islamisation of every single sphere of people's lives and which spread Islamic ideology to cover urban life.

As discussed above, in the literature review, Sennett (2018) targets the lack of connection between *ville* (the built) and *cité* (the lived) in modern urbanism. In order to better understand this connection/dis-connection in the context of post-revolutionary Tehran, it is important to consider Sennett's ideal image of urban planning and architecture, which is based on a kind of cooperation between planners, designers and people. He refers to a sort of 'propositional thinking' with which architects and planners [should] proceed, which at its roots can be found in Weber's ideal of a self-governing city state 'as a place whose citizens treat its rules as *proposals* which can be changed or evolved, rather than imposed in fixed form by the outside power' (Sennett, 2018, p.70). For Sennett, although *outside forces* may confound the outcome of a design, they cannot change the nature of 'propositional thinking' in planning and architecture, which is 'inherently a practical exercise, engaging existing reality by thinking about ways to change it' (Sennett, 2018, p.69-70). And this is the argument here. Because this ideal image for Sennett comes from Weber whose *city-state* notion can be found in ancient Athens or medieval Siena (both western contexts) where the true city was equipped with the following features: '1) the fortification; 2) the market; 3) its own court of justice, and, at least in part, autonomous justice; 4) the associative structure between different groups; 5) at least partial autonomy or self-rule…in which the citizens take part' (Sennett, 2018, p.60). The only problem in propositional thinking, for Sennett, is that it is today based on the *designer's* version of such self-governance rather than taking place in a workshop or studio where different propositions – those of both people and designers – are put on the table, analysed, debated and chosen. So, for him, not citizens or governments, but designers have the main power in the making of *ville*. However in the context of Tehran, it is neither designers nor citizens but Islamic/political power relations, as discussed in the sections below, that in the first place shape, influence, or alter architectural and planning practices, and consequently affect the making of the city. This thesis therefore sets out to discuss, in the urbanism of Tehran, this form of power relations, which is both more political and less practical in its dis-connection of *the built* and *the lived* from each other. Here, it is argued that in the context of post-revolutionary Tehran, and Iran in general, not only is urbanism less propositional, but it also needs to align tightly with the Islamic vision of the city demonstrated in the *velayat-e faqih* (Figures 5-1 and 5-2).
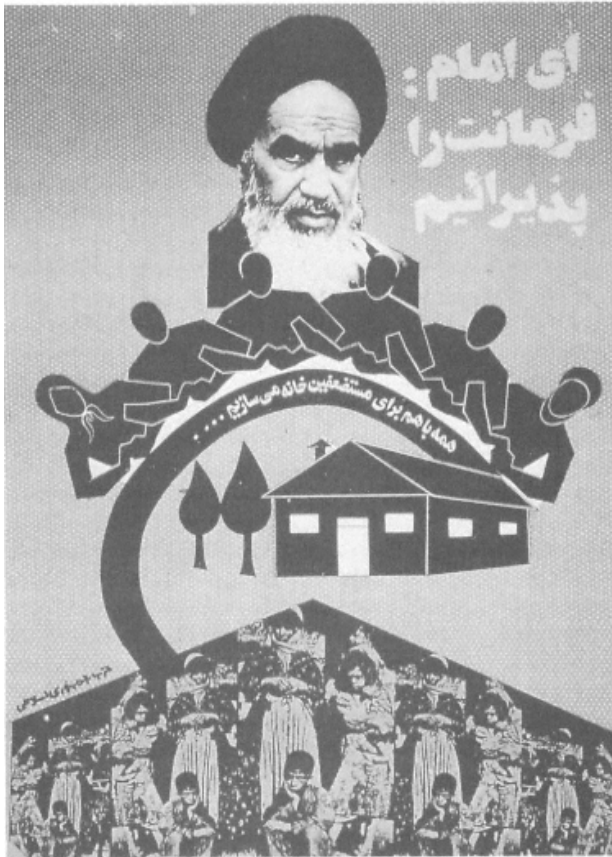
Figure 5-1 (left): Post-revolutionary propaganda: poster urging the construction of housing for the poor (Source: Abrahamian, 1993)

Figure 5-2 (right): Post-revolutionary propaganda: wounded Protestor under Khomeini Breaking Through US Flag, 1980 (Source: The Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, 2011)

The patrons of urban governance and planning

Khomeini's utopian vision of a just and pure Islamic society led him to introduce his 'classless society' programme by promising jobs, 'free homes' and dignity to the poor (Bayat, 2010). After the establishment of the Islamic Republic and in order to prove their faith in the promises of the revolution to the poor and low-income families, numerous semi-independent institutions, known as 'revolutionary institutions' were set up – among them *Sepah*-e *pasdaran* (revolutionary guard corps), the paramilitary *basij* volunteers, *Bonyad-e Mostazafin* (Dispossessed Foundation), *Bonyad-e Shahid* (Martyrs Foundation), *Bonyad-e Maskan* (Housing Foundation) – which together moved to fill the power vacuum (Vaghefi, 2017). According to Abrahamian (2009), 15 percent of the national economy and the control of budgets totalling as much as half that of the central government, were accounted for by these institutions. This is the context in which, according to Bayat (2010), *Bonyad-e Mostaz'afin* alone took over some 150,000 housing units (in 1979, there were 200,000 empty dwellings in

Tehran according to a survey by the Housing Foundation, including palaces, hotels, villas, and unfinished apartment blocks) that had been hurriedly left behind by the many businessmen, managers, landlords and rich people who fled the country during the time of the revolution. Permission to confiscate empty houses and apartments and control rents and property transactions was given by Ayatollah Khosro Shahi, who was the head of the Housing Foundation at the time.

These 'revolutionary institutions', as well as some pseudo-private companies ('pseudo-private' in the sense that their board members were mostly former members of *Sepah* (also known as the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, or the IRGC), or other public and governmental institutions (Vaghefi, 2017)) dominated the market by allocating massive projects to the public sector. The result was the expansion of closed and monopolistic hierarchies that worked together as state apparatuses, especially the Dispossessed Foundation (*Bonyad-e Mostaza'fin*) which owned 50 construction companies and 20,000 units of real estate (Razaghi, 1992, cited in Vaghefi, 2017, p.168), and the IRGC, which 'benefited from their ability to get awarded government contracts' (Coville, 2017, p.94). During Rafsanjani's presidency (1989-1997), and based on his neoliberal policies, the IRGC expanded its role in various economic sectors from energy to construction, to telecommunications to auto-making, and even banking and finance, as well as commercial activities (Alam Rizvi, 2012). By controlling the Iranian economy 'the IRGC went from military engineering to rebuilding Iran's infrastructure to using unemployed soldiers for government projects' (Alam Rizvi, 2012, p.590).

'For ordinary residents, it was now clear that the city had at best a *parallel power structure*' which could be characterised as the operation of *Sepah's* corporate power (Granter, 2017, p.97). Their main method was to increase control over political, organisational and social life, and to subvert the market and facilitate private gain by deliberately structuring and restructuring the implicit or explicit regulations and networks of relationships between individuals, companies and institutions. Consequently, *Sepah* gradually gained a patron-client role in the form of hidden connections and operationalised social relations between individuals, groups and classes that in return increased corruption in the construction and urban sectors in which a member-as-patron could put a client 'in touch with the right people' as he would be able to perform important favours for a reward of money or power. Although *Sepah*'s status is legal – based on Act 147 of the Constitution which awarded the armed forces the power to take part in re-construction and construction projects in peacetime – its systematic corruption and

mafia-type economic tendencies validated a comparison between this organisation and the racketeers in racket model societies in which hidden social connections created 'a closed, violent, strictly ruled in-group' in which patrons protect their underlings in return for obedience and consequently rule directly under a new guise (Jay, 2020).[5] Like *Sepah*, 'the racketeer is [also] able to control key processes for their own benefit' (see Granter, 2017, p.97). And like the racketeer, *Sepah* is also constituted by patterns of hidden influence, networks and organisational mechanisms. Both the racketeer and *Sepah* convert the political authority of ruling cliques into economic and financial power in order to utilise a range of approaches such as lobbying, intelligence and secrecy, and marketing.

But founding the Islamic and anti-imperialist visons of Iranian society on the basis of independence, self-sufficiency, and distributional justice could not last long, as by 1988 the revolutionary leaders were confronting a budget deficit of around $12 billion, the result of a decade of political instability due to the eight year Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988). This led to them borrowing secretly from abroad in the form of usance (Vaghefi, 2017, p.229). Later, following the ceasefire in 1988, the then president Hashemi Rafsanjani called for a free-market economy to reconstruct the country, and introduced a new set of *neoliberal policies* in the economic sphere, which took the form of the First Development Plan (FDP) (Vaghefi, 2017).[6]

The municipality of Tehran was one of the main targets of these neoliberal policies. According to Karampour (2018), Tehran was run by a municipal organisation (the TM, or Tehran Municipality) in conjunction with an Islamic City Council (the ICCT, or Islamic City Council of Tehran). However, the system of management in these two organisations was fragmented, as various other government or public institutions and private organisations also had considerable power and roles in city management. This led to ambiguity and overlaps in the effectiveness of this hierarchical organisation, because not only were there different ministries and organisations involved in governing Tehran (besides the TM), there was also a High

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[5] The Frankfurt School was the first social institution that established the theory of rackets. Horkheimer, Adorno and Kirchheimer took the concept of hidden connections in social theory and operationalised it in a more literal sense, to characterise social relations between individuals, groups and classes (Gartner, 2017, p.99). The theory of rackets, as Gartner (2017) argues, was part of a characterisation of advanced capitalism that shared many characteristics with totalitarianism and more specifically, Fascism. This theory emphasises a society in which personal connections play the key role in life and career and focuses on the corporate capitalism that operate increasingly as a racket, to become a sphere not of the formality of the state and the rules of the market, but of conspiracy, connections and private power (see Gartner, 2017).

[6] The First Development Plan (1989-1993), promised a wholesale restructuring of the economy based on a market-oriented strategy which was focused on privatization, liberalization and deregulation: 'government decontrol, sale of public enterprises, reduced trade protection, exchange unification, tax reform, banking-system reorganization and cost-price adjustments' (Amuzegar, 2001, 26).

Council, known as the Urban Planning and Architecture High Council (UPAHC) with ultimate authority on urban planning decisions, which had among its members a representative from the Islamic Parliament of Iran (IPI) (Karampour, 2018). Since this high council had responsibilities at a national level – including preparing planning regulations, supervising the preparation and implementation of comprehensive and detailed plans, and communicating with all the relevant institutions (Karampour, 2018, p.97) – and in order to tackle more locally-focused planning and architectural issues, in 1987 a commission (Commission No. 5 or CN5) was established that gave the municipality the power to exist 'as a supervisorial body and a legal mandate for legislating required amendments considering comprehensive development plans' (Moeini, 2006, p.44).

As a result, Tehran Municipality became the Secretary and Chairman of the Commission, and power relations between governing actors in Tehran began to change. On the other hand, by 30 May 1983, [central] government had been given a six month deadline to prepare and send to parliament a plan for the independence of municipalities and to phase out its financial assistance to municipalities over the course of three years (IPI, 1983: *The Country's Budget Bill for 1983*, *Part b from Section 52*). This plan was never prepared, however, and instead municipalities began to generate the money necessary to manage their cities using some *innovative* ways.

5.2. The non-democratic city

One immediate solution for Tehran Municipality was to use private capital, which in turn created individual developers who acquired a piece of land to develop and sell without setting up a formal company. Previously, a developer would have been a master builder, but the profitability of house building enticed many others, including doctors and civil servants, to become entrepreneurs (Madanipour, 1998, p.167). This is something like what Harvey (1989, p.4) has described as the reorientation of attitudes in urban governance towards the more 'entrepreneurial forms of actions' and decentralisation of central governments that have happened since the 1970s. He believes that this is manifested in the form of public-private partnership – a collaboration of businesses and corporations with state actors – as private capital became local governments' main resource for funding their expenditure and imposing amendments and changes in legislation, public policy and regulatory frameworks.

Tehran for sale

Tehran Municipality applied various tactics, tools and innovations to the generation of income: from changing land-use for a fee, to selling municipal land, to increasing property taxes and privatising some services and sectors of municipalitiy (Izadi, 2008, in Karampour, 2018, p.117). Since 1990, 'selling density' – which is now called the excess construction density charge (Karampour, 2018, p.117) – has become the biggest revenue generator. This is a fee that city hall obtains from developers and which in return allows them to increase the construction density of their buildings (Azizi, 2002). One immediate effect of this act was the fast financial growth of Tehran Municipality: from 26% of development budget in 1986-1987, to 28% in 1989-1990, to 63% in 1991-1992 (Ehsani, 1999, p.24), which means its revenue increased from IR41.2bn in 1987 to IR400bn in 1992 and IR700bn in 1993 (Madanipour, 1998, p.78). According to Ehsani (1999), three quarters of new revenues came from the sale of residential permits that explicitly violated zoning regulations (Figure 5-3).

Figure 5-3: Tehran in the making (Source: Citiestale, 2017)

The private sector became involved not just in the housing sector, but also in other large-scale urban projects, not in the shape of individual entrepreneurs, but this time as revolutionary organisations. In 1989, the *Pasdaran* announced their intention to take part in the

reconstruction of the country (*sazandegi*). In 1988, the IRGC had created a cooperative called *Bonyad Taavon Sepah* (BTS); in 1989 they created a construction company, which in 1990 would be called *Khatam al-Anbiya* (or *Khatam*). At first *Khatam* was active in the reconstruction of territories destroyed by the war, but it gradually became involved in a great number of activities, including the construction of dams, highways and water distribution networks (Coville, 2017, p.94). It is important to say that *Khatam*'s activities in making the city of Tehran were not limited to the Rafsanjani reconstruction era. In September 2014, *Khatam* signed a contract of 20 billion *toumans* (more than \$6 billion) with Tehran Municipality in which all construction projects in Tehran were allocated to *Khatam* for the next five years (Coville, 2017, p.95).

Meanwhile, starting in the mid-1980s, 2.5 million refugees from the Iran-Iraq War and 2 million Afghans poured into the country, many of whom settled in Tehran. The country's urban population soared as a result, increasing by 72% between 1976 and 1986, with the population of the city of Tehran alone doubling in just two years after the revolution. Although 432,000 land lots (equivalent to 11,000 hectares) were transferred to the people in the first decade of the revolution (Athari, 2006), and the urban poor were relocated to apartments in better-off neighbourhoods, many of whom just sold or rented out those homes and moved back into their shacks and old squatter settlements (Bayat, 2010, p.103).

By the mid-1980s, therefore, the second Tehran Comprehensive Plan was prepared, and ten years later approved by the Supreme Council of Urban Development. This was based on the old Comprehensive Plan of Tehran but revised its two main principles, namely, the linear expansion of Tehran, and the ceiling imposed on population growth. This was because, while the first Comprehensive Plan had planned for an estimated 5.5 million people by 1991, by 1986 the population had already exceeded this estimate by 550,000 people (Vaghefi, 2017, p.243). The new TCP, therefore, determined 7.65 million people as saturation point for the population of Tehran, and at the same time, aimed to decrease Tehran's share of the population of the region. Tehran Municipality did not implement the Plan immediately but instead appointed twenty-two consultant companies to prepare a plan of each region, and another consultant company to facilitate the work of those companies. This opened a new era of corruption, capital circulation and power relations between Tehran Municipality and private investors and speculators, who bought and sold Tehran's urban spaces and consequently had an impact on its physical, built and architectural spaces. Finally, the Comprehensive Plan, under the name

Tehran Structural-Strategic Plan, was approved in 2007, though it took another five years to approve the detailed plans of each region, which became controversial. The main characteristics of the new plan were to set out a vision for the city and propose a set of strategies based on recognised structures in the city (Karampour, 2018, p.129). Encouraging the polycentric development of the city, the plan divided it into four zones and proposed regulations for each zone. Twenty-two District Plans (detailed plans of the 22 regions), 10 Area Action Plans and 18 Thematic Plans were prepared to support the Plan's vision Comprehensive (Yacobi and Nasasra, 2019) (Figures 5-4 and 5-5).[7]
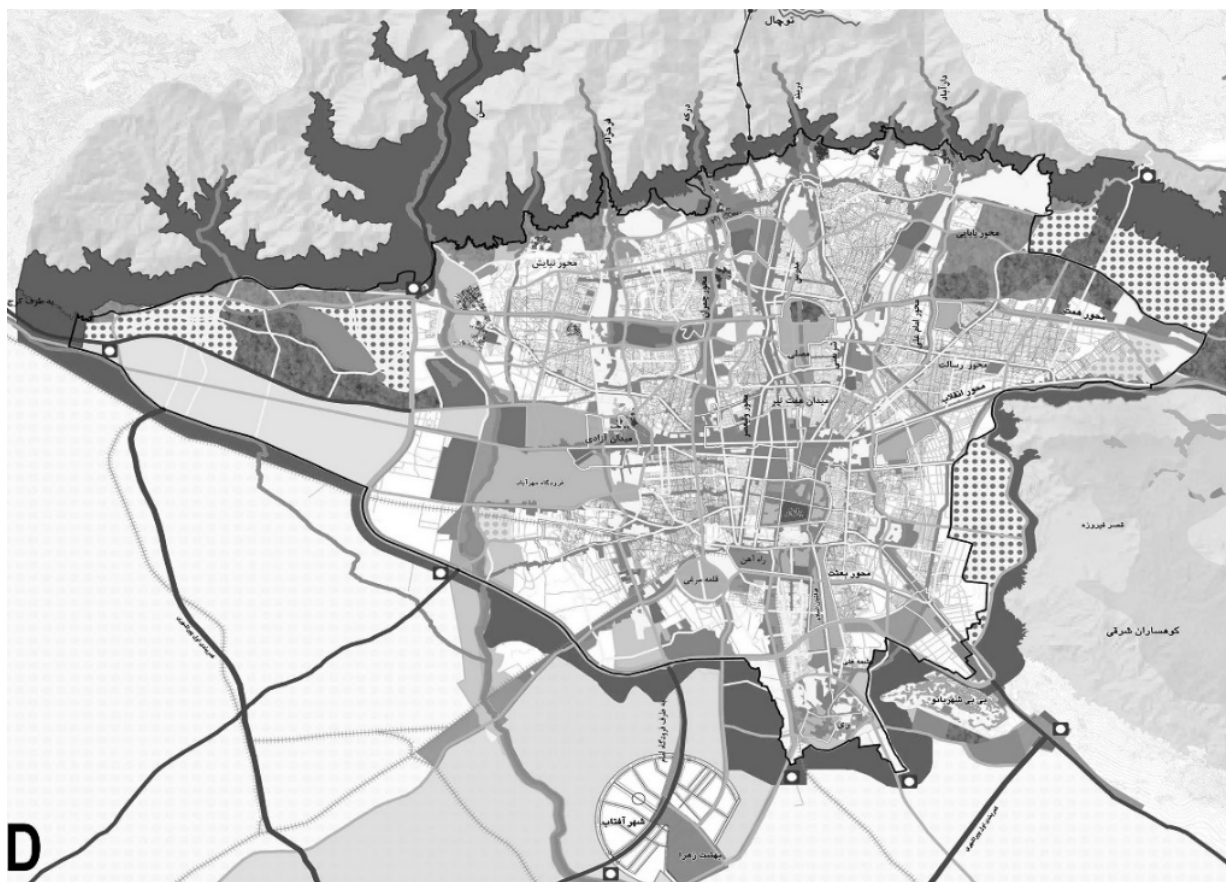

Figure 5-4: Master Plan of Tehran, 2006 (Source: Yacobi and Nasasra, 2019)

[7] Karampour (2018, p.225) has indicated that while planning documents such as a Land Use Plan used to be in the form of comprehensive and detailed plans, by the 1990s, a new system of structural-strategic plan was introduced at city level and District Plans (DPs), Area Action Plans (AAPs) and Thematic Plans (TPs) became its local and more micro level plans. These plans emphasised effective strategies for the development of economic, social and physical structures in each district (Majedi, 2012, cited in Karampour, 2018, p.113).
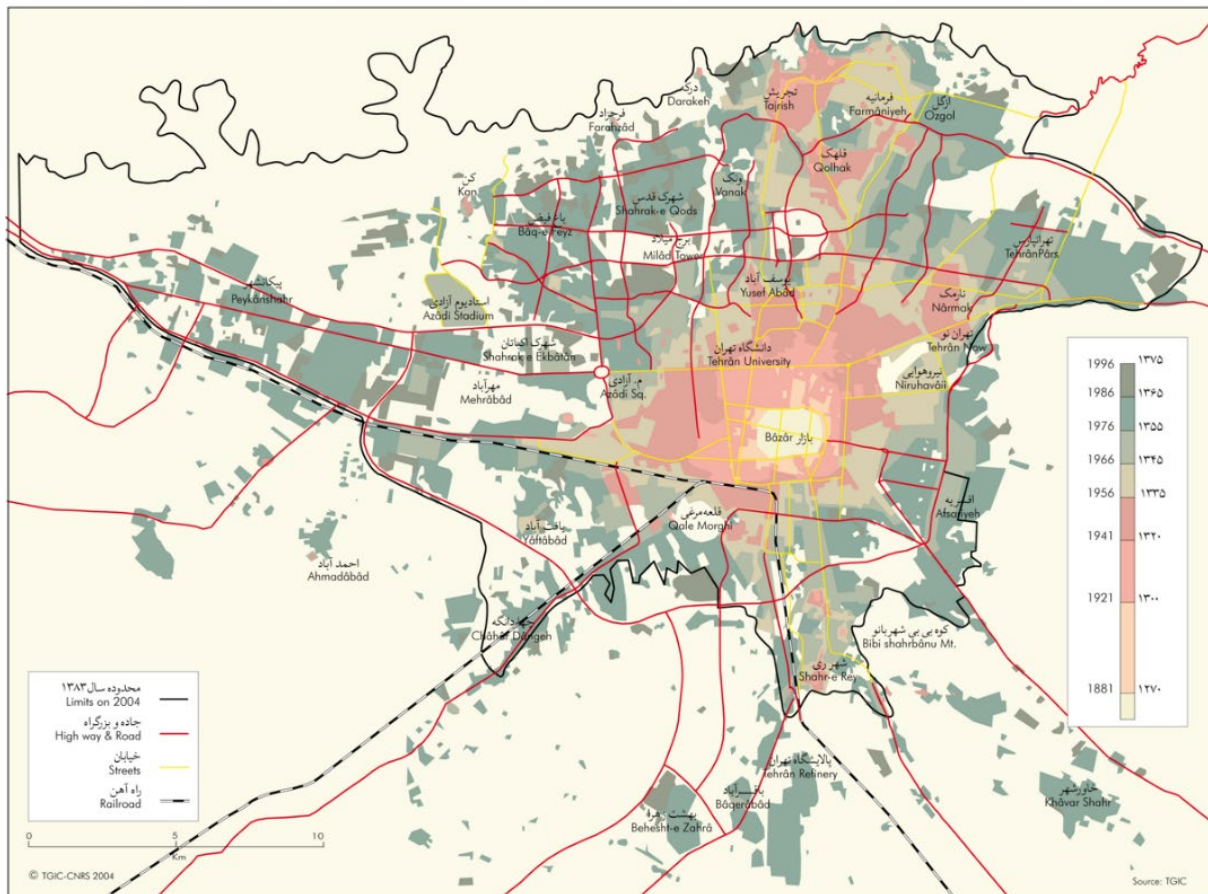
Figure 5-5: Evolution of built-up areas in Tehran (Source: TGIC-CNRS, 2004)

Against this background, it can be said that planning in Tehran is to some extent similar to what Sennett (2018, p.70) calls 'the problem in the marriage between making and dwelling'. This divorce was seen, as discussed in chapter four, in Tehran's first Comprehensive Plan in the Pahlavi era. The same problem occurred in the Islamic Republic era, but in this case it was the legal and administrative autonomy of the IRGC and Municipality that led these institutions to become patrons of urban governance and planning in the process of making the city. The argument here is that this should be the first step in understanding the built, architectural and physical space of Tehran if one wishes to apply Sennett's theory there.

The city's Islamic image

Not only do the post-revolutionary planning and urbanism of Tehran indicate its closedness, but the façade and surface of the city have also been transformed and merely manifest the visual production of state power through the representation of symbols in public spaces. Islamic signs, banners, murals, images, and names have become tools that disguise any sign of modernisation that remains from the previous regime. This process began with an attack on all the emblems of western popular culture as symptoms of impurity, which resulted in their removal from

public places including cinemas, nightclubs, discos, music studios, luxury restaurants, liquor stores, bars and so on.

At the same time, to make the revolution visible on the surface of Tehran, street names were replaced with Islamic Republic names, such as *Enghelab* (revolution), which is a street that connects east to west Tehran, or *Vali Asr* (the name refers to the emergence of the twelfth *shia* Imam), which connects the north to the south of the city. Alleys and avenues were also named after the *Shahids*, who were martyrs of the Iran-Iraq war. State sponsored murals, proclaiming official messages of the Islamic Republic, were placed high up on buildings to fix the form and meaning of the Islamic revolution (Karimi, 2008). At the outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war in September 1988, political posters and murals remained an important medium of propaganda. As Amir-Ebrahimi (2006, p.457) puts it, Tehran's public spaces were 'spaces of commemoration of war, revolution, and above all the main stage of the authority of the religion'. According to Afsarian (2011), Tehran's walls were covered with portraits of aggressive clergy and martyrs in heaven covered with blood, that left people feeling guilty every day. Murals of the Ayatollahs with lengthy quotations from their speeches symbolically assigned to public spaces a function that had traditionally belonged to the mosques: the production of Islamic discourse (Figures 5-6 and 5-7).

Figures 5-6: Production of Islamic space through art, portraits and murals of Shahid (Source: Rolstone, 2020)

Figures 5-7: Production of Islamic space through art, portraits and murals of Shahid (Source: Rolstone, 2020)

Against this background, it can be seen that there is a clear, direct, distinct and simple form of [Islamic] space production that defines who belongs in a space and who does not. Borrowing Sennett's own words in his description of Nazi Germany's *ville*, there was a connection between place and politics that aimed at exclusion and simplification (Sennett, 2018, p.129). Sennett explains that this form of exclusion is not only a matter of keeping out the other Others, rather, 'it also involves simplifying the look and construction of a place so that the place fits one kind of person' (Sennett, 2018, p.129). Covering Tehran with Islamic images helped the revolutionary state to impose its ideology on the city and to divert attention from the fact of differences between people.

Moreover, an increase in the number of mosques constructed in Iran – from 27,000 in 1979 to nearly 75,000 in 2018 (IQNA, 2018), of which some 3500 have been located in Tehran has contributed to the full Islamisation of the city. This has in turn promoted new Islamic space for social gatherings. Also, through a 'cultural revolution' in 1980, the Islamic Republic began to indoctrinate society with a state-sponsored Islamic ethical vision, which permeated the

education system, state-owned broadcast media, and propaganda films. Through this programme, first and foremost, the regime targeted intellectual elites by closing the universities for three years and reopening them only after massive transformation and reduction in the number of faculty, administration and the student body. Its intention was to Islamise education so that young people would 'receive a correct Islamic education side-by-side with their acquisition of formal learning, not a Western education' (Khomeini, 26 April, 1980). To reinforce this fluid surveillance a policy of gender segregation was imposed, resulting in widening the male/female distinction; hijab became mandatory, mixed schools were suspended, and public offices and transportation were gender segregated. It could be said that that hijab and the 'cultural revolution' were used as surveillance mechanisms that were dispersed across the city and tools/devices that implemented/embodied Islamic values. The art industry also underwent purification and cleansing as part of the Islamisation of society. The film industry, for instance, was Islamised and renamed 'Islamic Cinema'. Religious people who had once refused to let TV enter their households now gladly bought TV sets, as young Islamic and revolutionary filmmakers began to get inspired by the Iran-Iraq war to create 'Sacred Defence Cinema' in the form of ideological state-funded TV documentary series, such as *Chronicle of Triumph* (1986-1988) by Morteza Avini (Abbasian, 2017, p.34). Abbasian (2017, p.36) argues that this documentary series – which carried with it three important aspects of the Islamic Republic's national identity building project, known as 'Apocalypticism', 'Martyrdom', and '*Vilayat-e faqih*' – created an intimate, touching image of the 'sacrifices' made during the war. The city became filled with revolutionary spirit with the addition of signs and images of the martyrs in public spaces, and the airing of films and documentaries on national TV in private spaces; the Islamic Republic's propaganda language appeared in all cultural forms, from TV to music, to publications and so on. In addition to Islamic Cinema, the Ministry of Islamic Culture and Guidance announced other propagandistic attributes of the 'resistance against cultural invasion', 'the family as a social unit', 'women as the central axis of the family', and 'cultural values of Islam' as well (Khosravi, 2008, p.24, p.179). Islamic values and lifestyles were reinforced by programs such as *Akhlaq dar khanevadeh* (Ethics in the Family) or 'Mr. Gherra'ti's lectures on Islamic ethics and numerous other soap operas, TV series, and mythologizations of clerics and personalities of the Revolution' (Khosravi, 2008, p.24, p179) (Figures 5-8 and 5-9).

If one wishes to read the city of Tehran through the lens of open city theory today, it is important to consider the *Islamic space* produced in post-revolutionary Tehran which shaped the effectiveness of Islamic values in both public and private spaces. It could be said that post-revolutionary Tehran was, and still is, based on a centralised control system born out of a desire to monitor the city, its streets and its people. This is the hegemonic model of [urban]governance, in which people with different needs and desires are not meant to *experience* the city, but only to move through the space without leaving their mark.
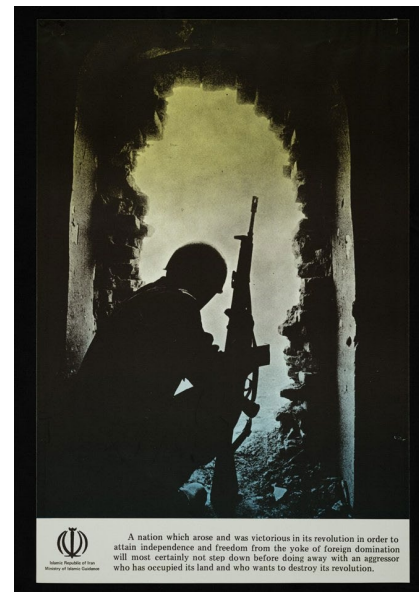

Figure 5-8: Production of Islamic culture: Avini's weekly TV series called: *Chronicle of Triumph* (Source: *Chronicle of Triumph*, 1986- 1988)

Figure 5-9: Post-revolutionary propaganda: '*Soldier Sitting in Bombed Building'*, poster by the Ministry of Islamic Guidance, 1980s. (Source: The Hanna Holborn Gray Special Collections Research Center, 2011)

5.3. A complex society

Although post-revolutionary Tehran can be seen as a closed city in which power relations played a key role in shaping the solid of buildings and streets and their Islamic atmosphere, the second decade of the Revolution witnessed gradual changes, as Khomeini's death in 1989 to some extent changed the absolute rule of *velayat-e faqih*. The end of the 1990s marks the beginning of an epoch of reformation, resistance, negotiation, disobedience and the fight for rights which has continued to the present day. Some believe that the juxtaposition between popular sovereignty (as provided by presidential elections) and divine authority (as embodied by the Islamic Supreme Leader or Jurisprudent) arises from the conflicting dual legitimacy that characterises the Islamic Republic (Boroumand and Boroumand, 2000).

A partial social and political openness

The presidential candidate Mohammad Khatami broke away from the fundamental, ideological jargon of the revolutionaries in his campaign speeches and opted instead for new terminologies such as 'civil society', 'the rule of law', 'citizens' rights and dignity', 'political participation' and 'women', which in turn galvanized countless Iranians, especially women and youth (Boroumand and Boroumand, 2000, p.304). Khatami was an advocate of *Goftogo-ye-Tamaddon-ha* (Dialogue between Civilisations), and under his administration (1997-2005), Tehran witnessed a [temporary] openness in public spaces and political landscapes. It was at this time that expressions such as 'democracy', 'freedom of thought', 'pluralism' and 'civil society' filled the public sphere. Cultural media such as daily newspapers, books, magazines, TV series and films, all increased the amount of dynamic sociopolitical discourse.

For instance, in the early years of Khatami's presidency, the number of newspapers increased to more than 850, and the total circulation of dailies rose from about 400,000 to more than 2 million (Karimian, 2009, p.16). The first reformist newspaper with an aim of 'political development' appeared in 1998. Called *Jame'eh* (Society) and favourably disposed to civil society, in the words of its editor in chief (Shamsolvaezin), 'the newspaper was the representation of the internal diversity of the Iranian society' (Fararu, 2019) (Figures 5-10 and 5-11). It was banned three times, as it criticised the corruption decaying the country's economic system, as well as the oligarchic structures of the regime and the election screening process, and arbitrary and violent judicial power or justice. It also published a photograph of a fun-loving society (Boroumand and Boroumand, 2000, p.331). It re-emerged after each ban under a new name, (*Tous*, *Neshat*, *Asr-e Azadegan*). Moreover, during the eight years of Khatami's presidency, the number of books published annually increased from 14,386 in 1997 to 38991 in 2005, as a result of the easing of censorship in the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance (Mokhtabad, 2005). This resulted, on the one hand, in the re-publication of books that had been banned by the previous administration (such as *Kelidar* by Mahmoud Dowlat Abadi), and on the other hand, in the publication of socio-political and historical content (including the history of the revolution, war, religious intellectuals, the relationship between religion and modernity, the relationship between religion and the state and so on (Mokhtabad, 2005). Moreover, a new wave of novel writing brought with it female writers who wrote about women's problems and their quotidian nature.

اصول ۱۰ گانهٔ جامعه

Figures 5-10, 5-11: 'The Ten Principles of Society', published 1998, in *Jame'eh* (Society) Newspaper. (source: Mokem, 2010)

While in the post-revolutionary and war decades Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) had become a state apparatus that served only revolutionary ideals, the reform era advocated a more liberal approach to film and series production, which was in many cases counter to existing revolutionary belief. The first post-revolutionary decade witnessed not only a boom in Japanese movie and TV series, but also more diversity in film production and other TV programs, including telefilms and religious, historical, and political series (religious history). The film industry helped to shape certain new ideas through a mystic aesthetic that appealed to these budding reformists. Unlike the IRIB, which has remained a powerful state apparatus to the present day, with its portrayals of the patriarchal family and religious values, 'Reform Cinema' or the 'Cinema of 23 May" (*Sinema-ye Dovoum-e Khordadi*), became a mirror of sociopolitical transformation in society by shedding light on taboo subjects, such as love, teenage crises, generational conflicts, drugs and youth culture (Khosravi, 2008, p.130).[8]

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[8] 'Often considered a golden age of artistic freedom in Iran' (Tehran Bureau, Guardian, 2013), reform cinema represented the reformist movement as part of everyday life, and both male and female directors began gradually to criticise the Isamification movement by bringing up their social concerns; among them the female director Rakhshan Bani-Etemad, took the top-down

Nevertheless, it is also important to note that in the eyes of conservatives, all these social reforms and democratic changes counted as '*tahajom-e farhangi*' (cultural invasion). They therefore used all their power to stop the movement. In less than a year after Khatami's appointment as president, conservative elements of the state, who controlled the judiciary and security forces, ordered the arrest of pro-Khatami figures. Khatami's supporters, ministers, pro-democracy activists, newspaper publishers and others were arrested, and a series of assassinations had begun, carried out by undercover agents of the Ministry of Information (Boroumand and Boroumand, 2000, p.305).[9] Tehran's mayor at the time, Karbaschi, was no exception and was sentenced to long-term imprisonment after enduring a series of sensational trials on charges of corruption (Boroumand and Boroumand, 2000, p.304). As a result, the conservatives returned to power to complete their 1980s 'Islamic city' project by appointing Mahmood Ahmadinejad as the mayor of Tehran, in May 2003, and later to the presidency in 2005.[10]

Socio-urban transformation

Despite having served time in prison, Gholamhossein Karbaschi remains an important figure in the social and urban transformation of Tehran that took place during his time as mayor from 1989 to 1998. Not concerned about land-use planning, he turned a blind eye to the Comprehensive Plan and instead, between1996 and 2001, introduced the 'Tehran 80' programme. The goals of this programme were 'a clean city, ease of movement in the city, the creation of parks and green spaces, the development of new cultural and sports facilities, reform of the municipal organisation, and planning for the improvement of urban space, including preparation of comprehensive and detailed plans for land use and conservation' (Madanipour,

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political narrative of the reformation back to street level through *Under the Skin of the City* (2000) and her documentary *Our Times…* (2002) (Mahdavifar, 2013).

[9] In April 2000, in a Friday prayers ceremony at a mosque in Tehran, the supreme leader, Ali Khamenei told worshippers: 'I suspect around 20 publications are acting as the enemy's "fifth column". We should do something about it'. Dozens of journalists were arrested after that speech and sent to jail, and many publications were closed (Sokooti, 2002).

[10] It is important to note that while Mir Hossein Mousavi revived the reformist discourse with his presidential candidacy in 2009, it was, in fact, President Hassan Rouhani who brought the reformist movement into power again, in 2013. However, it was only eight years until the Iranian people realised that although the position of president is recognised by the Islamic system, the president, in fact, has no power to make a change or challenge the hegemonic power of the fundamentalist supreme leader. This is because, according to Jahanbakhsh (2003), the Vali-ye Faqih can veto decisions made by the Iranian president or other powerful bodies. As Hashemi-Najafabadi (2010, in Don and May, 2013, p.24)) clearly states, Velayate Faqih 'gives the governing jurist the same authority as' the Prophet Muhammad and the Shia Imams to manage 'the Islamic society', and this places the Vali-ye Faqih 'in the position of the' saints in the Shiite tradition, 'giv[ing] the people a secondary and supportive role instead of a primary and determinant one in the administration of society'. And as a result, people boycotted the 2021 presidential election that the conservative Islamist Ebrahim Raisi became president to put an end to any reformist dream such as those of the so-called *colorful city*.

2006, p.436). In so doing, he relied hugely on privatisation and sold off urban spaces and land to private buyers; in return, he built new parks, highways, bridges, shopping malls, department stores, cultural and sport centres. As a result, all state subsidies were eliminated within four years, the Municipality's revenue increased tenfold and its developmental budget grew twenty-fold (Ehsani, 1999, p.23). According to Karampour (2018, p.112) it was during this period that the Tehran Municipality became financially independent.

In order to realise his ideology of the 'colorful city', the technocrat mayor ordered all the shops to be painted yellow or blue, and removed revolutionary slogans and paintings from the walls of Tehran (Kazemi, 2016, p.84). The city's image, instead of manifesting martyrhood, reflected hope and life, this time through consumer advertising on walls and banners in the city (Kazemi, 2016, p.84). Adverts for Samsung vacuums, LG television sets, Gillett Styler, Banks and investment replaced the revolutionary signs and pictures of mothers holding their dead sons as martyrs of the war (Kazemi, 2016, p.85). Within four years, 138 cultural facilities and 27 sports centres opened, 1,300 vacant lots were turned into neighbourhood sports fields; more than half these facilities were in south Tehran (Ehsani, 1999, p.25) (Figure 5-12). Resources were redistributed across the city's fragmented geography and Karbaschi managed, to some extent, to superimpose a new hierarchy of spatialisation on Tehran, breaking down the social and spatial stratification between the affluent north and the poor south, through projects such as the Bahman Cultural Complex and Navab Project that link the two parts of the city. Offering classes in computer skills, calligraphy, musical instruction, aerobics and religion – which had often been taught voluntarily by famous artists and craftsmen – the Bahman Cultural Complex became very popular immediately after its construction in 1992 on the former site of a slaughterhouse in one of the poorest neighbourhoods of the city; 'for the first time there was something attractive to visit in south Tehran, reversing the city's usual northward flow of movement', says Ehsani (1999, p. 25). As a result, the north-south binary became less tangible as he also tripled the length of the highway system and doubled the amount of public transport (Figures 5-13 and 5-14).

Figure 5-12: Milad-E Noor Shopping Center, 1999 (source: Hamgardi, 2021)
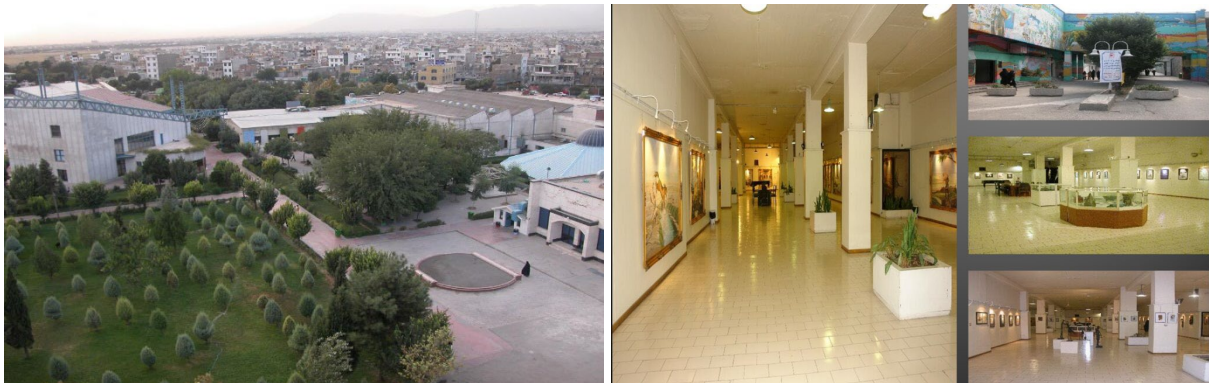
Figures 5-13: Bahman Cultural Centre in south Tehran (Nazi Abad), 1991 (Source: Mymemari, 2020)

Figure 5-14: Inside Bahman Cultural Centre (Source: Mymemari, 2020)

Reading this from the perspective of Sennett's *Multiple-seed planning*, Karbaschi's Bahman Cultural Complex can be seen as an example of this design intervention. As discussed in the literature review, this design intervention refers to creating public spaces with a distinctive character in poor areas (such as schools, libraries, shops or parks) to open up communities, create a complex image or add value to them and encourage others to come (Sennett, 2018, p.235). But, in the case of Tehran for instance, while the center is still praised for its wider social impact on south Tehran, it is important to ask to what degree and in what ways Tehran

municipality initiated such micro and mega projects in the first place. This relates, according to Brenner (2013), to the investment flows, property ownership structures and political decisions in the process of urban design. In the case of the micro project of Bahman Cultural Center and the mega project of Navab highway, the municipality plan was, in fact, to collect the tremendous liquid capital floating in Tehran's speculative (i.e. untaxed and unregulated) economy and redirect it into the construction and physical development sector. (Ehsani, 1999, p.23). In so doing, the mayor bent the zoning laws to allow commercial land use in previously forbidden areas and issued construction permits for the subdivision of large plots and the construction of high-rises. Constructing Navab Project – that facilitated access to the Bahman complex from any point in the city – was not a simple attempt to link the geographically fragmented city. Its construction, in fact, tore apart the old fabric of the city that had coherent family and social ties and incorporated some 20 traditional *mahallehs* (see Vaghefi, 2017, p.252). Connecting the northern Tehran to the south was about constructing new residential and commercial complexes which could provide financial sources for the implementation of the project. Not only this top-down intervention endangered existing social ties and degraded place identity and security, it also led displacement of the locals to other places (Shirazi and Falahat, 2019, p.38). And this is where Sennett's seed-planning design intervention falls short. Overemphasising, merely, the social impacts of such micro projects, which are highly rational and top down per se, shows that Sennett neglects the political and economic complexities behind the construction of such projects in the first place.

Moreover, Sennett's seed-planning approach can also be challenged by referring to the emergence of neo-liberalisation and commercialisation in Tehran and its impact on the durability, lifespan, and sustainability of these sorts of design interventions. Does Bahman Cultural Complex *still* create a reverse spatial mobility in the city, from north to south? The answer is no. It was an effective solution only so long as there were no other cultural complexes in other parts of Tehran. But in the event, the expansion of freeways, expressways, public transport (both the metro and the bus) and the emergence of new luxury shopping malls and mega malls in the north and west of Tehran, subsequently weakened north to south spatial mobility. It is estimated, according to Amir-Ebrahimi and Kazemi (2019, p.18), that there were 359 commercial complexes in Tehran by 2019. Of these, 11 were built before the revolution, 18 were built between 1979 and 1990, 82 between 1991 and 2005 under Karbaschi's mayorship, and 163 since Ghalibaf became mayor of Tehran in 2005. Furthermore, there are 250 shopping centres (including small passages, shopping centres, malls, and mega malls) in

north Tehran, 51 in the central districts, 42 in southern districts, and 17 in the new western districts known as Districts 21 and 22. As Amir-Ebrahimi and Kazemi (2019, p.29) have pointed out, most shopping centres are located in the northern districts 1, 2, and 3. This phenomenon – mushrooming malls and mega-malls in Tehran – is the result of various tactics, tools and innovations used by Tehran municipality to generate income: from changing land-use for a fee, to selling municipal land, to increasing property taxes and privatising some services and sectors of municipalities (Karampour, 2018, p.117). This is to suggest, instead of overemphasising the social impacts of such projects, it is also possible to look at other forms of semi-public space that Karbaschi initiated, such as all the modern-looking new coffee shops and super-bookstores (*Shahr-e-Ketab*) that provided the younger generation and seniors with new urban settings in which to spend time and socialise during this era.

Considering the sociopolitical context of Tehran, it can be said that these models of socialising in shopping centres, cafés, and other semi-public/semi-private spaces such as galleries created a 'productive sociality', which is part of people's everyday lives (see Sennett, 2018, p.260). Although by 'productive sociality' Sennett means the skills that people achieve when they come together and think about possible solutions to solve a problem, in Tehran it can refer to how people, especially women and youth, have *learnt* to transform the consumer spirit of these spaces into socially and politically safe places to do things that are forbidden in other public spaces in the streets and squares of the city. Productive sociality, according to Sennett (2018, p.261), is a dialogic process in which there is a good deal of ambivalence among the users. In this case, it is evident that since the reformation era, enclosed public spaces in Tehran are used in such a way that a good deal of ambivalence remains open as people have begun to resist the idea that urban spaces in the Islamic and revolutionary context should be used in specific, Islamic ways. This idea of the reconfiguration of the meanings of private and public space in Tehran was discussed in the literature review. In such a context, where public spaces are a manifestation of Islamic rules and regulations, the *accessibility of* and *visibility in* those spaces should be analysed accordingly. This is to suggest other semi-public/semi-private and underground spaces as possible alternative urban spaces that people use to experience a sort of sociability, interaction and complexity that may not necessarily fit into open city theory but which alter the closedness of the city momentarily (Figures 5-15 and 5-16).[11] And it is this that is explored in the next two chapters through ethnographic field work.

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[11] Even from a historical point of view, the Persian empires can be seen as despotic to some extent because they practiced 'arbitrary rule' (Salehi-Esfahani, 2008, p.629). This is at a time when ancient Greece, which was Persia's arch rival during the

Figure 5-15 (top): 'Tehran Café' (Source: Attar, 2001).

Figure 5-16 (below): '*TEHRAN UNDERGROUND*' (Source: Reza Hakimi Photography, 2010)

sixth to fourth century B.C., exercised the 'rule of law' and in that respect the current binary of public/private space, that is usually bounded to Agora, can denote free societies with a democratic political system. Although Persia dominated the history of Greece during the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. – specifically through military and diplomatic control in Sparta and Athens – there was still close interaction between the two social systems, which produced a marked process of Greco-Persian acculturation, such as in language, architecture and monuments, objects and statues, [encouraging] cosmopolitanism, and so forth (Balcer, 1983). However, Athenian democracy was seen to be at stake by many, including Herodotus, who rejected the tyranny of the Athenian state of the time and used the term 'equal right to speak' to denote Athenian democracy by synecdoche (Forsdyke, 2001, p.333). As well as the equal right to speak, *the right to speak freely*, or fearless speech, or parrhēsia was part of Athenian democracy. Parrhēsia refers to the act of telling the truth or true speech/discourse, that some philosophers (including Plato), attribute to kings and prophets to show how truth telling was a means to manage people (similar to what Khomeini did for the establishment of his sovereign state). Apart from kings, city rulers and prophets, Foucault uses parrhēsia to indicate the relation between the activity of truth-telling and the exercise of power among citizens (see Foucault's *Discourse and Truth: The Problematization of Parrhesia*, 1983). He indicates that a lack of courageous truth-telling (as an act) is a problem for a democratic city, and can be achieved by the freedom and duty to challenge power and push limits in a very political public context.

5.4. Body as politics

While in the first decades of the revolution a whole set of apparatuses managed to reorganise and redistribute power by different forms of control, surveillance, normalisation, and Islamisation, the 1990s reformation process opened up a new era in which the presence of women and youth underwent a massive transformation. By conforming to and internalising Islamic values on the one hand, and resisting, subverting and manipulating oppressive structures on the other, women and youth increased their presence in the city's public streets and squares, its semi-public/semi-private shopping malls, galleries and cafés, as well as in virtual space through blogging and the use of social media. In fact, they learnt to not be locked into the specific [Islamic] identities and social roles that were dictated to them from above by the authorities, schools or parents. Rather, they began to blur the pre-fixed edges between public and private, local and global, self and other by redefining their bodily experiences in urban settings.

[Re]veiling the body

The Islamic Republic deserves attention yet again for its contradictory attitude towards the body. This time, the Pahlavis' attempt to promote Europeanism came in for critique and Khomeini de-westernised bodies both from inside and outside. In the process, he ordered the creation of a variety of groups composed of revolutionary individuals, to supervise the activities of Iranians in both public and private space. As a result, the hegemonic disciplinary programme of A*mr-e be Ma'ruf va Nahy-e az Monkar* (which literally means 'commanding what is just and forbidding what is wrong'), began to create social order and enforce corporeal regulations. If Foucault's view of the Iranian Islamic Revolution is a focal point for many academics, post-revolutionary Tehran can perhaps be seen in the light of his idea of biopower, which focuses on disciplinary and normalising mechanisms designed to transform human life. In a society where revolutionary organisations operate like machines – dispositif or apparatus – to make visible and 'assure the automatic functioning of power' (Foucault, 1991, p.201), the embodiment of Islamic actors in the wider spaces of the city – in prisons, schools, factories, clinics, hospitals, etc. – opened up new opportunities to exercise techniques of training, surveillance, spatial distribution, examination, and normalisation. In this way, in the context of post-revolutionary Tehran, the very existence of the population became the subject of management, administration, and control to maximise the value of their bodies as an Islamic resource. The Islamic state looked at both physical bodies and their non-physical entities as subjects to be disciplined, to be transformed from westernised bodies to Islamic bodies with

higher Islamic capabilities. They achieved this by increasing the docility of the body and integrating it into the Islamic system of control.[12] And in this integration, some conformed and entered the realm of *insiders* (inclusion), known as *enghelabioon* which literally means revolutionaries, while some were left outside and treated like 'others' who needed further governance (exclusion). The city of Tehran and its streets, therefore, became the first place to practice and manifest all these mechanisms of inclusion/exclusion, inside/outside, open/closed and all the other reciprocal notions discussed above in the literature review. The question is how, in the context of post-revolutionary Tehran, the city was open to one group of people while at the same time closed off from other groups?

In every corner of post-revolutionary Tehran, in the streets and squares, and in front of schools or in cafés, especially in north Tehran where the supposedly more westernised and secular population were settled, there were individuals whose role was to place limits on the rights of (especially) women and youth. They became the 'eyes and ears' of the Islamic Republic, *Pasdaran* and *Basij*, trained in sophisticated riot-control techniques, organised to work with the secret police, and equipped with the latest weapons, to spy, control, and repress the dissenting urban population for improper behaviour and appearance.[13] This was because the central power, Khomeini, wanted to regulate post-revolutionary space based on Islamic logic in which only a certain dress code, manner, and type of bodily movement was acceptable. Since 1980, when the hijab became compulsory again, the body (and especially the female body) has become re-veiled in public spaces to become as invisible as possible. Not only could women

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[12] But it is also important to read Foucault's comments in their context, which, apart from pointing out how the pre-modern western sovereign power targeted collective lives, shows the genealogical development of the concept of 'biological life' in the modern era when, for instance, statistical analysis of the population developed for the first time in the 18th century, as a result of which people began to realise what it meant 'to be a living species, to have a body, conditions of existence [and] probabilities of life' (Foucault, 1991, p.142). So biopolitics for Foucault is about taking control of life and the biological processes of the population. However other lines of argument, such as those related to Agamben and Arend's analysis of state-power and biopolitics, are also important to consider. In his 1998 book, *Homo Sacer*, Agamben argues that there is no disjunction between sovereign power and the modern biopower that Foucault refers to, as Agamben finds the roots of biopolitical governance in Roman law and in the figure of *homo sacer* or the 'sacred man' 'who was banished from the political community that could be killed with impunity by anyone' (in Suuronen, 2018, p.36). This, for him, was the root of the western sovereign exclusionist violence – which could be seen in western imperialism, or in the totalitarianism of Nazi Germany. Agamben (1998, in Blencowe, 2010, p.115) argues that 'biopolitics is what happens when political man becomes concerned (and obsessed) with his existence as a natural, living being and the species and the individual as simple living body' becomes what is at stake in political strategies.' Similarly, Arendt, in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951), looks at the ancient and medieval custom of outlawry within the practice of excommunication in the late Roman Empire. She describes the danger of being a modern refugee, a stateless person, a worker in modern factories of mass destruction, a Jew in an extermination camp and so on, and as a result excluded from the realm of all worldly relations of the juridical, social and political kind. So for her, totalitarianism appears as the most extreme form of biopolitical domination, as 'contemporary politics is concerned with the naked existence of us all' (Arendt, 2005, p.145).

[13] The *Pasdaran* are the professional military trainers, operating on full-time basis. By 1986, they had grown to 350,000 members grouped in battalion-size unities including a small navy and air force. In the same year, the *Basij*, whose members were boys younger than eighteen and men older than forty-five, and those who had recently completed military service, enrolled some 3 million armed volunteers at 11,000 centers, including many women's units (Afray, 2009, p.266).

not wear obvious colours, make-up or perfume, or indeed anything that could attract attention to them (Amir-Ebrahimi, 2006), there were also minor incidents in which men were caught wearing a short-sleeved shirt (Afray, 2009). In attempting to instil proper Islamic manners, the *Basij* and *Pasdaran* began to stop cars to check for alcohol, and burst into weddings to arrest guests for improper dress, alcohol violations, or western music (Afray, 2009, p.266). In some cases, they even broke into the private domain of houses to destroy satellite TV reception. Moreover, if a man walked with a woman in the street, the very act of walking could be taken as counter-revolutionary unless they were relatives (Vaghefi, 2017).

All this has been done with little recognition that the more attention given to the body, the more it becomes visible. Women and youth are good examples of this phenomenon since, amidst all the limitations imposed on them, they gained a greater public presence in the city and formed a picture of their own identity as individuals. Women, for instance, and specifically traditional women, became one of the most publicly visible elements after the revolution, as their presence was needed by Khomeini to legitimise his reign. Moreover, due to very high inflation after the eight year war with Iraq, many women also poured into public spaces. They became more active and even worked outside the home on duties that had previously been considered to be masculine tasks, such as paying bills in the various administration offices, shopping for the household or even taking children to school. And their 'frequent presence in different public spaces gave women a new consciousness about themselves and their individual and citizen rights in the society' (Amir-Ebrahimi, 2006, p.458). Needless to say, by building cultural complexes, shopping centres and malls, the technocrat mayor and his successors helped give rise to a new middle class who could now either choose or 'buy lifestyles' according to their taste (see Tamari, 2002, p.350). Adding to the political and cultural openness of the 1990s, society was offered a mechanism for change that could now function in a way similar to what Simmel and Elias would call 'the temporary society'; a society based on relational social relations and considered to be a processual entity which is 'constantly under the process of formation and deformation' (Featherstone, 1995, p.135). They argue that within this process of society's formation and deformation, there also exists a significant, larger reference group; a group that was born and grew up after the changes, which would have influenced their identity formation and personality structure (Featherstone, 1995, p.135-136). This group can be referred to here as women and youth.

Women and youth

After the Revolution, the population of the country increased dramatically from almost 33 million in 1976 to more than 70 million in 2006. According to the 1996 national census, out of a population totalling 60,055,488 at the time, 68 percent were twenty-nine years old or younger, which means that 68 percent were born after the Revolution (1979) (Khosravi, 2008, p.5). This generation is called the 'Third Generation',[14] a generation that has come of age entirely within the era of the Islamic Republic, who are considered 'as young people that forge new spaces and attempt to control their own bodies in public spaces' (Atwood, 2015, p.134). For instance, according to Iran's Statistics Centre, between 1998 and 2004, the rate of growth in literacy for the age group 15 years old and above, was 8% for men, while women had a higher rate at 14% (Bani-Yaghoob, 2005). The result was a 47% increase in the number of women entering university, from 37% in 1998 to more than 53% by 2005 which shows that for the first time, women occupied more university places than men (Bani-Yaghoob, 2005). Another consequence of the reformation era was the considerable growth in women's sociopolitical participation, as the number of female candidates for parliamentary elections jumped from 351 in 2001 (the sixth parliament) to 504 in 2005 (the seventh parliament). This resulted in a tremendous growth in women's NGOs, from 68 in 1998 to 480 by 2005 (Bani-Yaghoob, 2005). Moreover, female writers, film directors and other artistic movements created new platforms on which women could depict their everyday lives. For instance, Zoya Pirzad became the first female novelist to win the Islamic Republic Book of the Year Award in 2001, for her book *Cherägh'ha rä Man Khamush Mikonam* (I'll Turn Out the Lights), published in 2000. She later began a movement called *adabiyat-e apartemani* or 'apartment literature'. Written almost exclusively by women, apartment literature is set primarily within apartments and re-imagines domestic spaces in modern Iranian society to show the everyday lives of the urban middle class, especially women, in detail (Atwood, 2015, p.136). This is to say that since the reformation era, women and youth have devised new ways of being present in public spaces, despite the fact that their presence is scrutinised by discriminatory and hegemonic Islamic, civil and judicial laws.

However, although many scholars refer to the 'tactics' used by this generation to create their own spaces and ways of communication to subvert the meanings and codes imposed from the

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[14] The first generation had spent their youth under the Shah's rule and made the Revolution. The Second Generation, born between 1965 and 1970, was in its early teens at the time of the Revolution. The Third Generation came of age by 2000 and have no memory of the Revolution. Unlike the First and Second Generations, the Third Generation has been totally formed under the rule of the Islamic regime (Khosravi, 2008, p.5).

top down, and to develop several rituals of 'performative defiance' (Khosravi, 2008, p.139), it is arguable that these tactics and everyday practices of resistance, in fact, have been mostly associated with people from higher-income areas who are supposedly modern, progressive and socially less conservative (Olszewska, 2013). Another class consists of conservative, traditional and religious people who are the main supporters of the Islamic Revolution. They have internalised its values and rules, which they practice on an everyday basis. On the whole, this latter class does not consider the Islamic state to be oppressive, and by following its codes and regulations, they find the Islamic city open to them. This is to say that while the Pahlavis' European model of the city was open to westernised citizens and closed to the traditional sector, the newly born Islamic state has opened the city to the latter, while closing it off to those who do not adhere to its rules and values. This indicates, as discussed in the literature review, the ambivalent nature of the metaphors of open and closed, in the sense that while the city can be open for one group of people, it can at the same time be closed to others.

The other argument here relates to the users of shopping malls, cafés and other enclosed public spaces. Considering the capitalist and neoliberal policies that underlie the mushrooming semi-public spaces, it is important to know that by 2019, out of a total of 359 commercial complexes in Tehran, 250 shopping centres (including small passages, shopping centres, malls, and mega-malls) are located in north Tehran (Districts 1 to 8), 51 in central districts (District 9 to 14), 42 in southern districts (District 15 to 20), and 17 in new districts (District 21 and 22) (Amir-Ebrahimi and Kazemi, 2019, p.29). Exploring the location of these malls opens another line of argument regarding the accessibility of enclosed public spaces. The argument here is that although on the surface, it seems that the main users of these places should be north Tehranies who live in the better off neighbourhoods, in reality the 2001construction of Metro Line-1 has made these semi-public spaces accessible and inclusive, with the result that the constant presence of the poor in northern areas, and the rich in southern areas can be seen as something that facilitates, according to Sennett (2018), tolerance of those who are different. In a way similar to that discussed by Tamari (2017) in the context of twentieth century Japan, for women under the constant scrutiny of the morality police in the streets and squares of the city, these designed and planned consumer spaces become platforms for the experimental innovation of those who not only enjoy the new consumer and aesthetic experiences of 'looking', but also of 'being looked at' on the theatrical 'front stage' of the shopping centres (Tamari, 2018, p.13). These innovative conscious/unconscious ways to open up the closed spaces of the city are explored in the following chapters in the account of my ethnographic fieldwork.

5.5. Conclusion

The emergence of the Islamic regime opened a new era of contradiction between the affirmation and negation of both Islamic and Western codes, values, and policies. Negating the west to promote his utopian vision of an 'Islamic City', Khomeini created another era of dictatorship, this time in the role of supreme leader, based on *Velayat-e faghih* doctrines. He then created semi-independent institutions and individuals to expand his power to every aspect of urban life. Soon the city of Tehran began to be covered with Islamic images and any sign of westernisation was wiped from the surface of the city. However, removing all the so-called western cultural, social, and leisure activities in this way led people to learn 'how to organise their life in the closed spaces of their homes, far from both the missiles of war and the revolutionary guards' and as a result 'all social and cultural activities were driven underground' and public life became internalised (Amir-Ebrahimi, 2006, p.457). It has been, then, the emergence of an underground sociocultural life that to this day accommodates the lives that were eradicated from public places by the Islamic ideology of the new regime. For Christaanse (2011), it is these aspects of totalitarian cities that, in spite of their rigid control, make them vivid and active; for him, this is because a new culture is being developed by the underground networks that make productive urban districts. This is the context in which Sennett's open city theory is explored in the following chapters. By describing the sociopolitical context of Tehran in the post-revolutionary decades, this chapter has explained the essential elements and criteria that must be taken into account before attempting to apply open city theory in Tehran. For instance, signposting the privatisation of the municipality, and corruption and mis-management in urban planning sector – which turned the city into an object that could be bought and sold – has helped to reveal how the process of designing and making the physical, built and architectural space of the city came to be in the hands of revolutionary organisations.

However, when it comes to the making of the *lived*, this chapter has shown how the utopian idea of the Islamic city has faced challenges. This time, the challenge is that the newly born state favours the presence of both the modern and traditional population on the street to legitimise its state, but at the same time wishes to Islamise their appearance, manner and personality. In so doing, it allows people to continue to occupy public space, but imposes restrictions on them that control their actions. On the other hand, as discussed in Chapter Four above, the Pahlavis' creation of a modern society opened the doors of Iran to westernised consumer culture, with the result that the post-revolutionary youth generation has had access

to western goods and clothes in shopping centres and experience of western culture through different mediums such as the internet, satellite TV, or VHS videos in the private spaces of their homes or the confined spaces of cafés and galleries. This chapter has shown how the Islamic Revolution closed the country's doors to the west, but how the 1990s reformation era then became an opportunity through which people began to claim all those demands once again. This era, in fact, was the starting point of a challenge to the closed society that continues to today. This chapter has shown that since the reformation era, women and youth have learnt, under the top-down oppressive regulations and codes, to maintain their presence in public spaces by socialising in cafés, occupying university seats, running NGOs, or simply sitting in the park or walking and socialising in shopping malls. Through these acts, momentum and bottom-up openness emerge, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 6: Reading Tehran with open city theory

This chapter is a physical description of Tehran's streetscape today, but it also goes beyond the physical. In particular, the chapter draws on Sennett's view of the city, which he sees as 'a *physical solid* that contains many different ways of living' (Sennett, 2020, p.8), in which much face-to-face, visceral and physical interaction takes place on the streets. Although his statement shows the *multiplicity* of the city, it still emphasises the physical and visible solid, not the non-physical, non-visible and non-solidity that can unfold numerous images, cityscapes and perspectives under the ground, on the ground, and above the ground. This chapter therefore starts by exploring Tehran from a particular experiential perspective: the vantage point of those immersed in street life. The openness and closedness of Tehran is discussed via a reading of the physical layout (building, street, and public space) of a specific case study, under the lens of open city theory. That discussion is followed by an exploration of the non-physical aspects of the case study, arguing that Sennett's notion of 'city-craft' – a physical space that we go through – and the ways we manage our lives within those spaces (Sennett, 2020, p.135) – can also be seen not just in the solidity of buildings, streets, and public spaces, but also in the atmosphere, affect and energy of the urban fabric. The aim is to re-think face-to-face sociability, coming together and bumping into each other in more than solid buildings, streets, and public spaces. In the process, the ordinary and mundane practices that take place in public spaces, quasi-public spaces, and [gendered] private spaces in Tehran will be explored. The objective here is to increase engagement with the intensity of practices within the sociopolitical context of Tehran, which is subject to surveillance, regulation and order, and to show how these ordinary events disrupt the linear rhythm, order, systematic regulation and sequence of the city creating moments of openness in the use of public, quasi-public, and private spaces in Tehran. After that, some [official] extraordinary times and spaces are also discussed; like ordinary events these show how in contrast to the ideal top-down image of Islamic society, people unexpectedly add chaos, diversity, individualisation, happiness and profanity to extraordinary events.

6.1. At street level

The streetscape, the confined spaces of the streets with their crowds of people sitting, moving and bumping into each other, where the cityscape can be seen from within the street-life, signs,

sounds, shocks and shifting impressions (Featherstone, 2020, p.104), develops into a network through which *complexity*, *diversity*, *negotiation*, *expressivity*, *interaction*, *unexpectedness*, *momentary stimulations*, *exposure, disruption,* and *disorder* can be encouraged. These are all the most exuberant fragments of the idea of the open city that Sennett develops, especially in the following books: *The Use of Disorder* (1971), *Fall of Public Man* (1976), *The Conscious of the Eye* (1990), and *Flesh and Stone* (1994). For him, a 'street full of life' and 'places full of time' – where different objects and situations overlap – are the symbols of urban provocation and arousal, because people are able to experience unexpectedness in the streets (Sennett, 1990, p.152 and p.169). But his ideal street has a specific characteristic which is different from, for example, the *legible* streetscape that Kevin Lynch refers to as 'places that are all about fixed identities of race or class or usage' (Sennett, 1990, p.152). Sennett's ideal streetscape is full of 'narrative spaces', as 'places of displacement' or 'places that disrupt the linear sequence of the city and allow 'conflict' and dissonance' (Sennett, 1990, p.194). He defines linear space 'as those spaces in which form follows function' (Sennett, 1990, p. 194). It is also important to note that he (1990, p.152) believes a linear street can be purposely possessed of a puzzling, problematic life, if new visual meanings for yielding surprising discoveries can be invented. In *Building and Dwelling*, he explains how all these can be achieved when the material conditions – in which people might thicken and deepen their experience of collective life – are structured by five open forms (see Sennett, 2018, p.240).

On the surface

The busy thoroughfares of the city, the confined spaces of the architecture of the street, the pedestrians rushing past, towards and into one another, varied forms of traffic, representations of the world of commodities in advertising (Frisby, 2010, p.7), all demand that verbal, visual, aural, tactile and proprioceptive senses be attuned. Simmel's aesthetic writings on the experience of the city – both from a distance (the cityscape) and from within the street-life (the streetscape) – showed how aestheticisation processes and consumerism at the turn of the twentieth century identified the street as a significant locus of the aesthetics of modern life, manifest in the money economy and the expanding metropolis (Simmel, 1991). Amid the melée of signs, sounds, shocks and shifting crowds, in a way that is reminiscent of Baudelaire's and Benjamin's writings on the metropolis (see for instance, Benjamin et al. *The Arcades Project*, 1999 [1982]), the street remains a readable and writable element of social life in the cities. With its shocks, speeds, bombardment of impressions, flow of traffic and bodily movements the

streetscape is always in motion. But at street level and as a result of these intensified circulations of individuals, traffic, commodities and money in the city, urbanites also display inexpressive blank faces every day, seemingly indifferent and blasé, as in Simmel's (1997 [1903]) *Metropolis and Mental Life* essay). This is, according to Sennett (2018, p.58), the 'dark unsociable side' of the street life depicted by Simmel, which is based on experiencing the density on the street that drives people inside themselves to shield their subjectivity. Sennett describes the bright side of street life, on the other hand, as connecting the street life to the built form in a way that might cause people to feel crowded without necessarily causing them to turn inward. The different ways of measuring the crowd (footfall/sessile density) in the specific urban forms of sidewalks (narrow/wide), the alignment of street lines to building lines, and the encouragement of social clumps are, according to Sennett (2018, pp.55-58), some '*ville* factors' that can create a positive feeling of being crowded in the street.

'Footfall density' and 'sessile density' are two ways to measure the extent to which people are 'feeling crowded' on sidewalks. Footfall density is related to the number of bodies passing by a fixed spot, while sessile density refers to the number of people who are confined or choose to remain in a place for a more extended period. Wide, raised sidewalks permit dense pedestrian crowds to inhabit the streets and can easily accommodate sessile densities (Sennett, 2018, p.57). He also mentions that the feeling of crowdedness on the sidewalk varies from culture to culture. In Iran, for instance, like other Muslim countries, the noon-time sidewalk densities – when the time of adhan invites prayers to go indoors to pray – can be different from those in non-Muslim countries. Moreover, different days of the week count as weekend days in different times and geographies. While Saturday and Sunday are, for instance, the Western countries' weekend days, Friday and Saturday are weekend days in the United Arab Emirates, and Thursday and Friday are weekend days in Iran. Thus, there is a connection between the feeling of crowdedness and the rhythm of the city that marks the different ways time and space are used in cities. Infrastructure beneath sidewalks is also a factor in this. Sennett (2018, p.56) indicates that infrastructure such as pipe-within-tunnel (instead of digging drainage pipes raw into the ground) or the way sidewalks are slightly raised, create compressive effects; a sidewalk height of 75% of a normal household step (about 16 centimetres), will allow elderly people and children easy access.

Sennett (2018, p.57) also metaphorically refers to the street wall as human teeth, to indicate that regular teeth – by which he means the regular, continuous edges of buildings that line up in relation to a sidewalk or road – allow the pressure of containment to increase and prevent

the street from leaking. By leaking, he means the decompression of the crowd via building edges that are set back from the sidewalk. Aligning the lines of the street to building lines makes it easier to assess the feeling of crowdedness.

Last, but not least, what makes a street feel crowded can be related to the tendency of people either to avoid clumping together or to *choose* to place themselves near others, which is more related to dwelling than making. This *ville* factor is also cultural, but a 'well-meaning urbanist', Sennett (2018, p.58) says, 'will seek to satisfy, indeed to encourage the desire to clump', for instance by providing groups of benches on the street rather than distributing them in a more isolated fashion. Instead of driving people inside themselves, the spontaneous formation of these sorts of sociable clumps, without premeditation on the planner's part, leads people to turn outward, embracing social inclusion.

At the level of the surface of the street, therefore, flexibility, mutation, and change can create unplanned face-to-face intensity among a population, which can be achieved not only through groups of benches, but also by adding new pieces, changing the materials or transforming their uses. This is what Sennett refers to as disorder – unplanned activities and social interactions. He believes that it was the emergence of the department store with all its 'fixed' characteristics, that put an end to these sorts of informal, flexible, sociable spaces at street level. The question is how to detect Sennett's *ville* factors, the built forms that might cause people to feel crowded, in cities? Drawing on Immanuel Kant's essay on cosmopolitan life (1784), Sennett argues that the city is 'crooked' because it is diverse, full of different people that create contradictory experience in a city (Sennett, 2018, p.2). When there is less 'political control' of the city, there will be less fixity in the relationship between people and space, so that, socially, the city becomes informal (Sennett, 2018, p.95). Space is less fixed if time is more informal, which means that it should be open-ended, for instance as shops and shoppers, offices and workers come and go; less fixity loosens the character of daily life. He refers to Nehru Place as an example both of a planned *ville* in which people feel crowded, and as a place for informal, flexible, sociable times and spaces at street level. He indicates that versions of Nehru Place can be found in a Middle Eastern souk (Sennett, 2018, p.95), which is a sort of marketplace, 'a kind of economic theatre', in which there is no fixed price on goods, and buyers and sellers can haggle about the price, the quality of goods, their colour, or even their smell (referring to the freshness of vegetables, food, and fruits).

In Tehran, a version of Nehru Place as a Middle Eastern souk can be found in Tajrish Square; a 150 year old Tajrish Bazaar (Tafakor et.al. 2019). This is not open-air in all its crooks and labyrinths, but instead is semi-transparent with a glassed ceiling in its main passage. The next section attempts to explore *ville* factors, to try to ascertain the extent to which people feel crowded in similar places where, contrary to Sennett's account, there is rigid political control. At the physical level, the argument is based on the architectural layout of the buildings, the surface of the street and public spaces in Tajrish Square (*fazay-e kalbadi* /the built); at the social level, the discussion revolves around the expressivity and outward-looking nature of the social clumps in the urban streetscapes (*fazay-e ejtemaee-shahri*/the lived).

Ville factors in Tajrish Square

At more than 750 square kilometres, Tehran has 22 districts, 345 main streets, 2351 adjunct streets and 718 squares (see Figure 6-1 and IRINN, 2018). Located in one of the most well-off districts of Tehran – District 1[1] – Tajrish Square is a 24 hour hub of natural and historical tourism, culture and religion, leisure, entertainment, shopping, international and diplomatic activities, and of a whole host of informal activities including street peddlers and itinerant musicians (Figure 6-2). The square is surrounded by major government, commercial, and religious establishments, including District 1 municipality, Tajrish old bazaar, *Imamzadeh* Saleh (Shrine and Jaame Mosque), city-wide bus terminals, luxury shopping malls such as Tandis and Arg, ordinary shopping centres such as *Qaem Passage* and other cultural and commercial activities such as museums, restaurants and cafés. While the square is home to some of the most affluent neighbourhoods of Tehran such as Saad Abad, Elahieh, and Zaferanieh, the expansion of metro *Line 1* and *Rahahan-Tajrish* BRT line (Bus Rapid Transit) now brings people from the poorest parts of the city for many reasons – to see or to be seen, to sell their cheap products, or simply to stroll and wander among the variety of activities happening in the square (Figures 6-3, 6-4 and 6-5). It was in fact the opening of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in 2010 and the Metro station in 2012 (Yousefi and Farahni, 2019) that enabled

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[1] Tehran District 1, locates on the north of Tehran. The population of the district is 487,508 which is %5.9 of Tehran population (census 2016), and its area is 4630 Hectare, which is 6.3 percent of Tehran land area (73000 hectares). The region includes 10 Districts and 26 neighborhoods according to municipal divisions (Tehran Municipality Website).

diverse groups to use the square in different ways and increased its capacity to encourage unplanned activities and social interaction.
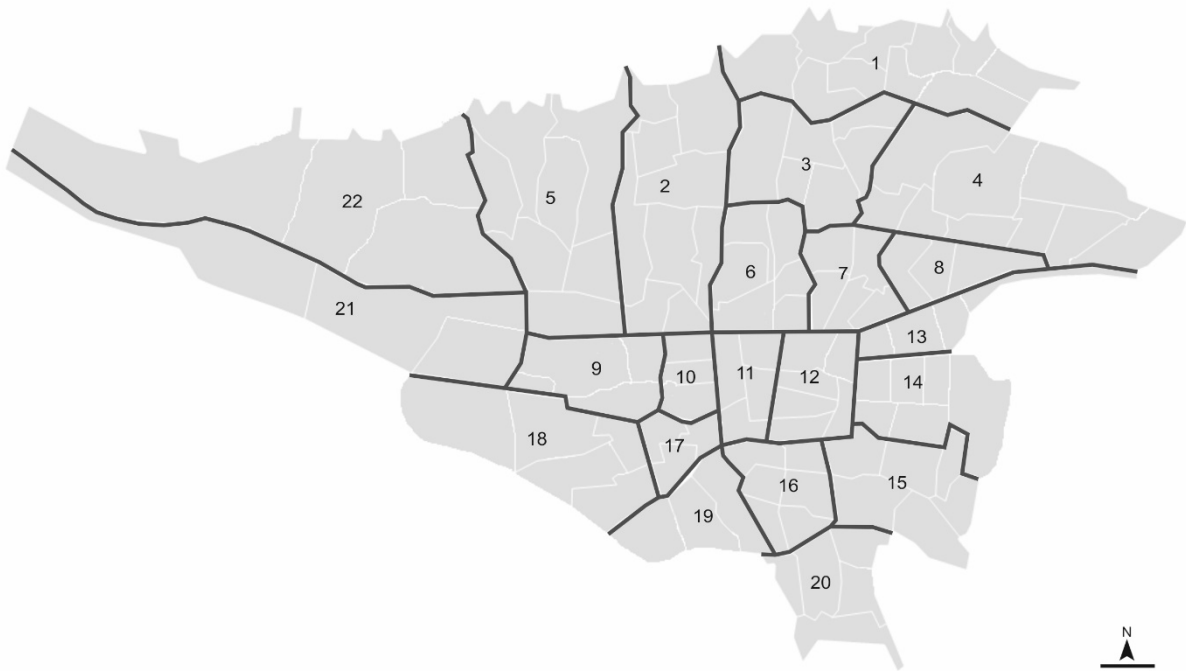
Figure 6-1: Tehran's 22 Municipal Districts (map produced by author)
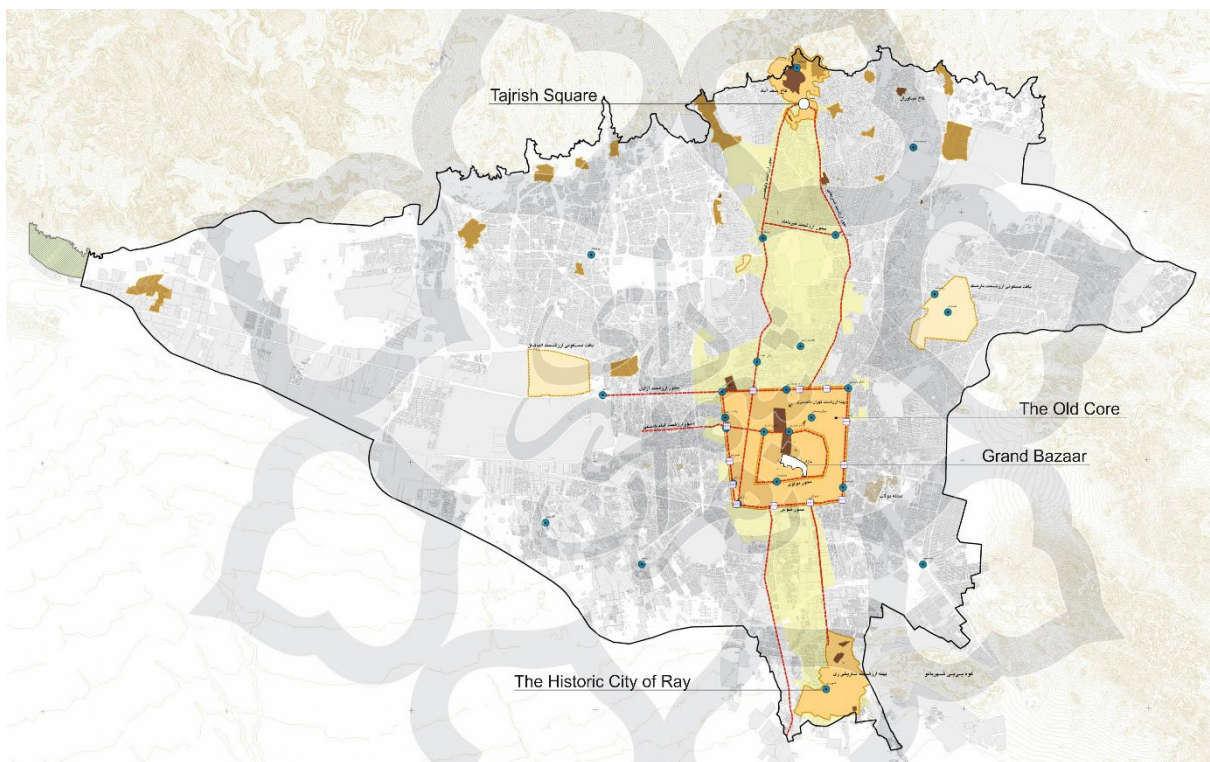
Figure 6-2: Valuable historic and contemporary confines of the city (map courtesy of the Municipality of Region 1)
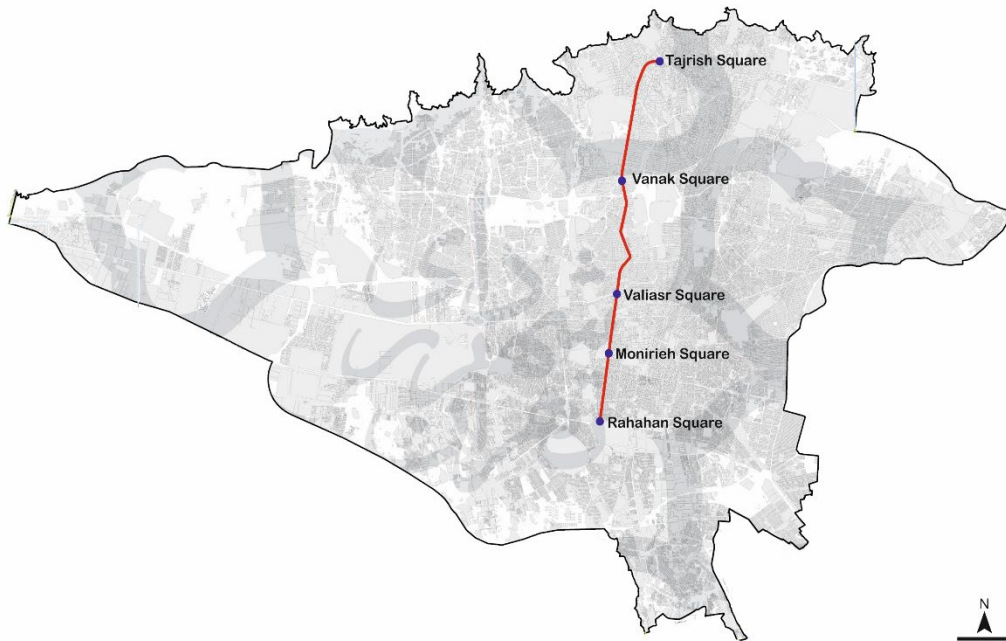
Figure 6-3: Rahahan-Tajrish BRT Line, connecting south to north via Valiasr Street (map produced by author)
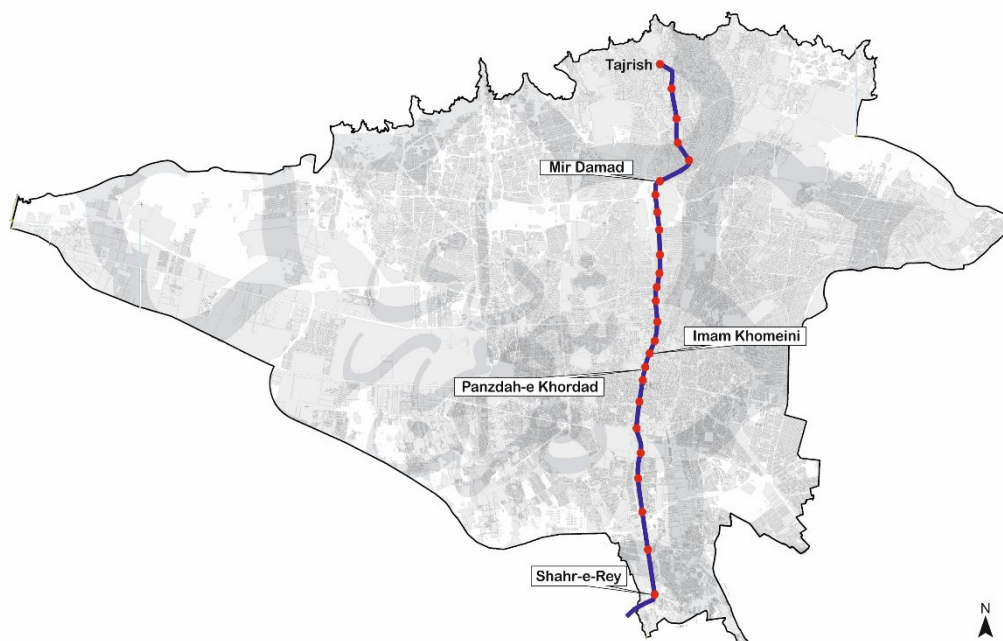
Figure 6-4: Tehran metro Line 1, connecting south to north via 29 stops (map produced by author)
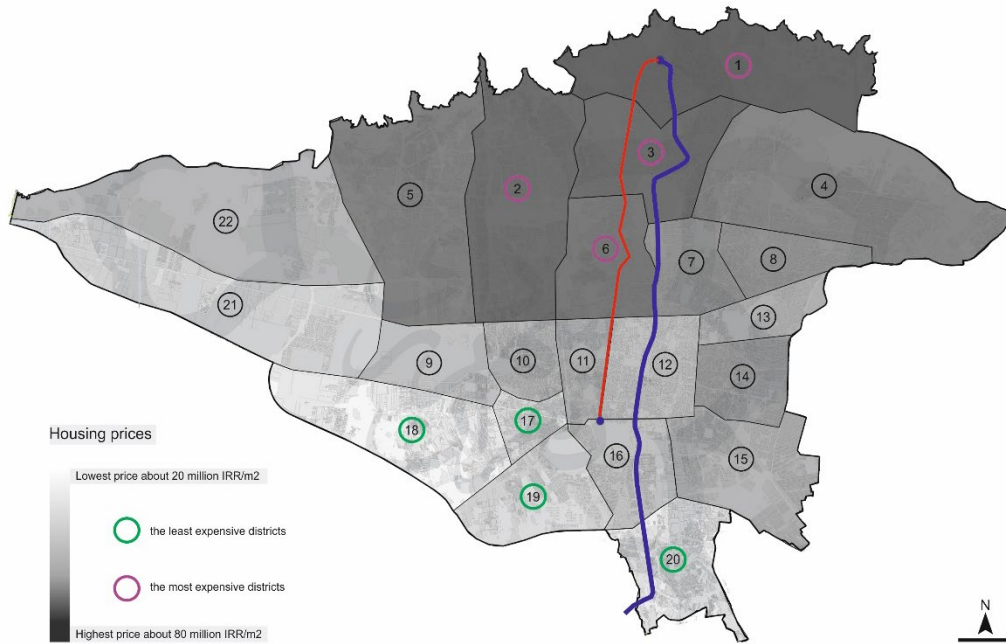
Figure 6-5: Average house prices in Tehran, in 2014, regions where Raahan-Tajrish BRT and Metro Line 1 pass (data layout by Yousefi and Farahni, 2019; map produced by author)

The analysis of the physical layout of the square is based on Sennett's *ville* factors, and considers the narrowness and width of the streets, the alignment of street lines with building lines, and the presence of social clumps. The aim is to discover which parts of the square currently encourages informality. Two visits each of 2-3 weeks were made to the square in the summer and winter of 2017. These visits consisted of time spent there during the early morning, at peak hours, and in late-night walking, driving, shopping, sitting, eating, and accidental/informal talking. It is worth noting that another visit was paid in September 2018, during the Muharram procession, to explore a non-ordinary or extraordinary time in the square as well. Different ways of accessing the square were used, from walking to using a private car, and depending on the time of day or night, all or part of Metro Line 1 and BRT. All the data gathered here were based on non-systematic and unobtrusive observation, as the visits were long enough to detect the main pedestrian fluxes, the current location of major spaces of social exchange, where people stop and spend time, their main destinations, the places from which 'outsiders' enter the area, how they relate to their surroundings and to the kinds of activities that take place in these spaces. The maps used in the visual analysis are courtesy of Tehran Municipality District 1, and were gathered during the first visit in 2017 (see Figures 6-6 and 6-7).
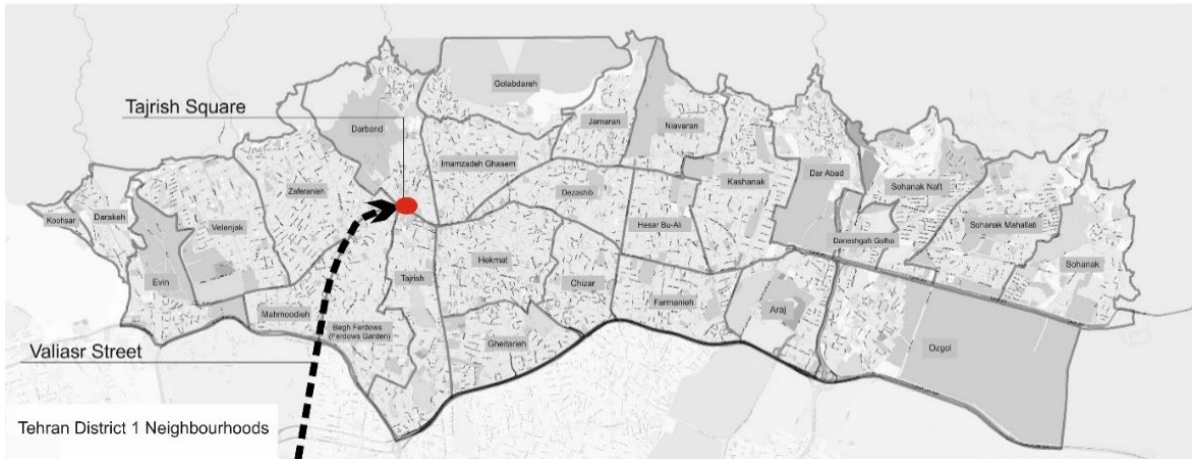
Figure 6-6: Location of Tajrish Square in District 1 (map produced by author)
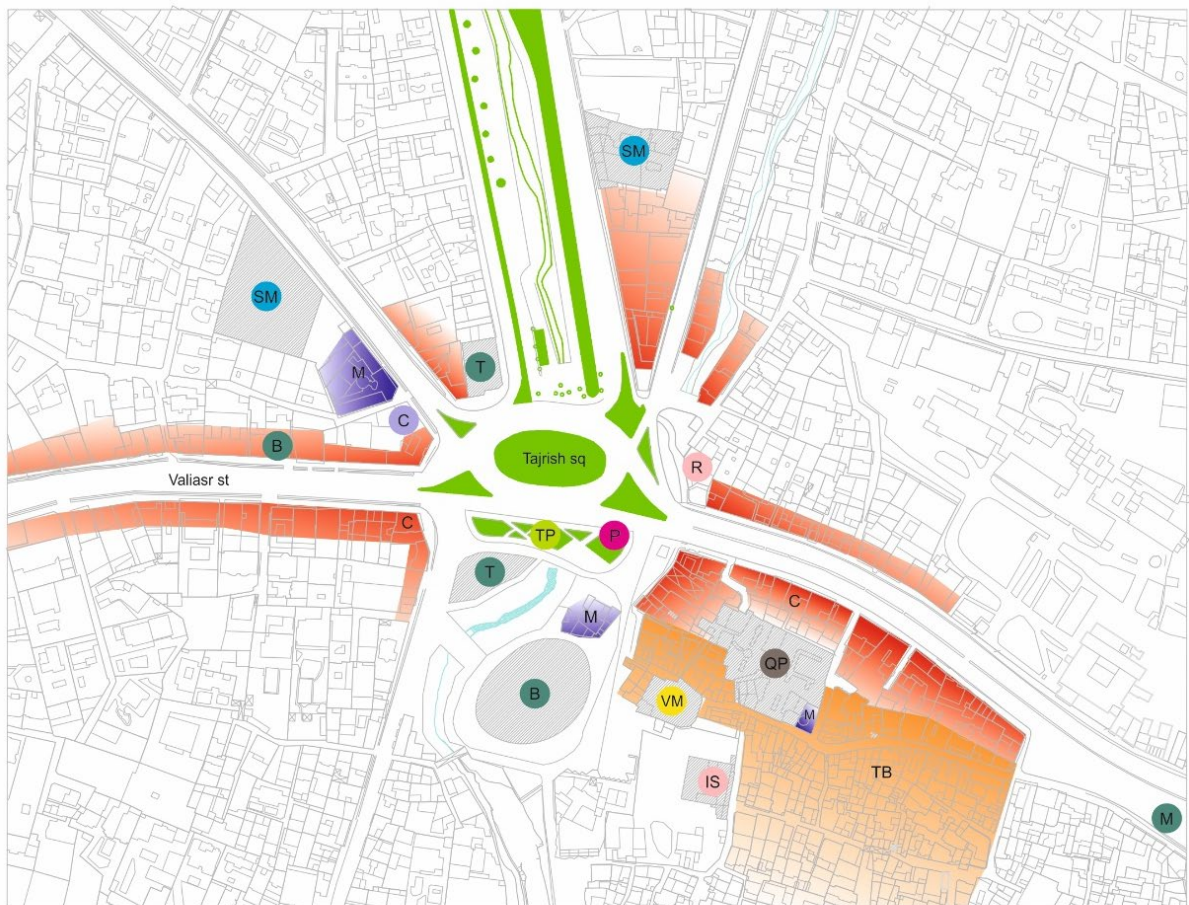
Land Use

TB	Tajrish Bazaar	P	Police Station
IS	Imamzadeh Saleh	SM	Shopping Mall
VM	Vegetable Market	C	Café
QP	Qaem Passage	R	Restaurants
M	Mosque	B	Bus terminal and stations
TP	Tajrish Park	T	Taxi Station
C	Commercial, and other services such as hospital, post, bank and office.	M	Metro Station

Figure 6-7: Land use, Tajrish Square (map produced by author)

As can be seen in Figure 6-7 (Land Use), the metro station and the bus terminal are both located in the southern part of the square. The first place with which metro and bus commuters interact is the old fabric of Tajrish Square (which contains Tajrish Bazaar, the vegetable market and Qaem passage inside the bazaar, as well as Imamzadeh Saleh). The ground-level map shows how these places overlap and permeate one another. The architecture of the bazaar – a two-storey building with brick walls and a glass roof, and ornamented with dark blue tiles on each store front where their names are calligraphed – shape the space in a way that maintains the consistency of details and form. The building is 'porous', as 'there is an open flow between inside and outside, yet the structure retains the shape of its functions and forms' (Sennett, 2018, p.218). In contrast to the sealed-off inner spaces of the luxury shopping malls in the western and northern parts of the square, the high permeability of the structure of the bazaar in the southeast is visible at the edges where it connects with Qaem Passage and Imamzadeh, marked only by a change in the surface, from asphalt to stone (which increases its functional capacity) or changes in the glassed signs (which enhance the potential for new situations) (Figure 6-8).

The time-space of Tajrish bazaar, the vegetable market and Imamzadeh is regulated, since although the labyrinth is accessible at all times, the shops can only open between 9 am and 5 pm. However, regulating the time and space in this part of the square cannot prevent non-regulated activities from happening, from shop owners '*letting poor shop workers sleep inside shops*' - as a 70-year-old shop owner told me in a conversation in 2017 - to hawkers informally selling goods inside the bazaar, in places where the width of the paths exceeds the 4m limit, at cross sections (Figure 6-9). Outside the bazaar, the width of Tajrish Park (the green space in the south of the square) is between 4 and 6 metres and the small rest area in front of the bazaar (where there are four benches) is 20 metres wide; both add another texture to the surface of the square as people use this public space spontaneously - sitting on the grass, benches or kerbs to rest, eating, watching, selling and socialising. Their attention is therefore captured, new associations and interactions are encouraged, and social clumps are created, especially around noon and late at night when policies on pavement use are less rigid, and there are more opportunities to pause, reflect and interact with different objects, people, material and non-material elements (Figure 6-10).
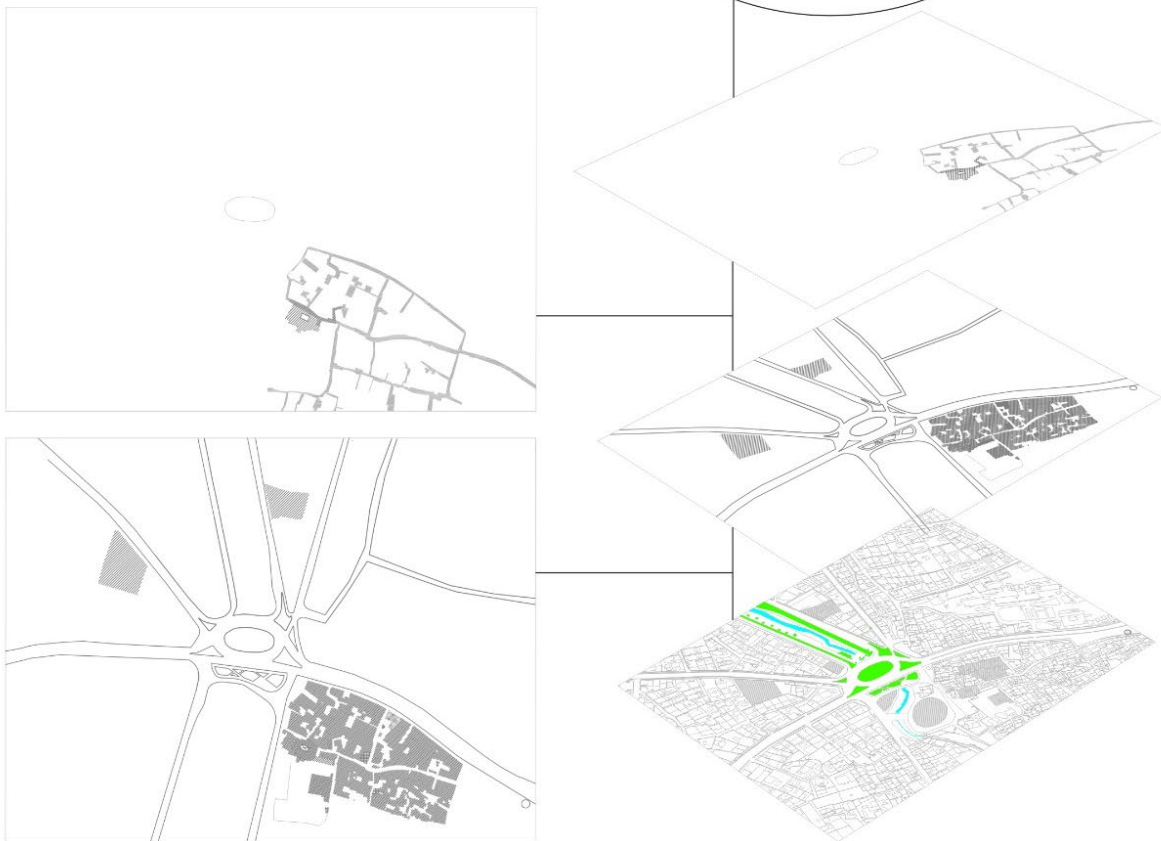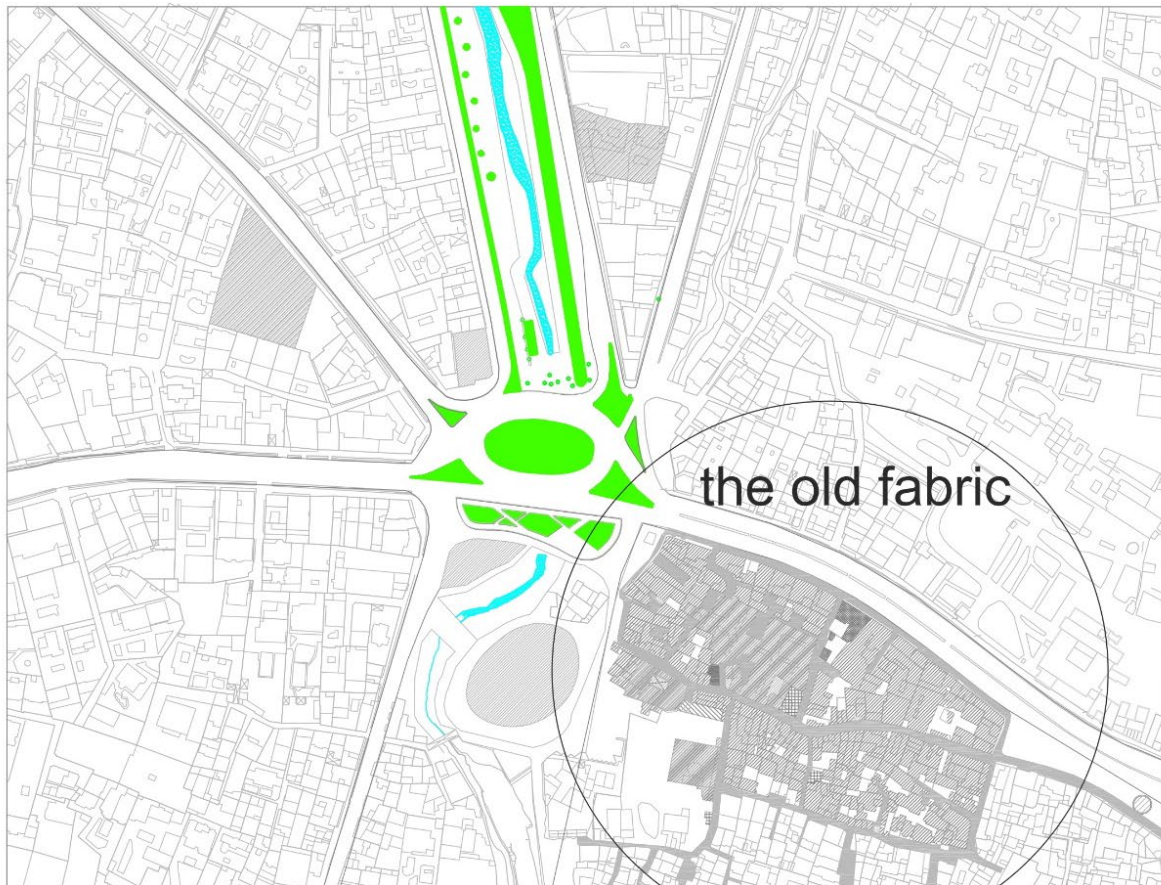
the old fabric

Figure 6-8: Figure-Ground map, showing the permeability of the old fabric (maps produced by author)

Figure 6-9: Narrowness/Width of sidewalks in Tajrish Square (map produced by author)
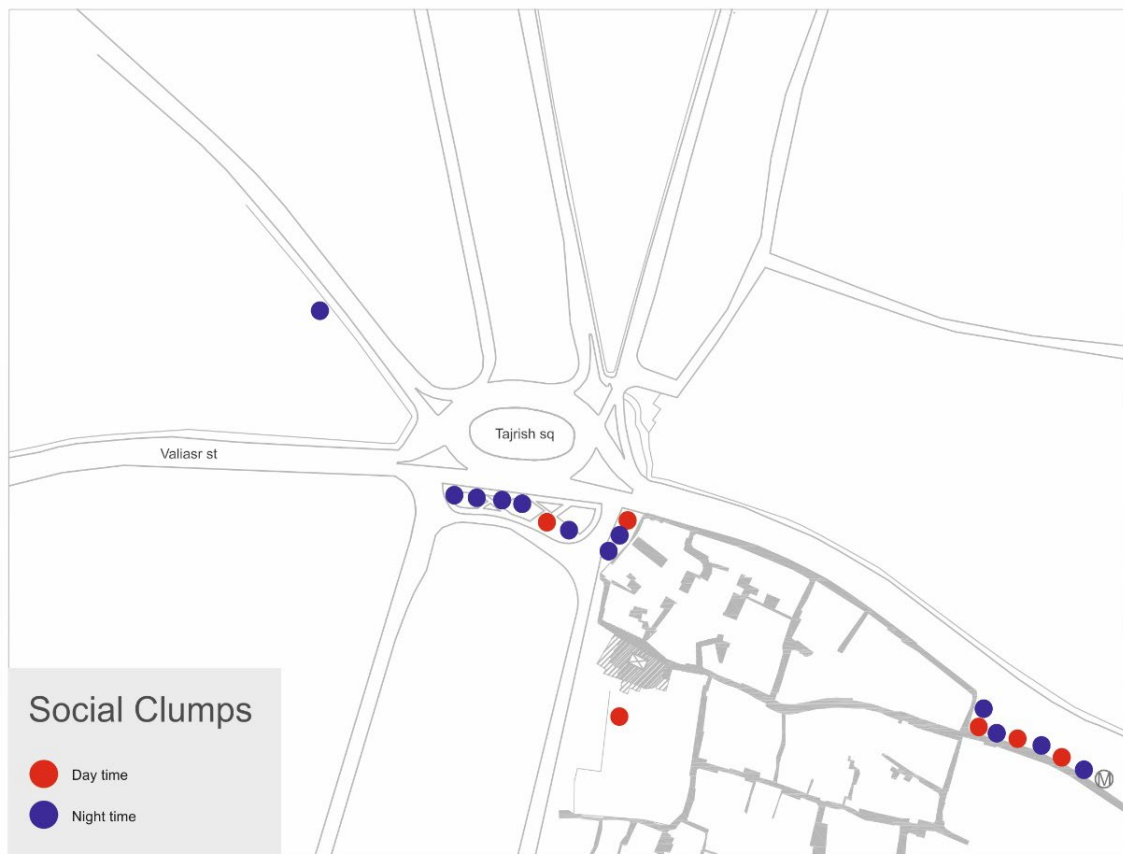
Figure 6-10: Mapping the social clumps in the square (map produced by author)

Another point is related to the alignment of the street line to building lines that can be seen in Figure 6-11, which shows that at street level, the edges of buildings all line up regularly in relation to the sidewalk and roadway. This, according to Sennett (2018, p.57), does not allow the street to leak, so that people feel more crowded. But this crowded feeling cannot always be seen as a positive characteristic. In 2017, a middle aged woman told me in an informal conversation on a bench in front of the bazaar, that '*walking is getting so exhausting in Tajrish since the time the metro station opened here*'. Her complaint was echoed by another woman, who joined the conversation: '*They come from paienshahr (south of Tehran) and change the atmosphere here. Tajrish is not like it used to be anymore*'. So not everybody enjoys the masses of people pressed together on the pavements, the hawkers and other sellers crying '*sale!*', car and motorcycle horns, air pollution and the stink of petrol, different music blaring from different shops, the smell of food everywhere. Many prefer the regulated, quiet and sealed-off indoor spaces of the shopping malls in northern parts; Arg in the northwest and Tandis in the north. In fact, the social dynamic here indicates the intention and attempts of the upper class to separate themselves from poor and lower class people from other neighbourhoods. There are two ten-storey malls filled with luxury Iranian and international brands, both equipped with five underground car-parks. Built on higher ground, the glass architecture of these two giant buildings sits adjacent to the low-rise, old fabric of the southeast. Nonetheless, it is still the architecture of Imamzadeh, with its azure dome and minarets that, like the medieval obelisk, invites one to approach (see Sennett, 1990, p.164).
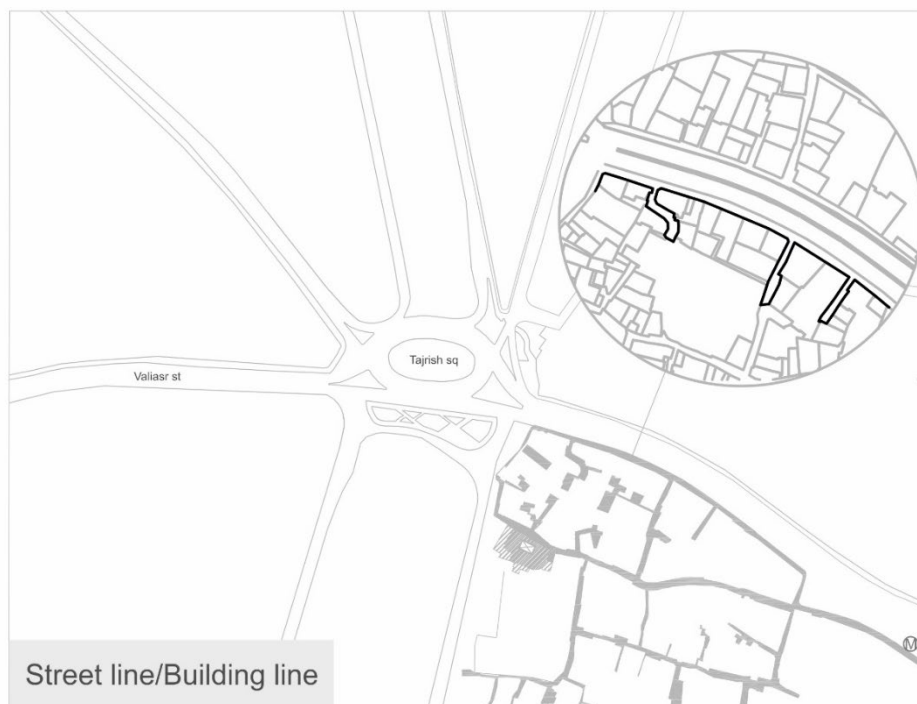
Figure 6-11: The alignment of street line with building lines (map produced by author)

Events are not spontaneous in the northern parts of the square, because everything inside the malls has a fixed definition. In his book, *The Fall of Public Man* (1976), Sennett indicates how the emergence of department stores in mid-nineteenth century Paris and London, created a new world of strangers filled with new mass-produced clothing (which ceased to be an indicator of social status) and goods, through sophisticated techniques of advertising and display. Plate glass windows were a key component of the display techniques. Sennett (2018, p.34) argues that for the first time in 1840s France and Holland, the creation of large plate-glass windows produced a 'commercial theatre' - or what Marx called 'commodity fetishism' - as fixed-size glass sheets encased in iron frames became 'the DNA of the department store', which invited people to stop and stare at the items displayed behind them. Today's malls also manifest features of the city that Sennett might reject – from the prices and the specific places for moving vertically (elevators, escalators and staircases), to the specific, designated places to sit and socialise (such as cafés and restaurants), to the underground parking spaces – they all can be seen as aspects of the closed city, in which form rigidly follows specific function on each floor. But this rigid functionality does not exist in Tehran; there is a level of porosity inside the building since people use its architectural components, such as the car park, for different purposes. Apart from providing a large, safe space for users to park their cars, and creating easy vertical access to different levels of the mall, Tehran mall's underground car park has another function - to bypass the morality police at the mall's main entrance. '*Since teenagers are not allowed to go to Arg without their parents, the best way to get into the mall is through the parking*', said a 16 year-old boy in Ferdows Garden (2017), '*one of us usually watches the gatekeeper and lets us know when is the best time to go in*'. A young girl in a café in Arg shopping mall in 2017 told me '*We are not sure whether or not we will be stopped by morality police at the entrance, as they sometimes check boys and girls relationships, so we usually drive and park the car in the parking and get directly to the café from there*'. Needless to say, the cafés of the luxury malls in north Tehran predominantly attract a particular group of people, from rich housewives to high-income urban professionals, to managerial workers (the so-called knowledge workers), to entrepreneurs and other (well-paid) private sector workers, to cool creative hipsters (see Shaker Ardekani and Rath, 2020, p.130).

6.2. Reading *ville* and *cité* in Tehran

In his book *Building and Dwelling,* Sennett chooses to analyse particular sites and places for their openness and closedness. He calls, for instance [the designed *ville* of] Nehru Place or [the not-designed *ville* of] Kantstrasse open *villes,* which promote open *cités*, but he avoids designating the cities of Delhi or Berlin open cities. In his analysis, he relies on examples taken from diverse architectural and urban projects in different parts of the world, and suggests five design interventions that are necessary for an open *ville*: *Synchronous* (two central [public] spaces), *Punctuated* (monumental and mundane markers), *Porous* (the membrane), *Incomplete* (the shell and the type form), *Multiple* (seed-planning) (Sennett, 2018, p.205). He also indicates that 'there is no one model for open city' (Sennett, 2018, p.235). For him, all five design interventions can take on a variety of shapes, themes and variations as long as they promote mixing and complexities. This means that although he does not directly explore the closedness of non-democratic and totalitarian cities, he leaves open the possibility of applying his theory to those settings. So in Tehran, too, the openness of the city can be studied, not as a whole to create a single clear image for Tehran, but by exploring the case study (Tajrish Square), to show how to detect the openness/closedness of physical layout and social life here (Figure 6-12). It is worth mentioning that Tajrish Square is not entirely a perfect model of what Sennett describes as open *ville*, because 'it did not come into being openly, as a co-production between urbanist and urbanite' (Sennett, 2018, p.301). But, it still serves 'as a *ville* that its forms are open in time' (see Sennett, 2018, p.301). This is similar to Sennett's description of Kanstrasse Street in Berlin; a street that was damaged during the Second World War bombing and for that, its re-construction required quick action and tight control of authorities. Therefore, the slow and deliberate process of co-production cannot be tracked in this street. However, Sennett (2018, p.301) argues that this street is an example of an open *ville* with a complex *cité*, because it gained openness, complexity, and mixture in time. Another reason is that Kanstrasse, like Haussmann's boulevards in Paris, 'has taken a life on its own, independent of its maker's intention'. While Haussmann intention was to make monumental and imposing boulevards, Sennett argues, the forms themselves acquired an agency of their own in time; 'they are not limited to the intention of their original makers'. In Tajrish Square too, as will be described in the following sections, this kind of openness can be addressed, which shows the open *fazay-e kalbadi* (*ville/*the built) of the square is full of character due to its crookedness, markings, irregularities, informalities and porous membrane between its south-east and north-west sides.

Five forms of open ville in Tajrish Square

To read the case study though the lens of open city theory, it is important first to remind oneself of Sennett's five design interventions, as indicated in the literature review, and their impact on opening up the *ville* and *cité*:

A synchronous space is where many things are happening at once, which means planning activities in the centre of a city, where people packed together do many things at the same time. Here, according to Sennett (2018, p.207), the complexity and mixture of social activities promotes a certain bodily behaviour. The 'upright body' is not a submissive urban body, but an urban actor who looks around, hears and makes eye-contact with strangers when standing still. Since the person receives a mass of disconnected impressions, he/she, physically, becomes alert. Secondly, punctuated spaces mark particular places, modestly, as important for orienting people; instead of attempting to guide people through the city by designing big, bold signs, value and boldness can be added to the place through simple designs. These simple moves can be such things as altering the width of the corners of a crossroads to create activities, or designing a quote mark/arbitrary marker, like a plastic bench, which adds value to the environment. Third, a porous space is alive at its edges – for example, a commercial market blends into a big transport hub, and packed housing nearby has porous borders/edges; there is

Figure 6-12: Tajrish square, view from the east looking towards west (Source: Citiestale, 2017)

no visible demarcation or barrier between the two states, but still, that demarcation (edge/border) remains distinct, in such a way that it is the internal relationships that become porous (in the sense of a membrane that is permeable). For Sennett, the physical mixing at these liminal edges is casual, accentuating inclusivity and sociability among people who interact with each other.

Fourth, an incomplete space is not finished all at once but evolves over time. For Sennett, 'architecture is a long-unfolding-labour' (2018, p.228). This is a method that allows maximum flexibility in filling-in the space. Sennett argues that when a piece of architecture works like a shell, it can be completed according to the inhabitants' will. So too in the open space of the city, the idea of a 'shell' refers to the flexibility of functions that allow a public space to evolve according to the will of its users, not just as a shell, but as a type-form as well (Sennett, 2018, p.231). The type-form is related to the flexibility and ability of a form to adapt to variations and new circumstances. A multiple space, similar to a type-form, is repeating and assembling the same form in different circumstances and in different ways. Referred to as seed-planning, this fifth model of open form means scaling up openness in the city through the repetition of 'a generic form, like a street market, in different places and circumstance around the city, and different kinds of street market then evolve' (Sennett, 2018, p.236) as if to leave room for maximum variations and innovations.

Figure 6-13: Tajrish square and Imamzadeh Saleh, view from west looking towards east (Source: Citiestale, 2017)

First and foremost, Tajrish Square can be seen as an example of a synchronous space in which many different events unfold at the same time. What makes Nehru Place an open *ville,* for Sennett, is the open plateau of this street and the fact that it unexpectedly became an open market after the street was paved to create the rooftop for a garage underneath. In the same way, apart from the *Imamzadeh* and bazaar, which have been located in Tajrish Square for some decades, it is the construction of infrastructure for metro Line 1 underground, that in 2012 turned the square into a social setting that not only mixes rich and poor but also promotes unplanned ways of using the pavements (Figures 6-13, 6-14, 6-15, 6-16). In fact, convenient metro and bus access to the square made it easy, even for people from the most southern (poorer) part of the city to pour into the northern (better off) areas and vice versa...[2] '*not that everyone comes to Tajrish for shopping from the old bazaar, as it is still expensive for many, but people come to Tajrish from every corner of Tehran to spend time there and look at it, because Tajrish is beautiful, crowded and full of people and sound at every time of the day and night*', said a young woman in personal conversation with me in the square in the winter of 2017.

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[2] The bus line runs through Vali-e-Asr Street, the longest street in Tehran, south to north throughout the whole city and connects *Meydan-e Rah-ahan* (Railway Square) in the south with the *Tajrish* Square in the north.

Figure 6-14: The main entrance to Tajrish Bazaar in the south of the square (Source: Citiestale, 2017)

Figure 6-15: Tandis shopping mall on the north side of the square, The leisure destination of Darband is located at the foot of the mountain in this photograph (Source: Citiestale, 2017)

Figure 6-16: The relatively empty pavements of Tajrish Park during the day (Source: Citiestale, 2017)

Imamzadeh is dear to many Tehrani people: '*Saleh is the son of the seventh of twelve Shia Imam, therefore he is the direct messenger of prayers to God, whatever you ask in here, you will get your answer'*, said the female gatekeeper of the shrine, in 2017 (Figure 6-17). But the *Imamzadeh* is not just for ritual ceremonies. Since 2015 it has become a mixed-use space, because the Rare Disease Foundation has set up camp (in the form of temporary tents) in its courtyard to provide poor people with appointments and free ultrasonography services during the holy month of Ramadan (Salamat News, 2017). One of the tents also serves as a marriage therapy centre (Figure 6-18). When not used for medical purposes, the tents also become temporary shelter for unemployed labourers to sleep in, from morning Adhan to 9 am. This is the incomplete character of Imamzadeh, in the sense that it can be constantly reconfigured at courtyard level. Sennett (2020, p.9) argues that the mark of a complex, diverse, loose city is that a person can look back and reflect that 'life turned out differently than I expected'. It is as if the design is being used by people beyond what was ordained or prescribed.

Figure 6-17: Casual use of space of shrine by visitors (Source: Citiestale, 2017)

Figure 6-18: Marriage Therapy centre in the courtyard of the shrine (Source: Citiestale, 2017)

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The shrine and Tajrish Bazaar are connected to each other by a narrow pathway. Qaem Passage, a shopping centre, is also connected to Tajrish Bazaar, by no more than a big sign showing the name of the centre and a change in the paving material. In other words, the shrine, bazaar and shopping centre are three separate physical boundaries that permeate each other's space through their overlapping edges. Porosity, for Sennett (2018, p.223) is a concept that values the informal and casual mixing of two states at their edges, instead of gating and isolating them from each other. Instead of forcing the articulation of different states at their edges, a more porous *ville* promotes the engagement of two states with one another, at their edges. Thus, by not marking the change in physical setting from shrine to bazaar, to Qaem Passage, the porosity of the edges allows them to morph into each other to create an open physical space (Figure 6-19).

Figure 6-19: The daily vegetable and fruit market inside bazaar (Source: Citiestale, 2017)

Apart from the shrine, which is a popular destination, both the bazaar and Qaem Passage are main destinations, especially for women and young people, since '*everything is cheaper than in either Tandis or Arg'*, as I was told in 2017 by some women shopping in the bazaar. Qaem

Passage and Tajrish bazaar are connected internally to each other, in such a way that there is no visible demarcation or barrier between these two pieces of architecture. The porosity of the edge between the two boundaries has reduced the distinctiveness of the separation between these two buildings. In Sennett's words, the edges between the Imamzadeh, bazaar and the Qaem Passage, in the same way as a cell's membrane marks its border, are marked only by a change in material, the form and size of the entrance that indicates the transition from one place to another. In other words, it is the internal relationships that become porous (Figure 6-20).

Figure 6-20: Wider intersections inside bazaar (more than 4 metres) (Source: Citiestale, 2017)

An observational vignette

Wearing his dark grey Fedora hat and holding his tobacco pipe at the edge of his lips, the man looks immersed in reading the lines of one of those 'non-censored' books. His grey pants are ironed carefully while his red braces help make his look very prestigious. In front of him, books lie on the ground while a young man, wearing blue ripped jeans and a checked shirt, is adding more books from a box and choosing carefully how to put them next to each other. This is the sidewalk of the southwest part of the square. The bookseller uses the small rectangular street island to sell the books laid out on the ground, every day from 10am to 4pm. He has permission from the Foundation of Martyrs and Veterans Affairs to set up a street library and occupy the pavement with his books – from Napoleon Bonaparte's first love, *Désirée*, to Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy*, to *Farah Pahlavi's Memoir* to Sadegh Hedayat's magnum opus *The Blind Owl*. Together with his younger brother and cousin, whose street-based bookshop is located on the east side of the square, they sell books on the street every day. Close by, the small [Tajrish] park seems empty, occupied only by two vendors, who have come from south Tehran to sell scarves, T-shirts, fruit and other goods. On the other side of the square, the northeast pavement is very smelly and crowded, with restaurants preparing lunch for the crowd sitting on the outdoor seating, a shady place cooled by the misting system. Next to them, at the kerb, four male workers sit on the ground under the shade of a tree to have their 13:00pm lunch: cheese and watermelon. At this moment, the sound of Iranian traditional musical instrument fills the air, entertaining the crowd, as two young (male) musicians, seated on the ground, begin to play. At the same time, a passenger slams a car door while getting out of a taxi; the taxi driver shouts at him and is gone. Trucks and honking taxis, the loud *Azan* (adhan) emanating from *Imamzadeh* Saleh calls prayers to perform *Namaz* in the shrine. A woman said *'I've known these two young boys for years now, they always come here and change the atmosphere with their traditional musical instruments'* (Figures 6-21 and -22).

From the author's personal observation, 2017

Figure 6-21: Street bookselling (Source: Citiestale, 2017)

Figure 6-22: Street musicians (Source: Citiestale, 2017)

At the heart of the bazaar there is a famous *Tekyeh* (ta'zieh performance space) which has been there for more than 220 years. Nowadays, during the month of Muharram only, *Tekyeh* functions as the religious performance area, while for the rest of the year, it is a daily fruit and vegetable market. This change in function is similar to what happens with the marriage therapy centre in the courtyard of the shrine, which can be link with the incompleteness of forms. For Sennett (2018, p.281), when it comes to open systems, a new use does not disable the old use, but makes it more complex. In fact, it is the incompleteness of Tajrish Bazaar and Imamzadeh Saleh that stimulates the buildings around them (Sennett, 2020, p.32). It is as if the existence of one building encourages the growth of other developments around it.

Outside the bazaar, towards the north, four casual concrete benches 'mark' – a term related to punctuated forms – the place in a 'modest way', 'using simple materials and placing markers arbitrarily in order to highlight non-descriptive places' (Sennett, 2018, p.240). '*My dear, I am sitting on the benches in front of the bazaar. When you arrived, just honk (the horn), I will come to you*', said a middle-aged woman with a broken-leg as she talked on the phone. She then described to her daughter the place she should pick her up in her car. She then turned to the stranger next to her and began to talk about her husband, who is in a coma, and cried. At the same time, on the bench next to them, a male tea seller – wandering around selling tea and cappuccino from his small tea-urn – began to discuss the country's current economic difficulties with a young woman who was also in the middle of a discussion with another woman regarding her hair colour for her upcoming visa appointment in the German Embassy. A beggar arrived, sat next to them all, freshened his breath, asked for money, blamed the stinginess of the authorities, clergy and American sanctions against Iran and was gone (Figure 6-23).

This causalness in their interactions with strangers, and such expressivity in public can be seen as examples of the type of 'informal activities' that happen every day and night in the Square. At night, however, the stories change (Figure 6-24). The pavements of the east and south side become an 'economic theatre' as Sennett would say. After 8:00 pm, since there are fewer policemen about, street vendors (young and old men and women), selling books, clothes, food, and other goods occupy such a large portion of the pavements that the passageway between their territories is suitable for only one or two passers-by at a time. The sheer volume of sensory overload is such that many people change their route and walk in the street next to the cars so that they do not have to hear:

'Ladies, I'm selling off all the scarves', only 5000 Toman',

'All shoes are made in Turkey, best price',

'They are selling the same manteaux at three times the price in Tandis and Qaem Passage, I will even give you a discount if you buy one',

'Buy these beautiful roses for your love',…

Although they are temporary, hawkers are able to claim their right to use the public space of an area that is closed to them. As non-wealthy Tehranies have moved to Tajrish Square and mixed with the rich people, tolerance and inclusion are practiced to some degree among the locals. Having said that, it is important to note the reason why their presence is temporary and their inclusion impermanent. '*From time to time the police force us to clear the pavements, usually during the day, since people, especially older ones and shopkeepers, complain about our presence',* said a young male hawker selling shoes, who continued with '*but I have to work until late, because someone needs to feed my family'.* On the other hand, locals also claim that south Tehranies have changed the atmosphere of Tajrish, making it a dangerous place. But Sennett values the existence of danger in the open city; for him Nehru place is the centre at which people gradually learn how to manage complexities, since these sorts of places are not only a festival of 'safe' pleasure, but are also edgy spaces in which safe and dangerous activities can happen together, in the presence of the police. Sennett repudiates the existence of determinist security in the built environment – such as the rhetoric of smart cities, in which everything works in the right place – believing that in order to keeping people engaged and interested, it is important to sow unexpected seeds (the unknown) casually, in the course of mixing with each other (Sennett, 2018, p.197). Referring to Bakhtin's account of the non-linear path of language use in social communication, he believes that environments without any surprises [or as Bakhtin puts it, heteroglossia] will make the urban body passive, while a complex urban setting, full of surprises, will lead people 'to be more open, exchange more freely, feel less uptight and behave less defensively' (Sennett, 2018, p.193).

Figure 6-23: Four benches outside the bazaar's main entrance, next to the main road (Source: Citiestale, 2017)
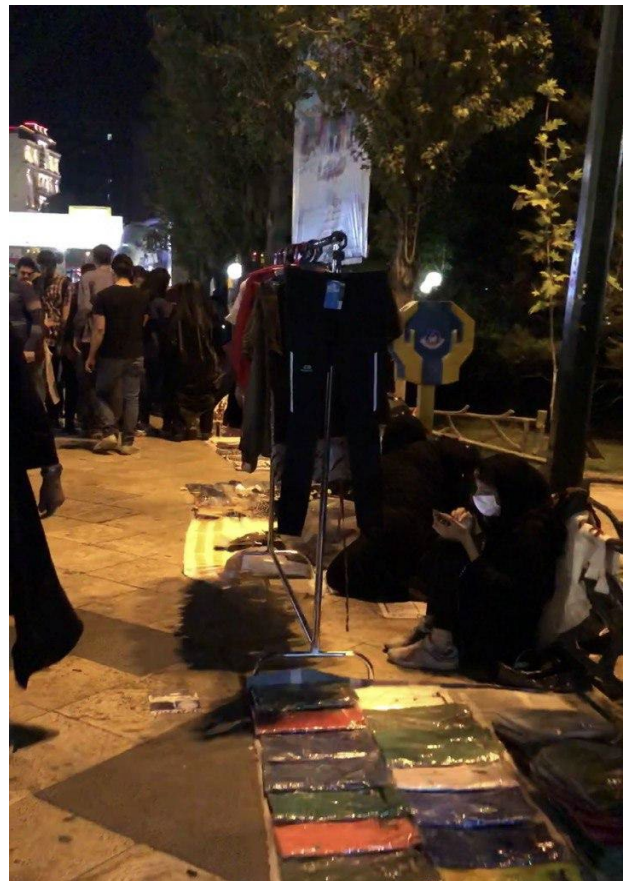
Figure 6-24: The busy pavements of Tajrish Park at night (Source: Citiestale, 2017)

A complex openness/closedness

While Tajrish Square, in terms of synchronicity, incompleteness, porosity, punctuality and multiplicity, can be fitted into the rhetoric of the open city, it is the official mechanism of control (municipal rules, morality police) and non-official forces (locals of the neighbourhood) that challenge the everyday inclusion of the poor. The ideal example of an ordered, formal, clean, safe and luxury setting is built in the western and northern parts. Although the two luxury shopping malls, Arg (on the west) and Tandis (on the north), create an invisible gate/barrier, that like a porous membrane, exclude but also integrate those who are different. According to a female Iranian sociologist, in a personal conversation (2017): *'the west and the east sides of Tajrish Square present two completely different worlds in one society; with the stylish and rich occupying luxury shopping malls (Arg, Tandis), while the rest mingle on the east side. They are seeing each other or even briefly interact, but they never mix together'*. Moreover, the constant presence of the morality police also encourages women and young people to use the '*safe zone*' of the shopping malls: '*every two days, after we drop our kids at school, I come to Arg with my friends to have brunch*' said a young woman, wearing heavy make-up, and a loose hijab. '*Safety is important. When I walk in the street, I do not feel safe, let's say, to wear my Rolex watch, but when I use my car, and then directly come here to sit in a café, I can put my jewelry on'*. Sitting in the roof-top café in Arg shopping mall, with a view of Alborz Mountain, her friend continues, '*Tajrish bazaar is a mess, full of paien-shahris; the metro gives them cheap access to here. At least Arg is clean and quiet, no one is bothering you here'*.[3]

This secluded and exclusive, safe meeting point, far from the morality police or lower class is, according to Sennett (2018, p.77) 'the destruction of outdoor street life prefigures the indoor shopping mall.' It can be said that the rhetoric of both openness and closedness in Sennett's theory are in tight competition on the two sides of this square, with openness evolving in the eastern and southern parts and closedness intensifying on the northern and western sides. It is as if, while the *physical layout* of Tajrish Square, which is open on one side, promotes a complexity of social life, its excluded side creates a social life that rejects mixing, disorder, incompleteness, and variation.

'*The production of space in Tajrish Square is based on appearance and moral codes'*, said a female Iranian sociologist (2017), '*a metro line can mix all Tehran together in Tajrish Square, but the east and west side of the square never mix with each other'*. The complex porosity and

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[3] Paien-Shahri is a general term that refers to those live in the poorer areas of the city in Iran.

openness of Tajrish square shows that porosity in Tehran is not based on design, as the creation of the built environment is largely in the hands of municipalities, state-associated forces, military organisations, or other private individuals with links to other patrons of the city (Figure 6-25). Porosity in Tehran is temporary and is based on the transit of bodies on the move from south to north and from north to south. This transitoriness opens new opportunities and possibilities to transform, express, experience, and de-construct the prefigured codes of identity. One question remains open, however, which is related to the non-physical aspects and relations that can also be effective in creating this informality, disorder, and temporal openness: what is the role of habitual factors here, which are interwoven with the material, social, biological, and cultural in different time-spaces? Is there any specific atmosphere in Tajrish Square that encourages one to travel from south to north Tehran? What are the values and formulations of an Islamic place, such as Imamzadeh, that provide *milieux* in which to unite and commune? The next section therefore discusses the affective qualities and atmosphere of the square in particular, and of Tehran in general, to tune in to less conscious modalities of attention, memory, and perceptions of Tehran.

Figure 6-25: Arg's rooftop cafe (Source: Citiestale, 2017)

6.3. Beyond the physical layout

The non-verbal, non-conscious dimension of experiencing the street is a sort of reengagement with sensation, memory, perception, attention and listening (Blackman and Venn, 2010). Swarming, gathering in groups, walking at different speeds, stopping, running, talking in different tones and pitches, sitting and a whole host of other embodied actions, create multiple images of a given place, that are different at a different times. The so-called 'mood' or

'ambience' of the street, the atmosphere, or the affect of a city, a street, an alley, or a house, are all matters that cannot be grasped just by analysing the solid, physical layout of the street, because they move and flow constantly so that events unfold in space as *a process* (McCormack, 2003). It seems that when Sennett indicates his five design interventions, he formulates the physical layout of the city in a readable and writable way, so that if the formulations work, then the informal and sociable *cité* is achieved. Nevertheless, in one of his design interventions Sennett refers to the psychological aspect of the physical layout, which unlike the other four dimensions – the synchronous, punctuated, incomplete, and multiple – is less tied to the physical place; the porous sound.

Porosity is a phenomenon, an element, a form, a design intervention through which a complex and ambiguous experience of social life develops in cities. Architecture is the first place in which to create porosity, in the form of walls made porous by building techniques such as *percements* of partially solid walls.[4] But porosity can also be seen as a phenomenon that can be found at the edges and in the liminal spaces between two places when boundaries turn into borders 'by the crinkling of the street fabric' or the shaping of 'sociable sounds' (Sennett, 2018, p.227). By crinkling the street fabric he means urban interventions in the streets where two states are separated from each other, such as creating a shopping mall, a cultural centre, a street market, a grocery store, or simply a platform for gathering in the street where two neighbourhoods are segregated from each other based on wealth, class, or ethnicity. By shaping sociable sounds, he means developing sonic borders in the built environment which refer to 'the sounds of a city' (Sennett, 2018, pp.224-7). Sennett argues that sonic borders can be found in informal social spaces such as the garage roof of Nehru Place or in the pedestrian tunnels underneath the Périphérique in Paris, spaces that are filled with 'sociable sounds' (see also Dorean Massey, 1994, p.156, on 'a global sense of place' and Nirmal Puwar, p.2004, on how sound can reconfigure space). This is an affectual quality that can also be found in silence, such as the 'silent walk' protest of the Green Movement in Tehran in 2009, in which the silent steps of the march, combined with the carrying of placards, and the wearing of green headbands, wristbands and scarves, wordlessly communicated dissent from the presidential election result that declared Mahmoud Ahmadinejad the winner. For Sennett, sociable sounds refer to the sociable-sonic function produced by the 'cries' of hawkers on the street, attracting people to

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[4] The Danish architect John Gehl is among the first architects to create a wall membrane or porous wall by working out ways of cutting doors and windows into blank walls, unsealing or smashing through them to create new entrances and windows. In doing so, he makes precise calculations about where and how much to smash in order to bring a street to life (see Sennett, 2018, p.222).

those places and alerting them to activities going on there based on those sounds (Sennett, 2018, pp.226-7). This means that this porous sound can only be found in places that are defined as porous in the first place, such as the space 'between porous buildings' or at the 'borders between two states' and that it exists somewhere in-between intense and intelligible (recognisable) sound (Sennett, 2018, p.224).[5] The argument here, however, is that based on habitual factors related to historical context, memory, and aesthetic perceptions - different sites, scenes, and episodes of social life can awaken conscious and unconscious sense-impressions and actions in such a way as to extend the body's potential for engaging the new - and that consequently change and creativity.

Ordinary

In order to understand the affective and tactile dimensions more deeply, attention can be paid to the rhythmical orders, patterns, and re-occurring sequences happening every day in the streets, squares and other public spaces. This is similar to Lefebvre's rhythmanalysis of the city, which was based on his overview of the street from a window, watching the intense experiences of living down in the streets. Looking down, while he could see the streetscape, he could also see the movements of bodies and traffic and hear the sounds of the city. Therefore, it can be said that in the course of a day it is possible to follow the movements of individuals or groups to get an impression of the rhythmical patterns of traffic flows and intensities. In fact, many use Lefebvre's rhythmanalysis as methodology, to understand the pulse and life of the city and elaborate the small details of 'chronic' everyday life, both evental and contextual. [6] However, the aim here is not to incorporate his rhythmanalysis as methodology because of its complexity or its 'lack of obvious methods to document rhythm in the urban fabric' (Koch and Sand, 2009, p.68). The focus here is on 'how life takes shape and gains expression in shared experiences, everyday routines, fleeting encounters, embodied movements, precognitive triggers, practical skills, affective intensities, enduring urgencies, unexceptional interactions

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[5] This in-betweenness is an important factor in creating porosity. Being 'in-between' means this-nor-that, here-nor-there, one thing-not-the-other, which according to Turner (1977, p.37) is a liminal phase. Liminal phases for Sennett occur 'at the limits of control, limits which permit the appearance of things, acts, and persons unforeseen, yet focused and sited' (Sennett, 2006, p.6).

[6] Linear rhythms are chronic, referring to the ticking clock, the laying out and measuring of the time of work and leisure, and produce the same equal intervals. While the cyclical relates to the cosmic, the vital and the biological, a returning or beginning again (Lefebvre and Regulier, 2004).

and sensuous dispositions' (Lorimer, 2005, p.84). This is to say that instead of using a processual method, the attempt is to increase engagement with the sensuousness of practices by exploring ordinary and 'mundane practices, that shape the conduct of human beings towards others and themselves in particular sites' (Thrift, 1997, p.127). Nonetheless, within the sociopolitical context of Tehran and other totalitarian cities, any site of study, from public to quasi-public to private space, is subject to surveillance, regulation, and order, which creates a picture contrary to Sennett's ideal open city, where regardless of political context, co-existence and mixing are practiced. This research, therefore, engages with the intensity of practices within the sociopolitical context of Tehran, by exploring ordinary and 'mundane practices, that shape the conduct of human beings towards others and themselves' (Thrift, 1997, p.127) in public spaces such as streets, quasi-public spaces such as cafés and [gendered] private spaces such as women-only bra shops. The attempt is to find in Tehran 'places full of time', and 'narrative spaces' that, according to Sennett (1990, p.194), disrupt the linear rhythm, order, systematic regulation and sequence of the city.

In of Tehran's public space, for instance in the large and crowded squares of the city, any appearance, behaviour or presence must follow a pattern consisting of bans and permissions (Amir-Ebrahimi, 2006). Especially at the precise moments at which the morality police are installed in public spaces, all [bad-hijab] women must fix their hijab, girls and boys distance themselves, and laughter and loud voices must be controlled (Amir-Ebrahimi, 2006, p.4). While all these disciplinary and controlling measures are used by families and neighbourhoods in more traditional districts of Tehran,[7] the morality police are mostly installed in the most modern parts of the city (Amir-Ebrahimi, 2006). How then do bodies and temporalities play out in the street, in the highly controlled and ordered public space of Tehran? Here, Sennett's notion of 'street-smarts' can be helpful to understand the movement of bodies and temporalities on the regulated streets of Tehran.

'Street-smarts', in fact, are cautionary gestures, or knowing how to behave instantly, in the environment in which one lives (Sennett, 2018, pp.172-75). The phrase refers to the instinctive

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[7] This is another contradictory image to the western context. In her book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, published in 1961, Jane Jacob advocates 'neighbourliness' as a kind of DNA of street life, arguing that the 'local control' or 'the eyes on the street' in West Village New York is creating safe streets (See also Sennett, 2018, pp.78,83). Whereas in the context of Tehran and within the small-scale traditional neighbourhoods where most people are known by others, local control and the eyes on the street of neighbours and family members remove 'the space of anonymity' and 'freedom' by controlling and judging every movement of women and youth (Amir-Ebrahimi, 2006, p.4).

and swift response time in which the mind calculates and ultimately learns how to navigate variable and often 'heavy' weather – the weather that invites trouble. As a result of street smarts, Sennett argues, this instant behaviour is ingrained, when sniffing out trouble, into the domain of tacit knowledge as 'something a person knows how to do without self-consciously thinking about what he or she is doing'. Following the psychologist William James and the philosopher Henri Bergson, Sennett claims that awareness of context 'is a matter of sensing the physical circumstances within which we are thinking' (Sennett, 2018, p.175). For him, these ways of using space develop 'embodied knowledge' which is framed, conceptually, by street-smarts. So too in Tehran, this sort of embodied knowledge can be seen when the appearance of a female walker, for instance, does not follow the Islamic dress code, so that she is constantly/consciously *sniffing out* (Sennett, 2018, p.176) the morality police – either seeing the green van or sensing its presence from other women's bodily gestures – and then unconsciously changing the rhythm of her walk, her bodily gestures, the tone of her voice, the way she looks around. This is 'situated activity' which is not tied to the physical layout, but to history and the memory that women have, since the revolution, of the morality police. They know that the encounter between themselves and the morality police is an 'orchestrated' moment of embodied interaction, as Goodwin (2006, p.7) would argue, which includes debating, fighting, and ultimately being hand-cuffed and having to sit inside the van. It is orchestrated because it is based on the political climate of the country in which these patterned practices are planned and organised by police, so that the pattern of their activity changes every four years before the presidential election:

* * *

A social vignette

"*Gasht-e Ershad scene*"

"Brother! Brother! Sir! Brother! What's wrong?" a man said loudly, while coming out of a glassed office tower, running towards the crowd after hearing their noise. Wearing a navy suit and pants, his collarless blue shirt was fully buttoned to the top, his beard shaved in '*Basiji beard*' style; his appearance is identical, he is pro-regime (Figure 6-26).

"There is no problem, Haj Agha!", the male police officer replied.

The morality police van has parked with its door open, the male police officer guiding and observing the female police officer who wears a black chador, who pulls the 'bad-hijab' woman's wrist, trying to take her inside the van. The woman, with her curly light brown hair out of her scarf, is wearing a manteau that is open in front to show her black t-shirt underneath, while her face is covered with make-up. She is carrying a couple of shopping bags, and argues, pulling her body back, and refusing to get into the van. The crowd surrounds her to back her up. A funny, happy background music adds to the scene:

"There is no problem? How come? When you are pulling this poor lady's hand like this" the man said and continued, "did you give her a verbal warning first?"

Figure 6-26: Gasht-e Ershad Scene, *Marmooz* (Source: Aparat, 2018)

" Haj Agh, no! They just attacked me" the bad-hijab woman said. The camera is getting a close-up of their interaction, so that the angry faces of men and women around them is clear.

"You didn't?" asked the navy suit man while smiling at the police officer, shaking his head as if the police officer did something wrong. "You didn't give her a verbal warning first"?

"Haj Agha! Look at her, her hair is out," said the male police officer.

"How on earth can this poor lady cover her hair while her hands are full", the navy suit man takes the shopping bags from her, passing them to the male police officer, and tells him "pull out your gun now." The police officer could not pull out his gun, so the man told him "Huh! You see what's wrong now?" and then continued, without looking at the women. "Pull your scarf forward and cover those fiery curls underneath". The woman covered her curls immediately.

"See!" the man told the male police officer, "Do you want something better than this?" and took him to one side, whispering in his ear, "Why are you making a scene? We are in election time… this is not the right time to do these sorts of activities. It all should happen after the election. Each of these count as one vote. We have to encourage them to vote."

From the movie, *Marmooz* (2018), directed by Kamal Tabrizi.

* * *

But, even though, like urban furniture, the identical vans of the morality police occupy the main squares and shopping mall entrances, the problem of knowing about them is not one of clear-cut embodied knowledge, as Sennett suggests, which can be related to sensing and navigating the built environment, because they do not necessarily articulate recognisable and readable patterns. This is intimately related to the inconsistent relationship that people, especially women, have with the morality police. Since their emergence in 2005, in the form of the "Social Security Advancement Plan" under the banner of the "Comprehensive Plan of Chastity", they have implemented conflicting policies regarding the hijab. The street scene, the rhythm of the city, and the ways public spaces are used can all be different, depending on whether the police decide to relax hijab policies or intensify them. Although specific periods, referring to extraordinary times, are identical, as a freer atmosphere fills the air, women learn to develop

different tactics, such as 'velvet transgression', to vary the patterns of their dress codes in different contexts, from their homes to the streets, universities, shopping centres and cafés.

Velvet transgression refers to the fashion techniques that women in Tehran use to subvert compulsory hijab-wearing into something that stands in-between full-hijab (black chador) and no-hijab (see Amir-Ebrahimi, 2006). The *new-hijab*, which emerged during the reformation era, was women's new interpretation of hijab, to re-signify and re-materialise the ideal Islamic dress code in different private, public, and semi-public/semi-private spaces. For instance, fashionable religious girls turned to new 'Islamic chador' in the streets and universities; a non-conventional veil, with two holes for hands that leave the front loose and open. Middle class and non-religious women also began to pull back their scarf and *maqnae* (Islamic scarf), wear make-up, and polish their nail with bright colours in the streets and universities. So wearing proper/improper hijab became an embodied action, bound up with Islamic discourse to some degree, but mainly bound to political discourse associated with specific political activities in different times. Today, however, this new hijab can be counted as a situated activity that unconsciously engages [female]bodies, memories, feelings and energies. This is because it was developed through the exterior practice of transforming the hijab, until the quality of being a bad-hijab woman regulated and governed one's behaviour without conscious deliberation (see Bourdieu's habitus, in Mahmood, 2001, p.216) (Figures 6-27).

Figure 6-27*: New Hijab, 'Humans of New York' photographer finds humans of Iran (Source: Human of New York, 2012)

But still, the new hijab has different codes at different time and in different spaces, from public space to quasi-public spaces to [gendered] private spaces in Tehran. This in turn impacts differently on the texture of practices associated with these spaces. In the quasi-public space of cafés, for instance – where loud western music is usually played, and different smells, from

coffee, to perfume, to cigarette smoke fill the dark and dim interior space – the feel and patterning of bodies in action can be conveyed differently from those in the street. There is a level of freedom for a [public] 'performance of the self' (Susman, 1979, p.221) here that is related to how people present themselves through their appearance, gestures and bodily demeanour, related to clothing, tone of speech, manner, posture and decoration of bodies (Featherstone, 2010). Either in same-sex groups or among opposite sexes, it is mostly [upper] middle class men and women that occupy cafés. Personal appearance – and especially women's appearance, with heavy make-up, loose scarves, colourful open manteaus, adornment, tattoos and piercings – creates an [outer] body image that in combination with the movement, control of the body, face-to-face interaction, preservation of self and 'management of impression' (Goffman, 1972, in Featherstone, 1991, p.171) re-formulates the quality of Islamic/non-Islamic moral codes indoors. The flow of different activities, from office work to business meetings, to educational workshops, to music rehearsals, to chatting with the opposite sex, alongside the 'non-verbal communications' (Featherstone, 1991, p.190) transmitted by facial expressions that suggest flirtation, to different tones of talking, laughing and whispering, and specific [male/female] bodily gestures in different sitting positions, all indicate greater bodily consciousness and self-scrutiny in public life (Featherstone, 1991, p.189).

This complexity can also be found in the Islamic and moral messages regarding women's dress code that appears on the boards or papers just inside cafés. The message '*Observing Islamic Hijab Is Mandatory in This Place*' is usually written on aluminium stands, or signs, or paper or any other medium and is installed at café entrances to warn women about their appearance (Figure 6-28).

Instead of functioning as a guide to proper Islamic behaviour, these paper signs operate like street smarts, because in reality they usually connote that the place is safe for loosening the hijab, as the morality police do not physically appear in the café: '*I've heard they are now applying CCTV inside some coffee shops, but I still come to café because I can do what I want, like smoking cigarette, meet with boys and relaxing my hijab*', said a young girl in personal conversation with me in Vanak Square, in 2017. '*Balashahr cafés are really expensive because they are paying extra money to stop police from inspections, so we are not bothered by the morality police here*' said a young man inside a rooftop café, in 2017. Sennett (2018, p.177) indicates that once street-smarts have been taken in and re-embodied in tacit behaviours, they include the capacity understanding the details of the environment though 'clue-reading'. In Tehran, this clue-reading has a complex influence on affective quality and embodied actions.

Figure 6-28: The sign of 'Observing Islamic Hijab IS Mandatory in This Place' in a café in Tajrish Square (Source: Citiestale, 2017)

<p align="center">* * *</p>

A social vignette from a Tehran café

"The sign 'Observe Islamic manners' is decorative: Serving Alcoholic Beverages and Industrial Narcotics in Cafes!"

"After a week of going to one of the coffee shops around the University of Tehran, I went into some other coffee shops around the main and central streets of Tehran to prepare a report. I recognized the coffee shop from the blackboard that was placed as a sign in front of the door…. As I was about to go in, a Western newspaper, crumpled behind the coffee shop window caught my eyes. It was something about World War II… I should have guessed what is going on inside…"

"Inside was so full that I hardly could find a place to sit. Moments later, the waiter, a young boy, came to my table. I still cannot forget his necklace, a cross which without exaggeration

was perhaps the size of a brick…The waiter greeted me in a thin voice and put the list of drinks on the table and left. The space was so dark that I could not easily look at the list, so I had to use the halogen light on a painting which was called: *A Woman Who Had Left Herself in the Wind*. From the painting, I realized that human dignity is not preserved in this place, and it became clear to me when I looked around and saw that there was no modesty or hijab in the coffee shop. Moral values were constantly trampled on by girls and boys here. I even heard from others' conversation that this coffee shop has a secret list for particular times of day, when alcoholic beverages and sometimes traditional drugs are also served. I changed my place to the other side of the table to see others behind me as well, but the other side was exactly the same, with the slight difference that girls and boys used pipes instead of cigarettes and the waiter was constantly offering them different kinds of tobacco. I was shocked! The girls were as inclined to smoke as if they didn't want to become pregnant or have children in the future… even the music that was playing in the air was by a sung by a woman in English, and I gathered that it was probably a famous song because everyone was singing with her… I left the café, tired of all the shameless boys and girls who, instead of spending it in universities, spend their time in these creepy places, designed according to Western values."

From Student News Agency" A Report on the Situation of Cafés around Tehran's Universities / Part II, 2014 (translated by the author).

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Having explored how bodies and temporalities play out in the disciplined and controlled environments of public space (in streets and in the presence of morality police) and quasi-public spaces (inside cafés and in the absence of the morality police), this section explores the temporalities of small-scale, ordinary gendered private space in the city of Tehran. The aim is to show that while the authorities create gendered spaces as segregated sites associated with a set of prefigured activities inside and outside, the combination of the flow of situated activities, talk, energies, physical objects, mise en scènes, smells, touching and homosexual gestures, create different spatial arrangements beyond the control of authorities.

Inside the boundaries of women-only spaces – such as traditional *hammam*, women-only parks, or bra shops in the streets and shopping malls – the bodily gestures of clothed and naked females create signs of mutual trust and acts of deep bonding, which according to Najmabadi (1993, p.489) provide a space for the development of a 'female-specific language,' that is

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'openly sexual', with words possessing 'vast, multi-layered culturally scripted erotic meaning'. Sennett (1994) also refers to the *Ancient Greek Adonia Festival* as an informal festival in which women exhibited homosexual activities. These unofficial extraordinary events were not formally recognised, scheduled, supervised or financed by the government, as they were 'as informal in organization as spontaneous in feeling' (Sennett, 1994, p.77). The similarity here is in the intensity and energy that is produced inside these women-only places that leads to particular types of actions, varying from engagement in social and political conversations to temporary homosexual pleasures among women. This in turn challenges the authorities' production of homogeneous Islamic space and disciplined bodies, or space as a container of homogeneous and synchronous relations – which according to Lefebvre's (1991) notion of the 'representation of space', can be planned, controlled and ordered – and the body as a fixed component of humanity, which can be disciplined and controlled (Foucault, 1977). However, produced spaces still contain a 'complexity of networks, links, exchanges, connections from the intimate level of our daily lives' (Massey, 2009, p.17), which is to say that the characteristics of these spaces, in general, are based on multiplicity – in the sense of the simultaneous coexistence of more than one thing – produced out of the establishment or refusal of relations. Spaces are therefore always 'under-construction', because relations are still to be made, or unmade, or re-made.

In the case of bra shops in Tehran, for instance, the aim is to create a space, behind a private boundary, dedicated to women within the public space of the city. However, apart from top-down rules and regulations, these spaces remain full of social rules and customary ways of interaction and relaxation. For example, in shopping centres bra shops are usually located in one place, such as Qaem Passage in Tajrish Square, but the edges between inside and outside are more rigidly defined at their boundaries with the street, so as not to allow any men to enter. In the heat of summer, their boundaries are less rigidly defined, because instead of the door, there is just a curtain, which becomes the main barrier between inside and outside. However rigidly or flexibly marked, the boundaries between the women-only space of the shop and the mixed-gender public space outside can be blurred easily and become permeable and porous enough 'to expose the improperly dressed women to those on the street' (Aghdasifar, 2021, p.5). The constant opening and closing of the front door at times when the inside is busy, especially at weekends, contradicts the master image of disciplined female bodies in the Islamic space of Tehran, as women feel free to unbuttoned their manteaus, and remove chadors and headscarves, while an informal reciprocal arrangement is created among those on either side

of the bra shop's edges; for example, between those inside the shop and the men who wait outside, either to get a glimpse of what is happening inside or to engage in conversation with their partner inside about choosing the style or to discuss the price. This is to say that exploring the unnoticed aspects of everyday interpersonal interactions inside women-only spaces in Tehran shows how animated and enlivening these gendered private spaces can be.

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A sensory vignette

Homosociality and the communal bra shop in Tehran

"Once in the fitting room, women's bodies remain in constant contact as they bump into one another while struggling out of shirts and bras. Occasionally, a woman or two help another who is struggling to unhook her bra alone. In the contained space of the fitting room there is almost always a mix of heavy perfumes, traces of cigarette smoke, scented shampoos, and, especially in summers, natural bodily odours which surge once undressed. The interactions between women here are varied: sometimes there is boisterous laughter as women crack jokes about the dismal state of their current bra, or talk of how much larger or smaller their breasts have become after weight changes. During summer months there is a constant buzz about the heat or the insufficiency of the shop's air conditioning. Sometimes women are quiet or appear tired, and sometimes they are too focused on their own children or grandchildren accompanying them to make conversation with other women. These conversations are interrupted once a store employee enters the fitting room. The employee asks each woman two questions: what kind of bra she wants and whether she requires an underwire. Women give a variety of answers to the first question which fall into three basic categories: requesting particular shapes or degree of lift, requesting specific needs (ease of unhooking, wide straps, something "pretty," etc.), and, most of all, requesting comfort, either overall or in particular areas (e.g. desiring more comfort in the band or in the cup). Once a customer answers, the fitter looks at the customer's chest, silently assessing the woman's size, and then working from memory yells out a bra style and size to another employee working outside the fitting rooms. This second employee fetches the requested bras for the fitter who then passes them out to customers to try on. The most intentional moments of physical contact in the shop happen

here: as women try on their bras, the fitter also works to adjust breast position in bra cups, correct strap length and position on shoulders, shows the customer which set of hooks to use, and sometimes pulls on the band across the side of a woman's torso to check for a proper fit."

From '*Rhythms of the banal: tracing homosociality in Iranian bra shops*', by Tahereh Aghdasifar (2021)

* * *

Extraordinary

Apart from ordinary, mundane and everyday practices and events that encourage momentary openness about using public, quasi-public, and private spaces in the city in ways other than those specified by top-down order and regulations, there are some extraordinary times and spaces that can facilitate temporary openness within the sociopolitical context of Tehran as well. Here, official seasonal events, such as Nowruz celebration,[8] Ramadan Holy month,[9] and Muharram[10] are among the popular and religious festivals and processions in which space and time are re-ordered, hierarchical distinctions, norms and the prohibitions of usual life are suspended, established orders dis-ordered and individuals become part of the people's mass body (Bakhtin, 1984, in Johansson and Kociatkiewicz, 2011). These annual collective effervescences can be interpreted as much according to Durkheim's as Bakhtin's concept of carnival, to show how the whole Islamised city annually turns 'upside-down' for a designated period of time. As Durkheim indicates: 'the division into days, weeks, months, years, etc. corresponds to the recurrence of rites, festivals, and public ceremonies at regular intervals. A calendar expresses the rhythm of collective activity while ensuring that regularity' (Durkheim 1995 [1912], p.10). But some extraordinary official events, such as the Muharram procession, release both a positive and a disruptive potential that is usually difficult for those in power to harness.

During Muharram and especially on Ashura day, 'collective life could attain its maximum intensity and power' (Durkheim, 1995 [1912], p.217). On this day, the morality police are eliminated from the public scene and instead Karbala narratives are recited in all the main streets, Imamzadehs and mosques of the city in a dramatic and deeply emotional style. Tajrish

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[8] Nowruz is the Iranian spring celebration of the New Year, which begins at the exact day, hour and minute of the spring equinox, when night and day are of equal length (British Council, 2021).
[9] Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar in which Muslims around the world stop eating, drinking, or smoking between sunrise and sunset (Rahmani, 2020).
[10] Muharram is the first month of the Islamic calendar, in which people pour into the streets to watch masculine performances of '*Hussain followers*' on the tenth day, which is called *Ashura*.

Imamzadeh and the Bazaar's Tekye are among the major spots that attract people from all over the city. In turn, 'group solidarity', 'collective identity and symbols of community' proliferate among the participants and audiences (Niekrenz, 2014, p.644). Participants perform *ta'ziyeh* (a passion play), *Zanjir-zani* (swinging chains on the back), and chest beating to fill the atmosphere with order, vitality, unity, collectiveness, melancholy and sacredness. But at the same time, a different set of practices, such as 'Hussain party', 'Muharram's fashion', 'Muharram's make-up', and 'night make-up' add chaos, diversity, individualisation, happiness, and profanity to the procession's atmosphere.

<p style="text-align:center">* * *</p>

Social Vignette

"Big Street Party; A vulgar show on 'Sham-i Ghariban' in Mirdamad Street"

On 25 February 2005, while millions of Iranians mourned the martyrs of Karbala in *Sham-i Ghariban* night, almost 500 young boys and girls poured into Mohseni Square and Mirdamad Street in Tehran, lit candles, whistled and clapped and cheered. Calling them 'improvident', the Islamic Republic Newspaper wrote: '*In this vulgar ceremony, which was more like a big street party, badly hijabed or unveiled girls and women in obscene and tight clothes with lace scarves, alongside bums and irresponsible boys with western style clothing ridiculed and insulted the beliefs and sanctities of Muslims in the most blatant manner on 'Sham-i Ghariban'* (Islamic Republic Newspaper, 2005, in Deutsche Welle, 2014). Instead of scattering them, the police closed four streets in this well-off neighbourhood of Tehran, all reaching to Mohseni Square including Mirdamad Street, from 6:00 pm (the dawn of Ashura day) until 12:00 am so that the crowd started to reduce gradually. By 7:00 pm, the report says, the crowds in the square increased as others joined, informed of the gathering by mobile phone. While on the east side of the square, religious people were mourning in the *Maktab Al-Shohada* heyat, non-religious girls and boys began to form groups of three to four, inviting each other to have ice-cream and crisps, while sitting casually on the ground, clapping, singing, and talking with the opposite sex. Suggesting that 'most of these women were street-women (prostitutes) and mannequins, gathering there only for public visibility', the report criticised youth for their belief that 'a true mourning should be a happy one' (Panahi Fard, 2005, in Islamic Republic Newspaper, 2005). Criticising the police for their lack of tactical action, the report ends by reminding the reader that the aim of these annual religious processions is to fill the atmosphere with the memory of

Hussain, not to put 'public security' at risk (Islamic Republic Newspaper, 2005, in *Cloob*.com, 2010) (Figure 6-29).

Figure 6-29: "Youth and the Overt and Covert Fringes of 'Sham-i Ghariban" (Source: Deutsche Welle, 2014)

From Islamic Republic Newspaper, 23 February 2005 (translated by the author)

* * *

When the city is lived in the extraordinary temporal rhythms of activities and people, ordinary urban places are reappropriated for temporary use and the space reconfigured for alternative activities outside the everyday realm (Crang, 2001, in Johansson and Kociatkiewicz, 2011). These moments, in which the normative social structure and order of everyday life is dissolved, develop into a kind of briefly productive sociability in Tehran. Turner (1982, p.236) describes the transitory nature and liminality of temporal festivals and ceremonies as a lucid element, 'a time outside time in which it is often permitted to *play* with the factors of sociocultural experience, to disengage what is mundanely connected'. So it is because of this liminality that the *physical layout of the city* is altered, re-ordered and re-invented to enable people to orient themselves in space in specific places, such as *Heyat* (a mourning group or gathering), *Tekyeh* (a building used in Shiite Islamic worship and mourning), mosques, main streets and squares. During Ashura, the central squares in the city play a crucial role in bringing people together, from the rich neighbourhoods to the socially disadvantaged districts (see also Simmel

1989 [1890], on how social differences are minimised on the surface at these extraordinary times, in Niekrenz, 2014, p.655).

Moreover, as the result of these extraordinary time and spaces, the physical layout of the city also alters, becoming 'punctuated' by the monumental and mundane markers of mosques and *Tekyehs*. It becomes 'multiple', as when (for example) a *Tekyeh*, like a generic form, is set up in different mosques around the city, so that different kinds of smaller and local *Heyats* then evolve (these terms are taken from Sennett, 2018, p. 236). At such times, the physical layout of Tehran can even be counted as 'incomplete*',* as the streets, squares and buildings that are usually reserved for more mundane activities morph and evolve constantly for the duration of the procession. Streets are closed off and unwanted elements are removed, to widen the stage for the performance of the procession, the presence of the audience, and the creation of alternative spaces. All these physical changes increase the collective bodily co-presence. As Durkheim puts it, "individuals, pressing close to one another, reaffirm in common their common sentiments" (1995: p.429). As a result, the social quality of the city becomes temporarily open.

6.4. Conclusion

This chapter examines Tehran under the lens of the open city to answer the first research question: which aspects of open city theory can plausibly be expected to be achieved in the city of Tehran? In the process, the flexible and crooked physical layout of the research case study, Tajrish Square, was explored to see how it creates a disordered and informal social life in Tehran. By analysing the streetscape of the case study on the one hand, and through exploring the extent to which south Tehranies could access those spaces in the spatially divided city (north/south binary) on the other, the informal qualities of the square have been revealed. The opening of the metro station, as a form of design intervention, has changed the square into a public realm where the less affluent converge to carry out their informal activities on the sidewalks, in front of the stores, or on top of an over-turned cardboard box. The question is how far can the physical solidity of the streets, buildings, and public spaces be the main target of design interventions that encourage sociability in cities? And where do non-physical matters stand?

Sennett did investigate, in fact, some ways in which urbanists might better engage with the *cité*. He investigated *ville* forms, and it is the *ville* that creates the ability to bring different people

together. What remains unanswered, however, is the extent to which his design interventions will always transform the fear of others and social exclusion. One example is Tehran's Bahman Complex, which was discussed in the previous chapter. When it opened in 2000, as the first cultural centre in south Tehran, it successfully altered spatial inequality in the city, by pushing *balashahris* (north Tehranies) to move to *paienshahr* (south). After its successful opening, the number of other cultural centres grew in other areas of Tehran. This is an example of *ville* being designed in an open way, as Sennett would say, through seed planning. But the question is about the situation of Bahman Complex today. Is it still successful at bringing different people from north and south Tehran together in one place and encouraging social interaction among them? Considering all the luxury shopping malls that have opened, mainly in wealthy north Tehran (Kazemi and Amir Ebrahimi, 2020), with the expansion of Metro Line 1 and Rahahan-Tajrish BRT, can this instance of seed-planning strategy still be seen as a design intervention that changed social mobility from north to south?

Another point is about the difference in sociopolitical context between the authoritarian setting of Tehran and the [so-called] democratic setting of western cities. The argument is that Sennett's ideal open city needs a democratic setting to embrace, whereas in a non-democratic context – even if one could intervene and design the city in an open way –social life needs to be controlled, ordered and disciplined according to what the authorities want. This return to Foucauldian discipline and biopower can call Sennett's theory into question in settings that, according to his design interventions, are counted as open. For instance, Sennett sees Noli's map of Rome as an example that depicts a mappable and buildable porosity; in its pantheon, the huge, domed ancient Roman temple with the only light coming from a hole (the oculus) at the top of the dome. The question is how much this porosity could be an effective design methodology for encouraging sociable interaction among different people when the city was under the control of a totalitarian regime, such as Mussolini's? What could openness possibly mean for the fascist himself, on the one hand, and his people on the other? And how much could open design interventions encourage open *cité* in that sociopolitical context? Take for example the case of 1960s' Prague, in the Soviet Union invasion, when many began to train and practice in unofficial settings, often underground and behind the closed doors of individuals' private homes. The question is how much the [porous] *ville* of Purge (like Rome with all its labyrinths, old squares, and other public spaces) could be used by people in a sociable way when the whole city was subject to order and discipline according to communist

doctrines and political strategies?[11] In Tehran too, after reading the physical solidity of buildings, streets, and public and quasi-public space of a case study under the lens of open city theory and exploring its momentary openness, the attempt was to find those energised and affective moments that transform the quality of social life, from ordered to disordered, from closed to open.

It has been suggested therefore that it is not always the physical layout of a city that creates momentary openness, but that the non-physical also matters – and this is related to sound (and silence), intensity, and corporeal sensations. A sensitivity for atmospheres and moods and scents can open new opportunities and possibilities for interaction; from inside quasi-public spaces such as cafés, to extraordinary events, people find opportunities to attach new meanings to the ways public spaces should be used. The discussion has shown how affect, energy and embodiment are also influential factors in temporarily transforming the quality of spaces in Tehran. However, there is still another realm to look into, one which is related to the circulation and navigation of both bodies and information in the city. This demands a profound understanding of how automobiles, other modes of transport, and the internet play a role in creating momentary openness in Tehran.

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[11] See Althusser's account on the repressive state apparatus that consists of the army, the police, the judiciary, and the prison system.

Chapter 7: Porous mobility

Chapter 6 analysed the physical layout of a case study in Tehran, based on an exploration of the streets, buildings and public spaces of the case study. However, even a deep knowledge of the physical solidity of the streets cannot clearly portray the *social layout* in the political context of Tehran. By exploring non-physical (or beyond physical) aspects of specific quasi-public and gender-segregated spaces (such as cafés and bra shops), the chapter also depicted the complex ways in which temporary openness is experienced in Tehran. This chapter, by contrast, explores Tehran from a distance and instead of a detailed analysis of the built (*ville*) and lived (*cite*) in relation to a specific case study, looks at other components of the city such as roads, tunnels, and virtual spaces. The aim here is to look at different forms of transit and movement in Tehran - at mobility - from - vehicles to information, and to explore their impact on the the experience of openness. The chapter starts by explaining modes of vehicular mobility in Tehran and why this is an important aspect of urban life in this city. I go on to look inside different forms of transport in this city, exploring a *social life* that is not dependant on the solid *layout of the city*, but on moveable entities. The aim is to read the traces of the city and explore moments, episodes, narratives and time-spaces in which openness is visible, even beyond the design interventions. The social life that goes on inside private cars and taxis, and on the metro and buses in Tehran will be examined under the lens of open city theory. Then the surveillance city will be explored as an aspect of virtual space, to see how openness might be experienced differently in a context where public and private, as well as virtual space is under state control.

7.1. Movement and passage

As with many other car-centric cities locomotion is a central part of the social life of the people of Tehran – whether this entails riding at various speeds in cars, or traveling from A to B by bus, taxi or metro with their more regular rhythms, or going by motorcycle. This is due to the imperatives of the infrastructure that keeps traffic circulating, which has been developed in different ways by different mayors during their period of urban management.[1] Here, unlike Western cities – where city planning, capitalism, consumerism, and aestheticisation are interrelated to expand the circulation and exchange of commodities and to create a 'beautiful

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[1] See for instance, Tehran Structural–Strategic Plan 2007 (discussed in Chapter 5), proposed in the era of Ahmadinejad's presidency, which has seven visions, nine goals (objectives) and 17 strategies for achieving its proposed goals in a timeframe between 2007 and 2026. "Improve the connectivity and transportation system of the city by expanding the infrastructure of public transport" is one of its nine goals.

illusion' in crooked streets (Featherstone, 2020, p.106) – there are more concerns about 'beautifying the appearance of highways' (IRNA, 2019) or 'beautifying the general landscape of the city by coloring and painting the walls of passages and highways' of Tehran (Farsnews, 2011). This beautification of roads not only involves wall colouring or ornamenting bridges with mirror tiles and colourful murals, but also includes huge infrastructural development to create, and constantly water, green spaces next to main roads, existing highways and at the entrances to cities. These are made by The Beautification Organization of Tehran Municipality and some other private sector investors (see also Article 4 of 'The Vision of Tehran', known as *Amending the Law on Preservation and Expansion of Green Space in Cities,* approved by the Urban Planning and Architecture High Council of Iran in 2007). It is correct that there are particular, fixed images that represent the city as a whole (see Featherstone, 2020) – such as Azadi Tower or Milad Tower[2] – but by becoming absorbed into roads, highways, superhighways, bridges and tunnels from the insides of automobiles, taxis, buses, and metro carriages, it is possible to capture some of the substantive and experiential qualities of the cityscape and to explore how social life can also be achieved beyond the confines of streets and buildings.

On the roadway

In general, in comparison with developed countries and even many developing countries, the approximate rate of car ownership is quite low in Iran (Soltani et al. 2018, p.109). However, considering urban population growth (which runs at an average annual rate of about 3% and which reached 70% of the total population by 2016), the harsh climate with scorching summers and snowy winters in some regions, the lack of alternative travel options, and limited access to essential daily services, car-dependency has grown even faster: there was 15% annual growth in the rate of motorisation by 2016, which is higher than the rate of urbanisation (Soltani et al. 2018, p.109-10). Tehran is home to 12 million people, a figure that increases to more than 15 million during daylight hours due to the daily influx of people (mainly commuters). This is more than a fifth of the country's population of 80 million. On the other hand, three million cars travel on the city's roads every day, a figure that is six times greater than the 700,000 which is their approximate capacity (Khalilikhah et al., 2016, p.136). A large network of highways, multi-tier highways, and elevated highways (280 km), along with tunnels, bridges

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[2] Azadi Tower marks the significance of contemporary Iranian architecture, which was the symbol of Tehran before the construction of Milad Tower, as the sixth tallest telecommunication tower in the world and 24th-tallest freestanding structure in the world in 2008, to become the cultural and global significance of Tehran (Archnet, 2021).

and other forms of motorway bring more cars and other vehicles into the cityscape, or the city's landscape (Figure 7-1).[3]
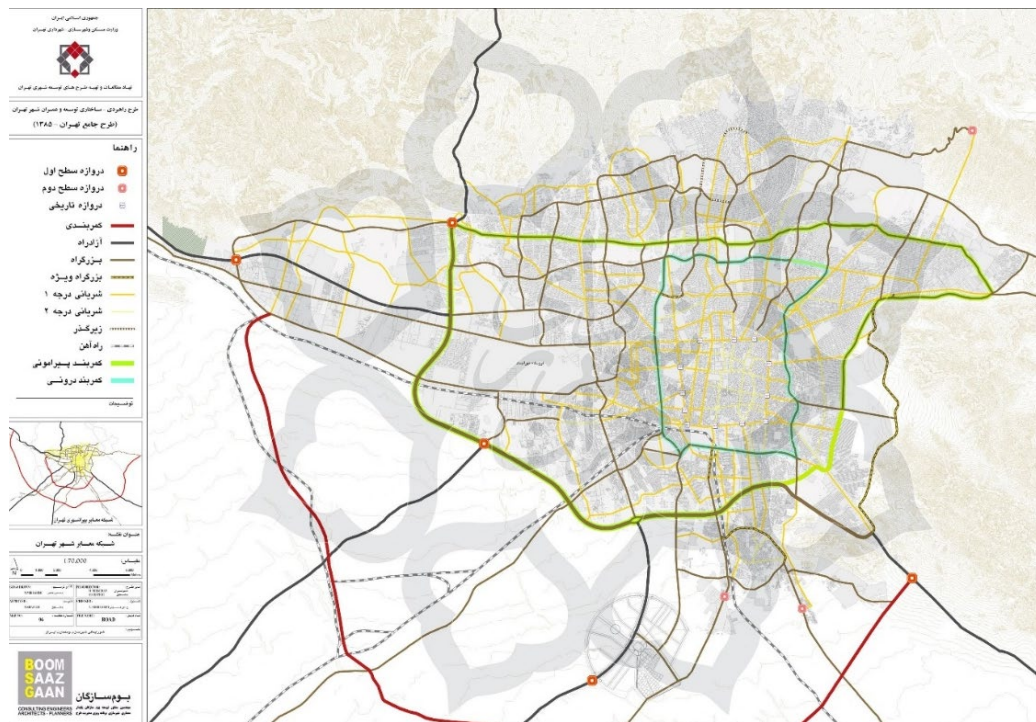
Figure 7-1: Road Map of Tehran (2006) (Source: Courtesy of Tehran Municipality, District 1)

The city's public transport system includes taxis, buses (including conventional buses, trolleybuses, and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)), and the metro, which is about 120km long (Khalilikhah et al. 2016, p.137). Of the everyday trips taken in Tehran, 36.4% are by private car/motorcycle, 13.8% by metro, 20.0% by bus, 22.3% by taxi, and 7.5% by another mode, such as cycling (Khalilikhah et al., 2016, p.137). As more than 90% of daily travel in Tehran takes place by some form of motorised transport, the activities of driving and sitting in vehicles cannot be seen as a simple act of going from A to B. As Motamed and Bitaraf have pointed out, there are 'insufficient amenities, low crossing safety…lack of maintenance' ... 'imprudent design and policy making, the implementation of projects without considering pedestrians, and on a larger scale, the lack of vision or holistic approach for pedestrians' (2016, p.96). Pavements are also disappearing and the ability to take a casual stroll in the city is diminishing. Moreover, considering the size of the city (750 km^2) and the fact that people need to take

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[3] See, for instance, the Financial Tribune (2017) that indicates how Tehran municipality constructed Sadr expressway – a three-mile-long double-decker concrete highway – costing more than $1.7-2.5 billion (70,000-100,000 billion rials). This expressway was built under the mayorship of Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf (2005-2017) 'as a way of reducing Tehran's congestion but it has had the opposite result', says Hakiminejad (in Wainwright, 2019), so in reality Sadr expressway 'had the effect of increasing traffic and further cementing car as king' (Wainwright, 2019).

several different motor vehicles to get to their final destination – as some transport modes, such as taxis, only use main thoroughfares and stay within the local area (Khalilikhah et al., 2016, p.137) – motorised vehicles in Tehran can be seen as 'assembled social being[s]' (Dant, 2004, in Featherstone, 2005, p.13) that have a profound cultural, social, and political effect on people's everyday lives.

Urban dwellers, who sit in taxis, or on the metro or bus at different times of the day, either feel at ease and converse spontaneously with the stranger sitting next to them, or display their customary everyday inexpressive blank faces – 'Simmel's blasé mask' (Sennett, 2018, p.54) – or what Mattenklott has called the typical 'cold eye,' (cited in Featherstone, 2020, p.117). Either way, although drivers and passengers are detached from the outside world, they are experiencing new streams of energy and activities – from different speeds and types of driving, overtaking and stopping to selling and buying cheap goods, listening to different sorts of live music, singing, radios and music players, to talking, debating or even fighting over political matters or moral behaviour and so forth. These new experiences, in turn, develop into new perceptions as vehicles move through the highways, streets, alleys and tunnels of Tehran. Away from police surveillance on the streets, the activities of driving and 'passengering' (Thrift, 2005, p.46) can be seen as an opportunity to spend time discussing the matters of the day and to share experiences with perfect strangers. It is not, therefore, the public square (such as Trafalgar Square in London which is an Arendtian ideal public space (Sennett, 2006)), nor Sennett's livable streets, but the enclosed and fixed space of the vehicle that becomes a 'transitory' meeting point in which there is a 'play between routine and discovery' (Sennett, 2018, p.30). Although the vehicle is a stable/solid entity – as its fixed structure, dimensions and composition are made and assembled in factories – it is still a transitory object, because unlike other fixed entities such as buildings, it moves from place to place at both different and unvarying speeds. When it is mobile, everything inside it is moving too, including the passengers. When bodies move inside cars in different time-spaces, depending on pollution, noise and traffic, their feelings, moods, blood pressure, heartbeat, perspiration rate and so on, change as well. This constant change, similar to what is experienced by the 'body of [the] walker' in the street (de Certeau, 1984, p.91), is what Sennett calls the 'liquid *cité*', except that his is bound to the *ville* where the 'buildings are going to be in one place for a long time' (Sennett, 2018, p.30). He argues that the modernist city-makers, like Cerda or Olmsted, wanted to create a particular place, responsive to the *swift changes* of modern life…' (Sennett, 2018, p.30). Although one can bring the notion of *ville*' into question by referring to the constant

construction and tearings-down in a city (see for instance Featherstone, 2020, p.111), here the question is: what if the *ville* can also be seen beyond the physical solidity of buildings that are bound to one place for a long time? What if it can also be seen in other physical solids that are moving from one place to another? In what follows, I expand on Sennett's suggestions for open forms, and specifically on the metaphor of porosity, and enunciate a series of provocations regarding how social life can also be translated into a channeled flow of people and vehicles.

Inside the moving vehicle

Lateral accounting, as Sennett (2018, p.184-5) suggests, is the ability to collect the sort of 'data' found at the edges of visual consciousness that a 'healthy flaneur' gathers as he experiences the city on his walks. Drawing on the work of biological psychologist Lionel Festinger, he argues that as a result of the 'peripheral vision' that develops on the horizon, at the periphery, at the border, or in liminal spaces, the brain does different sorts of lateral accounting at different speeds (as when walking, for example, or when moving inside a car). For instance, when one walks slowly, a deeper lateral consciousness develops in the brain, because it is possible to distinguish the place from the space, to dwell in the place and know more, neurologically, about the city (Sennett, 2018, p.185). A moving body in a car sees 'a single spotlit object [from within the car] as flat because the image has no depth and context' (Sennett, 2018, p.185). But the argument here is that this flatness is not all the same, because the visual field of someone sitting or standing on a train moving at a specific speed is much more limited than that of a person sitting inside a car moving at different speeds. For instance, stopping at a red traffic light, or getting stuck in a heavy Tehran traffic-jam at a specific time and space, or cruising in a car in the late-night *dor-dor* spots of the city (discussed in detail below), can all alter the visual field of those inside a moving vehicle. Even when driving on a highway in Tehran, the aesthetic dimension of the visual field (which is related to the beautification of roads and bridges) induces new perceptions and stimulates the passenger's imagination by changes of colour, painting, planting, lighting, and so on. Therefore, as with the over-stimulation of the walking body at street level, sitting and driving in a car on Tehran's roads creates a visual, aural, olfactory, interoceptive and proprioceptive consciousness and stimulation. This consciousness – the result of energy, affect, caution, gut feelings, hearing, communication, and observation (Thrift, 2005, p.46) – either results in instant and constant responses, or leads to a 'civil inattentiveness' (Goffman, 1961, in Featherstone, 1998, p.915) related to the quasi-automatic responses of the senses as a result of constant practice, so that the body becomes accustomed and attuned to the hazards of moving traffic (Featherstone, 1998, p.915).

But the lateral accounting of the moving body inside a car varies from city to city and country to country. For instance, in western countries the act of 'driving and passengering' is based on 'shared rules' that 'communicate through common sets of visual and aural signals, interact even without eye contact in a kind of default space or non-place available to all citizens on the road' (Urry, 2005, p.29). In Tehran, perhaps like other car-centric cities such as Sao Paulo, drivers, passengers, and pedestrians do not follow 'shared rules', but driving is based on spontaneous and arbitrary rules and decisions that vary from person to person. For instance, the zebra lines in the street do not have the same function as they might have in other countries, because drivers do not bother to stop at a crossing, and pedestrians do not care; they are out of bounds all the time. In the case of taxis, there is irregular and sudden overtaking, pulling-over and stopping, passengers getting in and out at their preferred locations, accelerating or reducing speed to talk about which direction to go, or to bargain over the fare with passengers standing beside the street, putting hands out of the window to give directions to the next car, or using an arm as an indicator to turn right or left; all these things constantly blur the edges between inside and outside, between detachment and involvement.

On the other hand, the movement of taxis, buses, and the metro in Tehran and other major Iranian cities does not just develop the communicative and visual senses of the driver, but also involves passengers in a highly corporeal engagement with each other. Shared taxis for instance, are always liable to fill up with passengers, regardless of their gender, age or ethnicity. Even up to 2005, two people were allowed to share the front passenger seat of a taxi (Mehrnews, 2005). Depending on what the driver chooses, new commuters may or may not immediately replace those who get out of the taxi. Extra bodies in the taxi increase the possibility of bodily contact between passengers, which makes it especially important for women to develop peripheral vision – they usually remain hyper-alert at all times when sitting next to a man. Sharing a small space with four other strangers amounts to a highly sensory indoor experience. While some don Simmel's blasé mask, others, especially women, react when men sit so close to them that they can feel the men's body odour, sweat and heat, or when men perform particular things, such as sitting with their legs wide open or rubbing their legs against a women's: '*I know what to do now*,' advised a young girl in a Tehran taxi, in 2017, '*whenever I feel something is wrong with the man sitting next to me, I put my handbag between him and myself, so he has to keep his legs tight*' (Figure 7-2).[4] In this way, women create a

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[4] In order to increase women's safety and comfort while using shared taxis in Tehran, a 'women-only wireless taxi' service was run in 2006, under the supervision of Tehran Taxi Organisation, Municipality and City Council.

temporary boundary, by putting their bags or shopping between themselves and a man when they have to share taxi space. It is worth noting that temporary boundary-making is not limited to women on public transport.[5] In fact it is, as Amir-Ebrahimi (2016, p.194) notes, a long cultural tradition among Iranian families dating back to the emergence of modern architecture in the Pahlavi era, when courtyards were replaced by high-rise apartments. So, in the absence of private space bounded by walls, parks become places where families could gather on various occasions, such as having lunch on a Friday afternoon, or dinner on warm summer nights. However, when they had to sit close to another family (a group of strangers), it was no longer a wall but the family picnic blanket that constituted the private boundary that allowed families to respect one another's privacy in the public space of the park (Amir-Ebrahimi, 2016, p.194).

Figure 7-2: Men's bodily gestures in shared taxi (source: Etemadeno, 2017)

However, it took no more than a decade for these women-only taxis to stop working, since the Taxi Organisation never issued any documents for female taxi drivers (Eghtesadonline, 2020). Following the '*Close Your Legs*' campaign, organised by Istanbul Feminist Collective (IFK) to shame male passengers who harass women every day on public transport, women in Iran also began to report their everyday struggles with male behaviours such as touching and other unpleasant experiences on public transport (see for instance Sadighi, 2017).

[5] See also the importance of control of the body and gentle manners in Norbert Elias's *Civilising Process* (1939), in which he indicates how 'the change of tone, the increased sensitivity, the heightened human observation and the sharper understanding of what is going on in others' (Gillingham, 2020, p.277), all are part of a 'gentlemanly code' of politeness among men in public, that can also involve social distancing.

So, contrary to Sennett's evaluation of porosity as a [positive] design intervention that increases sociability and interaction by removing boundaries and making the edges between two states permeable, here the very act of *boundary-making* in the quasi-public space of taxis, gives women better and more comfortable access to the city, as a temporary boundary reduces uninvited and unwelcome interaction. The opposite of porosity is welcomed, because the lower the permeability of the edge between two bodies and the fewer opportunities men can find to touch women, the more comfortable women become. However, a complex and ambiguous experience of social life develops when such interaction is welcome. In taxis, on buses and the metro and in private cars, this ranges from sexual behaviours to an increase in prohibited political debates, to buying and selling goods, drinking alcohol and other activities, all of which can be seen as part of 'the freedom associated with cars' (Featherstone, 2005, p.14).

Returning to Sennett's idea of a [welcome/positive] porosity; like a 'porous sound' or a 'porous edge', this indicates that a given space is inclusive and sociable (Sennett, 2018, p.218-227). So in the case of porous or sociable sound, for instance, the more intelligible (recognisable) and distinct a sound is (in the case of the hawkers in Nehru Place, for instance), the more sociable a space becomes. In the case of physical entities, the greater the permeability of a [visible/invisible] wall, the stronger the bonds of sociability that exist between the two sides. In the case of taxis, buses, the metro and private cars in Tehran, there are also different levels of sociability, mixing, and interaction, which need to be explored because they indicate that the enclosed space of a vehicle has different qualities at different times and places.

7.2. Sociable mobility in narration

This section explores sociability, experiment and interaction (all components of Sennett's porosity) within the confines of public transport as well as in private cars in Tehran. The objective is to create insights into the experimental quality of public transport, inspired by the stories told to me by people on public transport in Tehran in 2017, as well as by ethnographic texts, films, and other lived experiences recorded while travelling across the city over a two-week period, at both peak and off-peak hours, and for one week while participating in *dor-dor.* On some journeys I travelled the entire distance between Rhahan and Tajrish, and on some I went only part of the way, using different modes of public transport and routes: taxi, the Rahahan-Tajrish bus and Metro Line 1. The reason for using these specific public transport routes is that they run through parts of the city which have sharply contrasting socioeconomic

characteristics. The continuum discussed here is based on the proportion of daily trips in Tehran on the various modes of transport – as discussed above: 36.4% by private car/motorcycle, 13.8% by metro, 20.0% by bus, and 22.3% by taxi (Khalilikhah et al. 2016, p.137):

a) *Private cars*: this section shows how the holes and openings in the body of the car, in combination with drivers' and passengers' bodily gestures, transform the quality of public space and create momentary and mobile models of social interaction among the affluent youth of Tehran at night.

b) *Taxis, buses, the metro*: an ethnographic vignette was selected from a 2018 movie entitled *Ferrari,* by Alireza Davoodnejad, which shows how the boundaries of [private] taxis (*darbast*) give women opportunities to negotiate power relations and to de/re-construct their predetermined social identities by changing their appearance within the confines of the taxi. This quality is not limited to taxies, however. Metro Line 1 also creates settings that produce an overlaid and complex relationship between gender, the mandatory hijab, class, the geographical contexts of south and north, and mobility. Sennett (2018, p.224) refers to the 'passage from rich to poor places' as 'liminal edges' in a city. *Liminal* here refers to the 'experience of a transition' even when there is no clear barrier between two states' (Sennett, 2018, p.224). When this visible/invisble barrier becomes a porous border/edge, new possibilities and opportunities emerge, for comings together, interactions, and experiencing differences. But this research asks what the experience of transition is like - from affluent-north to poor-south, and vice versa, in moving vehicles in Tehran? Can transport be seen as porous if (like a porous edge or a porous sound), it suggests that space has inclusive and sociable qualities?

Private cars

Although private car use as a way to meet members of the opposite sex is mostly limited to the affluent car-driving youth of the northern districts and the performance of Tehran's 'rich kids' cruising in their expensive cars, the social phenomenon of *dor-dor* can be seen as an opportunity to improve urban experience in Tehran. Dor-dor' ('*turn-turn*' in Farsi) is where 'separate groups of young men and women drive around, pulling up alongside each other in congested traffic so they can flirt and pass phone numbers through the window. The cars are either all-girl or all-boy to avoid censorship by the Islamic morality police and if the police do show up, they can make a (slow) getaway (Wainwright, 2019). What is important is the change in the rhythm of the city at night when private cars pour suddenly into specific parts of the city

in northern, western, and some eastern districts. Dor-dor spots can be changed as soon as the police increase surveillance and establish checkpoints at well-known dor-dor destinations, because '*police stop cars when a car passes the checkpoints more than three times in the course of dor-dor*' said one young man during dor-dor, 2017. One reason for police surveillance is that dor-dor offers a platform for sociability and creates uncertainty and disorder in relation to the top-down Islamic rules and regulations. However, this contradiction goes beyond Islamic codes of manners and has also recently affected spatial inequality. As one rich-kid told me in north Tehran in 2017, '*we are not going to dor-dor anymore, it becomes 'khaz' (degraded) recently. Since paieen-shahries (people of south Tehran) also join dor-dor with their cheap cars and socialise with the girls; the atmosphere has changed*'.

Various aspects of the dor-dor experience are worth taking into consideration here. The first is the use of the material environment, such as red-traffic lights, U-turns, and parking spaces (either in unused spaces or in front of famous ice-cream and juice shops and kiosks), that facilitate opportunities for socialising. Among the cars waiting at red traffic lights, moving slowly in traffic, or parked up, with hands and heads come out of windows, open roofs, or doors to communicate with people in other cars; handshaking, chatting, exchanging numbers and offering flowers, juice and so on. Not just the material environment of the road, but the car's signalling system (horns, wiper blades and indicators) actively re-configure the space and are adapted, becoming signs of the driver's interest and an invitation to start a conversation: '*driving in the car is a better experience than walking in a park where everyone comes with their families. Inside the car I feel the freedom to wear what I want, to listen to what I want, and go where I want*' said one young woman during dor-dor in 2017, who was wearing a loose hijab and light facial make-up.

Apart from the aestheticisation of the 'body of the car' (Featherstone, 2005, p.12), which can itself be seen as the 'theatrical and display side' of this phenomenon (Tamari, 2002, p.76) – as some attempt to customise their cars by painting them and adding different icons – the body also exhibits certain ornaments and gestures.[6] Since only hands, face, and hair can be seen

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[6] See also the *Kustom Kulture* and 'cruise culture' in George Lucas's "*American Graffiti*" (1973) which portrays veteran cruisers on the street in late 50s/early 60s US teen culture. While all of the various car cultures involve 'personalizing' their cars, this movie shows how the Kustom Kulture is manifested in altering, redesigning, and, ultimately, reinventing stock Detroit automobiles and transforming them into something unique and expressive (DeWitt, 2010). Against the perceived conformity of the times, the teen and youth rebellion culture presented in this movie show how they manifested their own practices and aesthetics by assimilating the language, the clothing, and the music in 'cruise'. In 1970s, cruise, as a subculture, according to DeWitt (2010), happened on Friday and Saturday nights in towns across the country through which cars traveled a well-defined circuit in a ritual of display,

through the window, it is important for both driver and passengers to learn certain bodily gestures, either to attract more attention or to get none. Making eye contact or avoiding it, holding the steering wheel in so as to exhibit expensive jewellery (such as watches, rings, bracelets and other ornaments) or hide it, or playing loud music through the latest sound technologies, all demonstrate how youngsters in Tehran attempt to negotiate power relations, to inhabit, appropriate, engage with and occupy the vehicle space within which they communicate with and meet others. In Tehran, it is not face-to-face interaction in a solid physical place such as a square, as Sennett would argue, but window-to-window or car-to-car interaction in a mobile/immobile mode that 'represent[s] wider social transformations in everyday life' (Bull, 2005, p.243) (Figures 7-3 and 7-4).
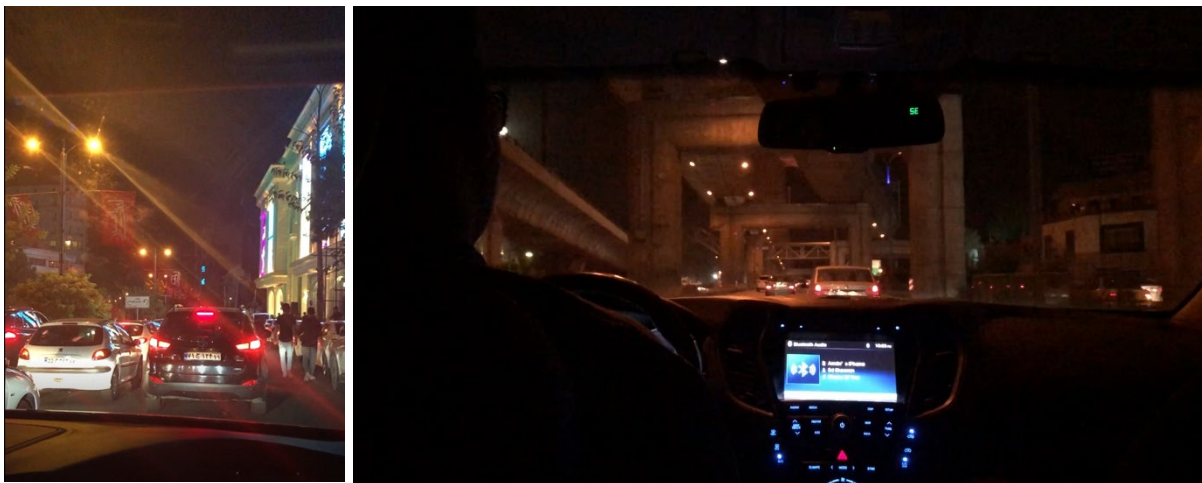
Figures 7-3 and 7-4: 'Concrete Jungle at Night' (Source: Citiestale, 2017)

Taxi

This section explores the relations between gender, identity and mobility in private taxis in Tehran, showing how the enclosed but mobile space of the taxi creates opportunities for women to re-appropriate and transform the fixed identities that are associated with Islamic dress code. The following vignette is taken from a movie made in 2018 – *Ferrari* – about a poor girl leaving her house and family behind in a small town. '*Dokhtar Farari*' (which means 'runaway girl' in Iran), comes to Tehran to find a red Ferrari she has seen on social media because she wants

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adults and teenagers slowly followed each other for hours in order to show off the latest modifications to their cars, to exchange gossip, to announce a fight or a race, to try out pick-up lines, and to trade insults, while moving slowly on the circuit (DeWitt, 2010, p.47).

to get a photo with both the car and its owner. The film depicts poverty, urban life in Tehran and the roles of the taxi and taxi-driver. It is worth noting that when written in Farsi, the title denotes both the car (Ferrari) and the '*Dokhtar Farari*' (runaway girl), except that two different vowels are used for F at the beginning: /ɛ/ for the car, and /æ/ for the 'runaway girl'(فراری). This similarity implies that the lives of poor runaway girls are infused with big and unreachable dreams. In one scene, the enclosed metal space of the taxi is used by a woman (living in south Tehran) to transform her 'body image' by changing her clothes and becoming a 'new person' who walks, talks, smells and acts differently (terms cited in Featherstone, 2010, p.198). She uses the internal space of the taxi as a safe place to create a flexible, anonymous identity, giving a false image of who she really is by changing her clothes, and making up her face and hair before arriving in north Tehran. In a city where '10,000 out of 80,000 taxis are unofficially on the road daily, which in return increases danger for women' (Eghtesadonline, 2017), the scene below depicts the quality of the enclosed space or the boundary of a private taxi when the driver is trusted.

It is worth arguing that there is a sort of experiment, surprise, and sociability associated with porosity in this scene. When Sennett discusses porosity, he usually refers to it as a permeable edge between places, that operates like a cell membrane and either allows a free flow between the two sides or *resists* parts of the flow. So, for him, a plate glass wall, for instance, cannot be considered a porous border just because the inside can be seen from the outside. It is not porous because the person standing on one side cannot touch, smell, or hear anything on the other side as the plates are usually rigidly fixed, apart from one, regulated, entrance. 'You have dead space on both sides of the wall', Sennett argues, 'in Mies van der Rohe's Seagram Building in New York or Norman Foster's new London City Hall... where you would expect life in the building to accumulate' (Sennett, 2006, p.3). By contrast, he refers to the plate glass panels of the 19th-century architect Louis Sullivan, which function as a porous wall because they are flexible, so that people are invited to gather, or enter the building, or simply to dwell at its edge (Sennett, 2006).

Here, in contrast with the physical solidity of a building, a look beneath the metaphor of porosity shows that it also contains *potential* and *possibility*; the possibility of experimenting with something new; the possibility of crossing boundaries one could not cross in normal circumstances; the possibility of accessing something that was inaccessible before; the possibility of transforming the quality of a space. So, too, the walls of the enclosed space of

the taxi cannot be seen as a boundary 'where things end' (Sennett, 2018, p.220), but rather to entail a breachable border that is both porous and resistant, because it is the driver (of a private or shared taxi or bus) who allows, resists, or selects passengers to ride depending on their destination, the fare negotiated,[7] whether or not they show a ticket, display appropriate or inappropriate behaviour or in recent instances, appropriate or inappropriate Islamic dress codes. Apart from high levels of social interaction between and among passengers and drivers in shared taxis, which can be seen in films such as *Taxi* (2015, directed by Jafar Panahi), porosity in the taxi scene below is related to the *possibility*, *sociability* and *interaction* discussed above. The three poor protagonists in the scene move from the poor south to the rich north of Tehran in an old taxi, while luxury brands of clothes, make-up accessories, perfumes and smart phones are displayed constantly. Here, it is specifically the mobile quality of the vehicle that creates transformative possibilities, the chance to move beyond their predetermined identities and geographies and to experience different gender identities (Figure 7-5).

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Ethnographic Vignette

Ferrari (2018)

The camera emerges from a tunnel, showing cars overtaking each other. It then shows the city-space around Navvab Tunnel, portraying Tehran as a whole; symmetrical residential apartments on both sides of the noisy highway full of cars; polluted air on the horizon; car horns blaring, and even the background music is dreadful. This is a depiction of south Tehran. It's where *Mohtaram Khanoom* is usually picked up by *Agha Nader* from her house in a messy alley near Navvab Tunnel, to be taken to her usual destination: '*Elahieh*'. Wearing all-black clothes, she gets in the back of Agha Nader's taxi but is surprised to see a new face sitting in the front passenger seat.

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[7] There are different sorts of taxis in Tehran and in Iran at large. Private taxis are called *Dar-bast* and *Ajans*, while shared taxis are called *Khati* and *Savari/Shakhsi*. S*hakhsi* usually refers to unofficial taxis that can be both private and shared. Recently the Uber version of the taxi entered Iran as well, and these are called *Tapsi*. Depending on the destination and the number of changes one has to make in the course of travelling, the fares of private *Ajans*, shared *Khati* and internet *Tapsi* are usually fixed, while the fares of *Dar-bast* and *Savari (shakhsi)* depend on bargaining and quotes.

Figure 7-5: Make-up scene in taxi, *Ferrari* (Source: *Ferrari*, 2018)

Agha Nader takes two plastic bags from the boot of his taxi, hands them over to her and introduces the new face: 'this is Golnar, my friend's daughter who comes from S*hahrestan*, I am taking her to the bus terminal to go back to her town'. It is a lie of course, as he knows Golnar has run away from her town, dreaming of finding a new life in Tehran once she has found the red Ferrari that she has seen on social media, and its owner. No sooner has the taxi left the alley, with its grey walls, than Golnar appears to be shocked to see how 'Mohtaram Khanoom' begins to change her appearance. First, she replaces her black *maghnaeh* with a pink scarf she takes out of one of the plastic bags. Everyone in the car is quiet, the driver is looking straight ahead and in the side mirrors. He is a trusted, respectful man, not looking in

the rear-view mirror so that Mohtaram Khanoom will not feel uncomfortable while changing her appearance. Only the young girl seems curious about how she is transforming gradually, this time by removing her black manteau, taking another piece of clothing from the plastic bag, a light grey coat. Golnar looks to the front every time, as Agha Nader stops her from staring at Mohtaram Khanoom, but she keeps turning back to look at her again. Mohtaram Khanoom breaks the silence at last while looking in a small mirror to apply her red lipstick. She asks Golnar, 'haven't you seen someone doing make up?' She is not looking out of the car, but perhaps the outside is looking at her doing make-up inside the car. Golnar says 'is your perfume called Joomag?' then closes her eyes, smelling the scent as if the whole car is filled with perfume....

They arrive at their destination: *Elahieh*. Mohtaram Khanoom wears burgundy gloves and takes her burgundy bag. From head to toe, she has become colourful. The neighbourhood is quiet, no messiness, no dirt, the walls look all white. Before getting out, she says: 'I'll let you know when to pick me up.'

From Ferrari, 2018, directed by Alireza Davoodnejad

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Metro

Tehran metro carries three million commuters every day (Financial Tribune, 2017). 'The actual price of a metro ticket is 198,000 rials [$0.8], two-thirds of which should be paid by the government and Tehran Municipality, and the rest by the passenger, so that the passenger should pay 59,400 rials ($0.23) for each metro ticket' (Financial Tribune, 2017). With only seven active lines, Tehran metro's vehicles are often busiest on weekday rush hours. Like the previous vignette about private taxis, the metro, and specifically its women-only carriages, can also be seen in terms of boundaries, behind which women develop new experiments and relations with their surroundings. Riding the full north-south and south-north journey on Metro Line 1, in peak as well as off-peak hours on both weekdays and weekends for two weeks in summer 2017, showed me that there are certain elements, such as the informal presence of hawkers and women removing their hijabs, that change the fixed, ordered cyclical rhythm of mobility by metro on Tehran's Metro Line 1, especially on weekend afternoons (Thursday and Friday). First and foremost, it is important to note that each train has twelve coaches. There are

two women-only coaches located at the front and back of the train, with mixed-gender coaches in-between.

Back in 2019, the deputy of Transportation and Traffic of Tehran Municipality forbade hawkers on the metro (Eghtesadonline, 2017), but even so, they constantly occupy metro carriages due to the 'high rate of unemployment, recession, inability of the social policy system to cover social risks such as disability, poverty, and class differences'. Their presence has increased to the extent that people now refer to Tehran metro as 'a mobile shopping passage' (see Eghtesadonline, 2017). Despite being forbidden, the hawkers have developed and organised their own private language to inform one another of the presence of the police at the next station. Once they receive a signal, whether by text message or a whistle and/or wink, hawkers hide their bags, camouflage themselves among the crowed, change coaches (through the doors linking the carriages) before the train stops, or get off quickly and disappear as soon as it does.[8] This is similar to what Sennett (1990, p.126-127) describes as a 'deviant population' associated with urban 'outsiders' who change the 'moral order' that exercises hegemony over the city as a whole (see also Merton (1938) on how they developed Durkheim's anomie theory of deviance to suggest the positive role of deviance in defining morality and bringing people together). For Sennett, the urban dweller who passes from place to place, activity to activity, while 'taking on the coloring of each scene, as easily as a chameleon changes color in various surroundings,' can acquire membership of widely divergent groups to shape different aspects of social life in a city (Sennett, 1990, p.127).

This is similar to Goffman's notion of 'fitting-in' in micro-level public spheres by means of a high level of facework and bodily gestures (Goffman, 1959). To 'fit in' on the train, some try not to stare at others, while some try to get more attention by using particular bodily gestures, such as pushing or touching others, speaking loudly, and more recently by being political, protesting against the compulsory hijab in women-only wagons and circulating the pictures globally on social media. In all these cases, the high level of accidental encounters between strangers creates something similar to a street-based public space in which ordinary and necessary everyday actions – among them interaction, attitudes, expressions, 'civil inattention' (Goffman, 1963, p.84), and 'tactful inattention' (Goffman, 1959, p.230) – happen. Many accidental encounters of this sort can be seen in women-only carriages, where male hawkers

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[8] See, for instance, James Scott account on enslaved groups in the American South that developed a communicative language among themselves to speak to each other in ways the masters could not understand, so mentally they were not enslaved (cited in Sennett, 2018, p.262).

feel free to walk, even though male passengers are forbidden to enter by law. Both male and female hawkers circulate inside the women-only boundary – especially in off-peak hours when there is more room to walk between bodies.

The [unofficial] freedom associated with women-only carriages brings more hawkers in to sell cheap make-up, fake jewellery, scarves, chador and other hijab ornaments, such as colourful scarf clips. An irregular, informal, non-linear, mobile geographical container, moving from south to north and vice versa, creates a setting for face-to-face, verbal, aural, and bodily encounters between the people who pour into the metro from both the north and the south of Tehran. The crowds on the one hand, and the constant presence of hawkers on the other, especially during rush hours, leads to passengers learning 'impression management' in this micro-level public sphere (Goffman, 1959, p.14). In so doing, people must sustain a collectively shared definition of the situation – in a country with political sanctions, mismanagement, a high rate of unemployment and hegemonic laws and regulation of women, including compulsory hijab-wearing – to decode the normative expectations and adjust their social behaviour accordingly.

The point here is that while mobility on Tehran's Metro Line 1, as on any subway around the world, is based on a predetermined rhythm, and locked into a regular series of moves and stops at particular locations, it also serves as an informal environment in which a porous relationship can form – between the fixed enclosed space inside the train's carriages and disordered, deviant social interactions. The equivalent of this phenomenon, on the ground, can be found in Merriman's argument about the Israeli wall and the embodied mobility of Palestinians (Merriman, 2019, p.68). While the wall [like a women-only carriage] is designed to 'secure' Israeli territory [women's territory], and like a barrier prevents the movement of Palestinians [male passengers] 'it also generates, enables and embodies distinctive movements, rhythms and affects which have political resonance and significance', such as, for example, Palestinians who cross the wall by different tactics at different times of day and night (Merriman, 2015, p.559). It is therefore important to consider mobility, transitivity and temporalities, which create a broader reconfiguration and relational distribution of openness in Tehran.

That is to say, instead of occupying a highly sociable public space outside the metro, women and male/female hawkers transform the quality of women-only carriages from spaces gender-segregated by a boundary into semi-public/semi-private spaces with porous/resistant edges in which men and women cross the boundaries whenever they can. This sociable quality,

however, cannot be seen on all metro lines in Tehran, since it is only Line 1 that connects the two most strongly poles contrasting poles. Within two weeks of riding either all or part of the route in both the women-only and the mixed carriages of Line 1 (at times ranging from early mornings to late at night), it became clear that among the main destinations chosen by north Tehranies on a weekday are three stations near the Tehran Grand Bazaar (*Saadi, Imam Khomeini, Panzdah-e Khordad*), while *Haghani* (near Vanak Square), and *Tajrish* are the main destinations for those commuting from south to north on weekends as well as weekdays. The vignette below is based on a three-minute journey between two stations near Tehran Grand Bazaar (Figures 7-6).

<p style="text-align:center;">✳ ✳ ✳</p>

An ethnographic vignette

'*Next station: Imam Khomeini*', the monotonous female voice announces automatically. It is 12:00 pm on a summer day. Although there are no empty seats in the women-only carriages, they are not overcrowded at this time of day. Sunk into their seats, their colourful scarfs tied nicely and not showing any hair, two old women are drinking a bottle of orange juice while laughing about their memories of public baths: '*we had to take so much food with us because we wanted to stay till afternoon*'. They continue in a whisper, probably about how in the old days married and experienced women chose brides in the public baths since they could see the young girls' bodies naked (Ahmadi, 2014). Staring at smartphones, four girls sit tightly packed next to each other on three seats in front of them. Although the public realm of the subway is subject to Islamic laws and regulations, women forget the codes here, letting their scarves fall off their shoulders, braiding or combing their hair, making-up or even changing their scarves and *manteaus*. '*I told her to not let him to take advantage of her; keep your dignity'*, she finished braiding her long light brown hair at last, turning her head around to look for a hawker selling elastic hair bands. She wears a strong red lipstick, her fake eyelashes heavy on her eyes, her nails are polished a light red colour; she intentionally lets her scarf rest on her shoulders when she has finished braiding her hair. This vivid, mobile temporal market of the women-only carriage offers the pleasure of easy shopping to its passengers. Regardless of their gender, saleswomen and men circulate through the crowd selling their cheap products. Some

saleswomen wear pollution masks so as not to get recognised by others. Carrying their items in a suitcase, facilitated by the latest mobile card-reading technology, they grow their business by hanging their goods from the horizontal handrails to tempt passengers into buying. The rhythm and tone of their voices, shouting together while standing or walking, their changes of direction in the tiny space between seats, all turn the women-only carriage into a theatrical stage where passengers must either keep be or take a break their conversation for a moment to hear what they are saying:

'Ladies! This new mascara is made in Turkey not in China, its price is 10,000 Toomans in bazaar while I am selling it for only 5,000 Toomans',

'My dear ladies! Wooden set of forks and knives is all you need in the kitchen for only 10,000 Toomans',

'Ladies! Let me apply this new hair removal technology to your skin',

'Ladies, smell these original perfumes, all imported from turkey',

'Dearest ladies! All sizes of new bralettes in all colours, without wire which stops you getting breast cancer'.

At this moment the monotonous automatic voice, louder than any other voice, announces, *'next station: Panzdah-e Khordad'*. Everyone gets ready to get off the train at Tehran Grand Bazaar station. Squeezing, touching, rubbing bodies against each other, feeling the bodily sweat, smell and heat, everything is at its highest sensory momentum right before the doors open at 12:03.

From the author's journey by metro, from Tajrish (District 1) to Shoosh (District 12), on 15 August 2017.

✳ ✳ ✳
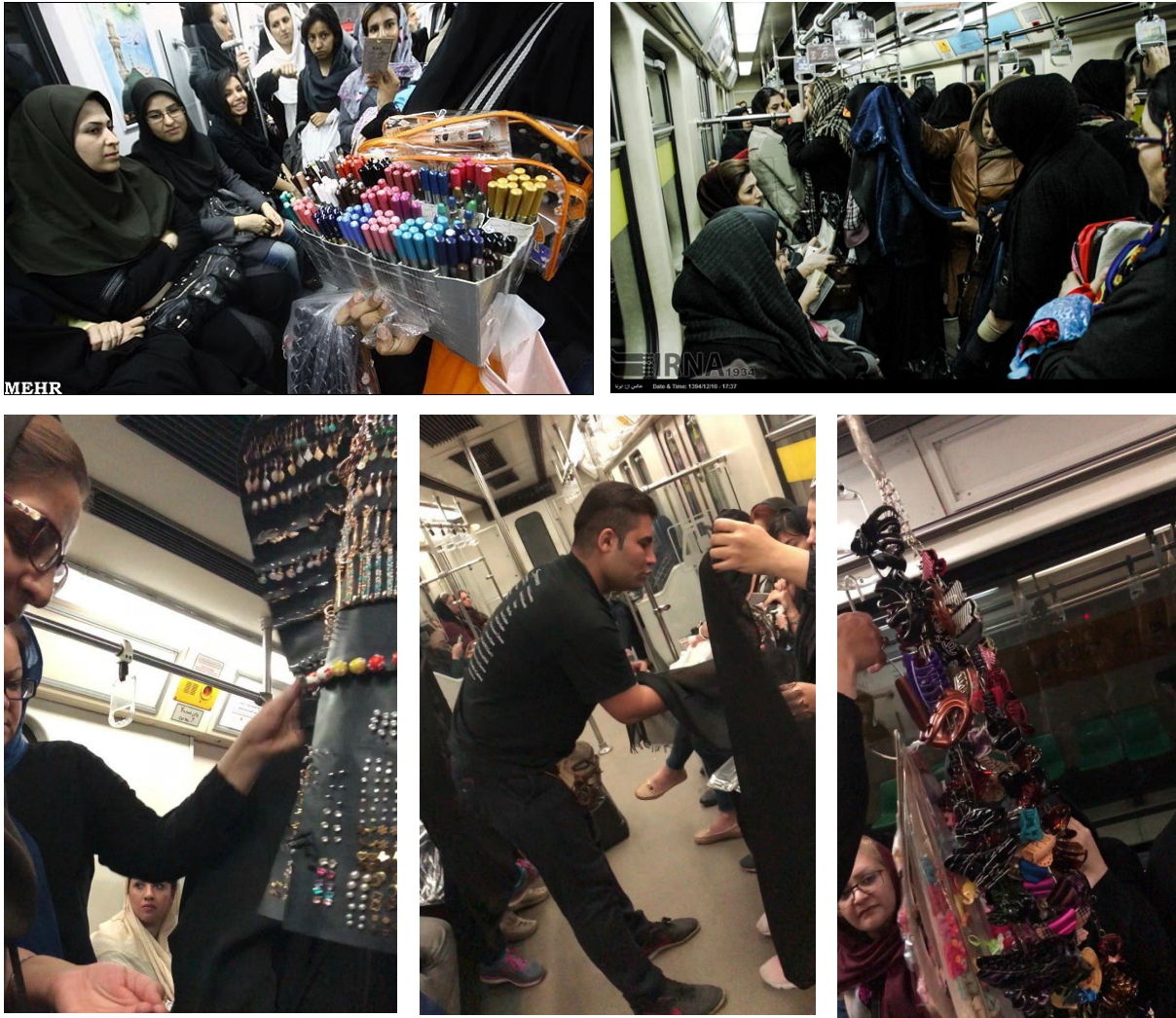
Figures 7-6: Inside Tehran's metro Line 1 (Source: Eghtesad Online, 2017)

Bus

Like the metro, Tehran's buses are also gender-segregated. However, unlike the metro, which has two carriages dedicated to women, one at either end of the train, gender division on the buses is less rigidly defined and more transparent (it is worth noting here that not all trains have separate carriages for women, but that some, like the buses, apply transparent dividers as a tool to segregate men and women from each other). The bus divider, introduced in 2006, functions like an architectural partition based on versatile and adaptable prefabricated wall systems that create a non-load bearing wall, to separate spaces inside buildings and provide privacy, storage, a corner wall and many other functions, including dividing office workspaces.

This is what Sennett (2018, p.228-231) refers to as a 'shell'. A shell is a type of empty building, shaped like a shoebox, where the character of a space can be altered in a positive or negative

way, for instance by creating partitions, where an interior is supported by very few internal structural walls of brick or stone (Sennett, 2018, p.229). Similarly, a bus can function like a shell, with its huge floor cluttered by flexible obstructions, such as passenger seats and gender-dividers both of which can be re-organised, re-configured or removed based on demographic demand, sociocultural factors, and political imperatives. The ability to change the inside of a shell-type building type 'creates porosity within a building, since structurally there are few fixed barriers', says Sennett (2018, p.230). On Tehran's buses too, there are boundaries between men and women. However, at the edges where they meet – in the divider zone – people actively engage and interact. The divider therefore functions as a permeable border that instead of isolating one side rigidly from the other, creates a dynamic relation between them. The divider – which is a low vertically glazed wall on some buses and consists of horizontal metal pipes on others – allows a high level of visual, aural, verbal and other sensual interaction between men and women at its edge, while keeping them away from each other bodily (Figures 7-7).

Athough the divider is usually fixed in the middle of the bus, there is a loose fit between its form and function. The divider was initially introduced to construct an Islamic space inside the bus and 'to reduce the physical contact between unrelated men and women in public space' (Shahrokni, 2019, p.38). However, the porous/resistant quality of the divider allows the boundary's sides to overlap at their edges, since men and occasionally women (in the company of male relatives) cross the divider whenever there is a lack of space on one side of the boundary. Here, the shell space of the bus creates momentary concentrations of sensory and physical interactions around a divider intended to 'promote the appropriate Islamic ethics,' said the director of Bus Companies of Tehran (cited in Shahrokni, 2019, p.38). On the one hand, the divider and boundary make it easier for women to access the city; on the other, in various circumstances people re-balance and de-stabilise the top-down Islamic ethical codes by changing the character of gendered-segregated territory.

As can be seen in all these instances, vehicles, as with Sennett's open *ville*, 'create the material condition in which people might thicken and deepen their experience of collective life' (Sennett, 2018, 241). While his own open *ville*, 'which is marked by five forms,' allows the *cité* to become complex, the specific qualities and characteristics of mobility by public transport in Tehran show how this sort of open *ville* can also be seen beyond the streets, buildings, and public spaces, in mobile settings where there are porous, as well as resistant

relations between inside and outside, between detachment and involvement. This is to say, within the sociopolitical context of Tehran, a better understanding of 'a complex *cité*' emerges from zooming out and seeing the moving cityscape from a bird's-eye view, or zooming-in to see the city moving below ground.

Up to now, the momentary and pop-up quality of openness in Tehran has been explored. However, it still remains to show how resistance, subversion and disruption can also change the top-down power relations to temporarily open the city from below. Although previous sections have discussed how women and youth change the Islamic codes on the use of public spaces, for instance in cafés and during dor-dor, it is still important to note that these activities in north Tehran are 'dependent on the currents of capitalism and consumerism'. This shows how north Tehrani youth are 'drowning in their own economic and material desires' (Atwood, 2015, p.137), while the middle class and poor youth who do not live in wealthy North Tehran also develop their own ways to inhabit, appropriate, redefine, subvert and transform the qualities of their physical environment.

Figures 7-7: Inside Rahahan-Tajrish bus (Source: babcnews, 2020)

7.3. Imposing disorder from below

In the southern parts of the city, a lack of facilities, restricted traditional and religious beliefs and a higher level of parental surveillance in central and southern parts (Hamseda. 2008), encourage youth to become more strategic in their acts of defiance and negation of Islamic laws and cultural norms. However, it is worth noting that literature on urban life in the south of Tehran usually focuses on risky factors such as poverty, drug use, lives of addicts, 'runaway girls', and peripheral life, while the middle-class youth of the central neighbourhoods of Tehran are initiating a new language of negotiation, as well as of defiance, in momentarily opening up the closed, regulated, restricted, and controlled environment of public space. By joining different groups and communities, similar to what Maffesoli (1996) has called *neo tribes*, and by using new information and communication technologies widely, they choose from a wide range of secondary social groupings and maintain fluid, transient and still varied social ties (Zokaei, 2015). Instead of design interventions that create openness, different musical, artistic, sporting, or voluntary groupings have begun to lay claim to physical spaces that disrupt the dialogue about what is considered to be acceptable social behavior and order.

While not everyone takes part in these activities/performances, their impact on the imposition of disorder and transformations in the quality of urban life cannot be ignored, as they circulate widely (both locally and globally) in virtual space. Graffiti art, parkour dancing, and climbing on utility boxes in the street are some of the practices that allow physical features of the built environment to be seen as socio-material assemblages that result in reconfiguration of the public realm as a place for cultural, social and political interventions as well as spontaneity and urban life (on sociomaterial symbiosis, see Sendra, 2015). It means that instead of designing a porous edge to let social interaction intensify among those different groups, a plain white wall, an urban stairway, a concrete platform or a utility box also can be re-purposed by users in a way that promotes 'tolerant sociability' (McFarlane, 2011, in Sendra, 2015, p.822). This tolerant sociablity emerges when, according to Sendra (2015), both people and material elements (including urban infrastructure, spatial configurations, vegetation and other physical features of the built environment), can propose types of urban disorder that encourage tolerance towards difference. It is worth noting that disorder here refers to Sennett's (1990, p.213) argument about strategies for intervention in the physical built environment that create conditions for the *unplanned* use of the public realm, since consciousness of material objects can resonate with the consciousness people have of one another in cities.

As a new visual culture, graffiti (which dates back to the 1970s but which has thrived in the last twenty years in Iran (Mashreghnews.ir, 2018), involves the re-appropriation of public spaces by a growing underground culture of dissent, to communicate artistic, cultural, social and political viewpoints via walls. According to a state news agency, *Mashreghnews* (2018), graffiti artists usually choose the southern streets of Tehran as municipal workers there seem to be less active at erasing the graffiti and whitening the walls the next day. Needless to say, by hiding their identities and colouring the walls of the city, graffiti artists have been successful in creating large online/virtual audiences (including bloggers, photographers, journalists, and graffiti hunters) who circulate their work internally as well as globally. Their latest work can be followed easily on the web page, *irangraffiti.com* (established in 2005) and other social media platforms such as the Tehran-based graffiti artists' Instagram page *Artnafir* which has more than 40k followers. One of the most radical confrontations between graffiti artists and the authorities happened during the 2009 Green movement in which – similar to what Abaza (2013, p.128) describes during the 2011 revolution and urban transformations of downtown Cairo – the graffiti became 'a form of reclaiming the public spaces and non-violently protesting' against the violence of the regime. During the protest, wall writing, spray-painted graffiti, and even writing on banknotes (*pool nevisi*) was of 'crucial significance for the visual and artistic narration' of the protest (Abaza, 2013, p.131), as authorities removed almost all banners with pictures of the supreme leader in March 2011, to protect his picture from being mocked by murals and graffiti (Khosravi, 2013, p.13). Since 2009, according to Khosravi (2013), the wall has remained a sociopolitical urban material that facilitates spontaneity and improvisation. '*My work is not political, I am reflecting on events that seem important to me on a daily basis',* says a Tehran-based graffiti artist in an informal conversation in 2017. *'Still, every time someone rings the bell, I think it's police and I know they will arrest me one day, because painting on the city wall needs permission from municipality and therefore graffiti is counted as an illegal act in Iran'… . 'That's why my work is whitewashed in physical space but lasts only in virtual space'* he continues (Figure 7-8).

Figure 7-8: "Making the World Colorful for the Kids of #darvazeghar, Tehran" (Source: Citiestale, 2017)

Like graffiti art, the physical environment for practicing parkour can also be seen as socio-material assemblages, which are constantly subject to the momentum of change and reconfiguration. Since the early 2000s – after Iranian state television broadcast *Yamakasi*, a French film about parkour's young founders – thousands of young Iranians have taken on this challenging discipline (Nada, 2013). Since then, it has exploded into public consciousness as a representation of a certain type of mobility in any urban space (including architectural surfaces such as walls, concrete platforms, staircases, or other sociomaterials such as benches, rails, pipes, and banisters), and via the circulation of parkour experiments, play, and tournaments on social media. Once traceurs' (French for tracers) bodies touch the texture and surfaces of various architectural forms, parkour becomes not just a physical but also an emotional and affective engagement with the urban environment, in which they acquire physical injuries (including broken legs, hands, and heads) and experience many different emotions and affects simultaneously (such as fear, panic, excitement and etc.) because the nature of the sport is 'to decide in the moment where and how to jump' (bbcpersian, 2020). Traceurs improvise; their

movement is unplanned and unpredicted, to 'revitalise and transform the architecture of the city' as they move both physically and emotionally (Saville, 2008, p.892). In Iran, however, it is illegal to play parkour in the streets without obtaining official permission. The architecture and 'neo-tribal' grouping of the Ekbatan residential complex in Tehran, for instance, was one of the first landmarks to attract young male and female traceurs in the early 2000s. The first parkour academy in Tehran was launched in 2005; it had the first official website and Instagram page with more than 19k followers: *ekbatanparkour* (Hamshahrionline, 2021). Keeping it under state control, however, does not stop young boys and girls spontaneously transforming and redefining the quality of public spaces, such as parks and the urban fabric associated with them, by imagining new time-spaces in the places they move through. This is because parkour players are constantly engaged creatively with the sociomaterial environment, disturbing the rhythm of various architectures and attaching their own disordered rhythmical movement to 'the ordered hierarchies of architecture-as-object, architecture-as-drawing, or architecture-as-idea' (Borden, 2001, in Saville, 2008, p.909) (Figures 7-9 and 7-10).

Figures 7-9 (right): Women's parkour in the streets of Tehran (source: Guardian, 2017)

Figure 7-10 (left): Official Parkour Competition in Tehran (Source: AzarakshPhotoblog, 2009)

Climbing and standing on top of urban utility boxes, however, is not associated with parkour training; it was a protest against compulsory hijab-wearing by ordinary Iranian women and men, that grew into a global phenomenon on social media. It started with a video shot by a passer-by in Enghelab Street in 2017, showing a woman standing on top of a utility box in busy Tehran street located in District 11 – the cultural centre, that hosts its main publications, bookshops, and Tehran's universities – wearing a plain black shirt and trousers and waving her white scarf on a stick. The immobility of the utility box and her body – that like a statue looked straight ahead in silence, moving only her hands – while underneath cars and motorcycles blare their horns and passers-by watch or film her, makes the city appear restless and creates an aesthetic assemblage of a theatre in which the utility box becomes a stage for performing an act of defiance (Figure 7-11). This is similar to the way Abaza (2013, p.126) describes Tahrir Square in 2011, as 'a novel understanding of public spaces as spaces of contestation, of communication and debate, as well as spaces of the 'spectacle'. Soon after, not only defiant young women, but also old and religious women as well as men enacted the role of 'The Girl of Enghelab Street', climbing on any utility boxes or platforms in their cities, and waving a scarf on a piece of wood to protest against the compulsory hijab. Like the graffiti that are whitewashed shortly after they appear, like the parkour that is illegal except at specific sites, climbing up urban utility boxes made the authorities obsessed with reshaping their flat top surface with a vaulted surface with sloping sides like an upside-down V, and with imposing new rules, police harassment, fines, and even jail terms to stop people from protesting in this way (Figures 7-12 and 7-13).

Figure 7-11 (top): "The Girl of Enghelab Street" (Source: The Independent, 2018)

Figures 7-12 (right): The subsequent protests in other cities (Source: Zeitoons, 2018)

Figure 7-13 (left): Re-ordering the built environment by authorities: "Construction of gables on electricity and telecommunication substations by police to prevent girls from standing on them" (Source: Euronews Farsi, 2018)

All these instances and many other instances – such as dancing on rooftops, or underground parties and recording music – shows how changing the fixed order and hierarchy of *ville* ('the solid of buildings and streets' (Sennett, 2020, p.8)) can promote a complex *cité* ('the behavior and outlook adopted by the people who lodge within the physical place' (Sennett, 2020, p.8)). It is as if the physical form, not as designed, but interfered with and transformed, in a way 'loosen[s] up the fixed habits, to disorder the absolute image of self' (Sennett, 2020, p.8) and communicates the different ways urban sociomaterial, architectural components and public spaces can be used. This is what Sennett (2020, p.9) calls 'life beyond the ordained, the prescribed'. However, the parts of civil society that support the top-down Islamic rules and prescriptions are opposed to those whose behaviour creates a complex image of society as a whole, seeing only deviants disconnected from society and detached from commonly held values and beliefs (see Durkheim, 1897 [1951], in Thorlindsson and Bernburg, 2004). They believe in a kind of social order based on social integration and regulation which promotes 'the perception that people are part of a larger social whole, focusing their interests outside the individual self and counteracting egoism' (Durkheim, 1951, in Thorlindsson and Bernburg, 2004, p.272). So, by not conforming to the [Islamic] social order, those who attach innovation and surprising configurations to physical urban environments become 'particular individuals'

whose 'deviant behaviors' need punishment and should be erased from the surface of society. Although these bottom-up strategies create momentum in the closed city of Tehran making it a 'theatre for self-expression and social engagement and complexity' (Sennett, 2020, p.15), they are strictly controlled, erased, punished and disciplined by the authorities as well as by a large portion of [mainly religious] civil society (see Foucault's (1977) panopticon in disciplinary societies for the way they subjugate their citizens). Having said that, it is important to note that although their footprints may be erased from the physical space, their impact will endure virtually (online), beyond their specific existence in time and space.

This opens another line of argument relating to virtual space: exploring the complexity of *cité* in the sociopolitical context of Tehran cannot be limited to analysing the physical layout, the means of mobility, and the subversive use of urban sociomaterials alone. Rather, underneath the social and political surveillance of Tehran, there is a need for close attention to the technologies and means of circulating information that enable different uses of public space to be widely seen. This is historically similar to the emergence of civil engineering in the early nineteenth century through which the quality of urban life was transformed and the city's underground infrastructure dealt with health issues in the city (see Sennett, 2018, p.22). But the networked infrastructure of the internet, with its vast array of information and range of technological devices exists above-ground and provides greater possibilities for mobility, flexibility and interactivity, as well as surveillance. With more than 68 million mobile internet users, the Internet has a penetration rate of 94% which means that 94 out of every 100 people in the country used the Internet in 2020 (Mehrnews, 2020). This expansion of virtual space creates the need to discuss the different place-based narratives it produces.

7.4. Virtual porosity

With the advent of technological development, societies began to move towards new communication technologies that enabled them to move, virtually, beyond their physical locations. The physical environment/*ville* (streets, buildings and public spaces), apart from providing a surface for face-to-face interactions, is 'constantly offering, passing and collecting information… about our movements, consumption habits and taste preference' (Featherstone, 2009, p.5). Behind this massive collection of information lies another network of collectors interested in harvesting our traces, from government or military authorities (that design

'cultural, moral, ethical codes… to guarantee our safety' and increase their surveillance of the population) to other corporations and private companies (see Chun, 2011, p.91). In the mid-to-late 1990s, when the internet first emerged as a mass personalised medium (Chun, 2011, p.92), users began to browse and surf imaginary new worlds through films and images. By 2005, users began to get access to virtual time-spaces to which they had previously had no or limited access, that allowed them to become, for example, the google maps figure who can wander into the alleys of different cities around the world. This shows that discussion of the 'urban' cannot be not limited to the physical, built environment; rather the 'urban', as Adey and Bevan (2006, p.47) argue, must 'now be understood as an integrated complex of the physical, the virtual and mobility.' They discuss how the physical form of the city is so integrated into software and telecommunications that even some architects, such as Marcos Novak (1997), use the term transarchitectures, to describe the ways that socio-technologies are re-shaping cities, urban forms and spaces. This can be seen in the development of software that has opened new possibilities for users, especially architecture students, to render and move through their preferred and imaginary *ville* that is created by 3D-AutoCAD, 3D max and a whole host of ubiquitous architectural software such as Rhino and Revit. This is to say that if the virtual presence and movement of an individual in the 'data environment' (cited in Parisi, 2009, p.350) is bound to technological control or government surveillance that turns humans and all physical objects in the physical world into codes, zero and ones, IDs, logos, algorithms, and so forth – it opens, at the same time, new possibilities for inclusion in different forums for social interaction in societies that have harsh and closed political environments such as Iran. As a result, it is is important to consider 'new forms of (im)mobility, subjectivity and encounter' integrate physical, social and virtual space (Sheller and Urry, 2006, p.3).

Inclusion beyond the ville

This section explores inclusion (as another component of Sennett's porosity) within the virtual space of Tehran. Take instances of the gendered-segregated spaces of bra-shops, women-only parks, women-only carriages on the metro and women-only sections on buses in Tehran. These gender segregated public spaces in the city are similar to what Amir-Ebrahimi (2006, p.240) calls a '*metropolitan andarouni'* or what Sennett refers to as *ghetto*: 'a complex space designed to use the *Other* practically while pushing away their presence socially: to exclude' (Sennett, 2018, p.134).[9] However, as will be shown, this is not just women's problem, but includes a

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[9] Sennett, ontologically, reviews 3000 years of ghetto life in Jewish communities and how *they* (Jewish people) become a 'shared spatial identity' in the way that the very 'space of the ghetto forced on them habits shared in

wider category of people in Tehran, and in Iran in general, including in particular young people, whose access to public space is limited and who are pushed away from the social life of the city. Young people (aged 15-29 years) make up some three million of Tehran's total population (Statistical Center of Iran, 2016). In comparison with the first decade of the Revolution, a large proportion of the demographic shift in Iran's population, which has 'ballooned from almost 33 million in 1976 to more than 70 million in 2006', belongs to the 'Third Generation' (Khosravi, 2013, p9). The Third Generation is the post-revolutionary generation that came of age in the first decade of the new millennium, around the same time that the ability to access the internet expanded across the whole country (Akhavan, 2013, p.829). The behaviour of this generation, which according to the authorities was largely illicit, caused huge social difficulties. As a result, they became labelled as a generation under 'cultural invasion' (*tahajom-e farhangi*), which refers to the flow of global youth culture through the internet and other mediums such as TV, radio, underground music and so forth, of which the purpose is to de-moralise young Iranians and thereby de-stabilise the Islamic Republic (Khosravi, 2008). While, on the one hand, hegemonic Islamic moral codes of behaviour, appearance and action limit the proportion of, and extent to which, women and youth are visible and can access the *city*, on the other hand women and youth use alternative underground and virtual spaces to re-assert their visibility and expressivity. Virtual spaces – such as websites, blogs, social media profiles, posting, and recommending – create alternative ways for women and youth to navigate the *city* in Tehran.

Amir-Ebrahimi (2015, p.829) has suggested that beginning in early 2000, the Iranian blogosphere soon became 'one of the most prolific and miscellaneous platforms of Iranian cyberspace…through which many bloggers, such as feminists, secular, political, social, and cultural dissidents constitute[ed] the main counterparts and targets of the state censorship.' New codes for Farsi typing were emerging at this time, and owning a computer was becoming more affordable; connecting to the internet either at home or from an internet café became possible for the middle-class, according to Amir-Ebrahimi (2008, p.235). In the absence of a free, democratic public space to gather, chat, and interact with the 'other', chat rooms and forums became an alternative free public sphere for people, especially women, from different

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common, but dwelling together also promoted them to think of themselves as neighbours' (Sennett, 2018, p.134). For him, between the Jews and the rest, there was an 'I/Tho' relationship that itself comes from Levinas and Buber (Sennett, 2018, p.134). By social interaction with others and the abilities one has to see the world through others' eyes, Buber indicates, the thou becomes I, while Levinas keeps a distance from the other, looking at the other as a neighbor, a stranger to point out the responsibility one has towards the other (Sennett, 2018, p.134, see also Sennett 1999, p.145).

backgrounds to get involved in the social, political, economic, and cultural life of the city (Amir-Ebrahimi, 2008). But middle-class women and young people were not the only users of the internet who began to blur the rigid boundaries of private and public space through weblog writing about their personal interests and beliefs, the internet brought a new challenge to the Islamic authorities in the shape of religious youth. The reason for this was that – apart from the state-sponsored content on the Internet, including 'the Koran, various propaganda, articles, religious and political texts, and even prayers' translated into different languages – religious youth and students now also 'had access to multiple sources of information', developed 'new perspectives', 'ask[ed] new types of questions', 'slip[ed] beyond the visible boundaries of the religious social community', and encountered 'other people with different points of view, including members of the opposite sex' (Amir-Ebrahimi, 2008, p.235-236).

However, although the Internet became a new public sphere in which, unlike physical space, the edges between inclusion and exclusion became more porous and permeable every day, the Iranian state recognised the potential harm of this virtual porosity and responded with heavy surveillance, one aspect of which was 'a repressive arm [that] filtered content and controlled Internet speed and a cultural arm [that] produced content and participated online' (Akhavan, 2013, p.97). According to Akhavan, the state engaged in a 'soft war', 'to subvert what [it] claimed were media-based assaults on Iranian values and culture by *educating* the public about the perceived enemy's media tactics and producing competing media content.' In other words, they attempted was to *purify* the Internet, to extend their disciplinary policies from the physical to the virtual landscape, imposing order on (what they perceived as) disorder.

Virtual [dis]order, momentary openness
'Eliminating the possibility for experiencing surprise, by controlling the frame of what is available for social interaction' in modern urban planning was how Sennett saw the world in his first book, *The Use of Disorder*, in 1970. He later expanded this into the theory of the closed city in *Building and Dwelling*, 2018. In the *ville*, 'a conflict is conceived as a threat to some *better* conflict-free city life' (Sennett, 1970, p.97). On the other hand, a friction-free *cité* 'is withdrawn from the clamour of contending interests – the interest of other people or, perhaps worse, contending interest within oneself' (Sennett, 2018, p.158). It is as if, in the context of Tehran for instance, the authorities supress/ignore the interests and desires of those who oppose them, so that the environment will be ordered, disciplined and friction-free. Beyond the *physical layout of the city*, in which urban planning can foster or eliminate this approach, it is

the Internet's surveillance system that *regulates* and *disciplines* the public sphere from a control centre. In Iran, this control centre is called "The Committee to Determine Instances of Criminal Content (CDICC)", which was established in 2009 after the global circulation of images and video clips of the Green Movement protest, to dictate the way society should create friction-free, crimeless, and purified content on different platforms, taken from personal weblogs, to YouTube, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and a whole host of other communication platforms such as WhatsApp and Telegram.

In doing so, this control center introduced a systematic and unified filtering process by labelling the circulation of specific content as crime – among them the vague violation of 'creating conflict in society' (US. Department of Treasury, 2013) and some 56 other infringements such as 'endangering security, comfort and public safety' (CDICC, 2009). Someone caught committing one of these virtual crimes faces a conviction in the physical world, either in the form of a cash fine or a bodily punishment such as imprisonment and lashes (CDICC, 2009). In other words, the state makes a close connection between 'online communication' in virtual space and 'offline events' in physical space (Akhavan, 2013, p.99) and has extended its disciplinary biopower into other spheres as well. According to the CDICC (2009), this is because 'users are not just readers and consumers of published information, but also actively participate in the *production* and *dissemination* of information and *exchange* views on various topics.' As a result, instead of finding problems with the production of filtered, Islamic virtual space, the attempt is to filter and erase material and content produced by the 'enemy', including Iranian diaspora outside, Iranian/non-Iranian oppositional groups inside and outside, and women and young people who bypass Islamic moral and dress codes and so on. One instance of this virtual surveillance of cities that 'privileges the problem-solving over problem-finding' can be seen in what Sennett calls the *prescriptive* smart city (2018, p.161-162), that has developed in the age of ubiquitous computing and technology. This kind of smart city, he says, is able to foresee potential threats in advance, dictating how the city will work, and laying out its workings precisely in spatial and built form. He believes that the prescriptive smart city 'stupefies' the *cité*, because it is 'user-friendly' and 'easy to live in' with a 'homeostatic balance between its components' (Sennett, 2018, p.162).

Nevertheless, the Islamic authorities' prescriptive surveillance and filtering of virtual space has produced vigilant and active online/offline citizens/users in Tehran and Iran at large, who use VPNs and other anti-filter software to maintain and expand their presence in both

virtual/physical space. In the face of censorship and the limitations of the physical layout of the city, virtual space becomes their alternative, '*real*' world, as the country's supreme leader once said,[10] through which people, especially women and youth, have reclaimed, redefined, challenged and shaken the [imaginary] strict definitions of Islamic codes of conduct. Not only middle-class women and young people, as already mentioned, but also among the religious youth and women, for instance, began to disclose their inner selves (*baten*) to the outer world by writing personal blogs, re-defining the boundaries of *zaher/baten* (inner-self/outer-self), as one of the most fundamental elements of modesty among Muslim women (see Amir-Ebrahimi, 2008). Social media also became a platform for involvement, inclusion, expression, experience, and interaction with the Other. For instance, after the 1999 Tehran Student Protest, the second confrontation between youth and the conservative state came with the events of the disputed presidential election of 2009, in which social media extended the boundaries of the protest globally, and created a sense that 'the new technology had the potential to overthrow even the most entrenched powers endured.' (Akhavan, 2013, p.104). This would also be the motto of the Arab revolutions in Egypt and Tunisia between 2010 and 2011, as Abaza (2013) indicates. More recently, as Featherstone (2020, p.113) points out, a 'recommendation economy' has developed, especially on Instagram in Iran, in which ordinary people are encouraged to intermediaries to rate and rank their experiences online, and in return the physical experience of the city is customised for those who are interested. In Iran, the emergence of new virtual influencers and some '*Shakh-E Insta*',[11] 'particular kinds of mobility and mobile communication have shaped or are re-shaping space, place and presence' (Sheller and Urry, 2006, p.3). This is similar to what is happening in other countries, as influencers are partly changing the understanding of 'fixing urban spaces as a kind of bounded geographical location into and out of which people and objects move' (Sheller and Urry, 2006, p.4). However, the difference is that [female] influencers inside Iran have introduced new codes for compulsory hijab that are prohibited in physical urban space. By indicating that they themselves are a '*Follower of the Islamic Republic Rules*' in their bio section, influencers are in fact showing that wearing these specific forms of hijab – such as a sport cap and new ornamented forms of wearing the scarf to cover only a small part of their front hair – is a kind of *ordered disorder*

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[10] According to the country's supreme leader, Ali Khamenei, 'it's called virtual space, but in fact, it is a real space' (Khamenei.ir, 2017).

[11] According to a state sponsored news agency, *Shakh-E Insta* refers to those public figures on Instagram who are 'continuously active in the production of Dubsmash, showing daily life in full detail, bringing the audience into the private sphere and share feelings and emotions openly, producing content that is formally and legally considered a taboo and a violation of the law' (Eghtesadnews, 2018)

that can be found in virtual space. And because urban practices and the cultures of city life can be transformed through all these new forms of virtual connectivity, it is hypothesised that the practice of 'new hijab' will be transformed into an even newer one which appears first in virtual space. As a result, it can be said that interfering and transforming the codes and order of the *city* via virtual space opens up new opportunities to experience social life 'beyond the ordained, the prescribed' (Sennett, 2020, p.9).

7.5. Conclusion

A closed city for Sennett is a city that eliminates the possibility of experiencing new things; 'you are moving through space rather than experiencing place' (Sennett, 2018, p.163). A closed city does not provoke and awaken awareness of the surroundings. The environment of this city is designed in such a way as to eliminate barriers and conflicts, everything is in order. This chapter has explored the open qualities of Tehran. Moments of conflict, contrast, disorder and difference, or as Sennett (2018, p.58) would call them, urban DNA, become part of the everyday life of people in the [closed] city of Tehran. Through a detailed exploration of everyday life in vehicles and virtual space, the chapter has discussed alternative approaches to Sennett's open city theory, where it is not the positive sides of particular elements such as porosity and permeable edges, but temporary boundary-making that increases access to and experience of the city. This is to say that when it comes to the sociopolitical context of Iranian cities, it is necessary to alter and re-think western urban theories before directly applying them to the new built environment. This is because even when applying Sennett's five design interventions directly to Tehran, the activity of experiencing the city is still controlled and observed by the state.

Here, it is suggested that when reading authoritarian cities through the lens of open city, instead of approaching *cité* as 'the behavior and outlook adapted by the people who lodge within the physical place' (Sennett, 2010, p.8), there is a need to re-think other possibilities that the 'physical place' might include, and whether it has to be a physical place such as a street? Or could it also be a quasi-public space such as an underground meeting place, café, or the mobile space of a moving vehicle? Needless to say, virtual space and the internet are also a physical process, made up of a massive infrastructure of cables, networks and other material such as black oil sleeping in the ocean (see Reza Negarestani, *Cyclonopedia: Complicity with Anonymous Materials*, 2008). With the advancement of digital media and access to

smartphones, the relationship between the [online]body and the physical world is changing rapidly. Cconsequently, experience of the city and sense of place become less bound to physical place. This chapter has therefore taken the alternative approach of looking beyond Sennett's physical place to explore other spaces in which the people of Tehran can experience openness.

When a place, either physical or virtual, mobile or immobile, offers variation, complexity, informality, social interactivity and involvement, it can free the city to evolve and open up. This chapter has shown how private cars, taxis, buses and the metro offer settings where people can either experience or create a complex quality of life in Tehran. Like Sennett's open *ville*, the physical layouts of these vehicles are not restricted to a single function, since both drivers and passengers gradually colonise them as transitory sociable spaces, by temporary boundary-making, selling and buying, chatting with strangers about politics, culture, economic, and breaking through filters to comment, communicate and interact with others. The chapter has discussed how in the closed city of Tehran, with its massive surveillance system that sees the citizens in physical and virtual space at all times, people use moving vehicles and the internet as a tool to negotiate power relations in the city, to transform the quality of urban life in Tehran, and to re-claim the public spaces of the city. Against the closed, top-down approach of the state in ordering the city according to the Islamic rules and regulations and creating a friction-free society, woman and young people in Tehran expose conflict and difficulties by maintaining a constant presence, re-defining Islamic codes of appearance (from hijab to new-hijab), behaviour (from modesty to expressivity), and social interaction with the Other (from face-to-face to either car-to-car or virtual). As a result, while the city is still closed, the chapter has described moments at which people interfere and co-produce alternative, temporary open spaces.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

This thesis investigates Richard Sennett's theory of open city within the sociopolitical context of the Iranian capital: Tehran. By considering Tehran's history, politics, culture, urbanisation, and architecture, this study has sought to critique Sennett's lack of engagement with power relations through which cities are shaped. Reflecting on association between the shaping of urban public space and the functioning of the authoritarian governance in the public sphere in Tehran, this research shows the limitation of open city theory being merely desirable to those cities performing under democratic governance. This is to say that open city theory is, perhaps, too charged with a western sense of openness/closedness of what a city is or should be. Clearly, as it was shown in this research, the meaning of the openness/closedness should depend in large measure upon the political and economic interests of those governing the cities. The reason is that it is within the political, economic and even ideological contexts of cities that western concepts and notions can be re-defined in the first place. The question is what openness/closedness might mean within the public spaces and streets that are produced, from above, as spaces of surveillance, discipline and control? Needless to say that even private activities, when they are forced to support the political goal of the authoritarian regimes, shape a certain kind of ordered public space reflective of political ideology, military security and authoritative affluence. Nevertheless, instead of simply excluding authoritarian and nondemocratic settings from open city theory, this thesis has suggested other potential ways to experience openness/closedness, but these might not necessarily fit into Sennett's theory.

Although Sennett's open city theory is useful in connecting the built and the lived – suggesting a different urban system with more interaction between the built environments and how people dwell in it (social behavior) – it is still weak in creating a better picture of cities that are built and shaped as so-called 'closed systems'. This is because by 'closed' 'he means over-determined, regimented, balanced, segregated, controlled, clarity and linear' and by open 'he means incomplete, errant, conflictual, innovation, uncertain, complexity, and non-linear' (see Urban Springtime, 2014). Doesn't then an authoritarian power structure that constantly seeks to orchestrate private and public spaces to create a highly controlled, ordered, balance and linear urban environment, produce also a closed system of urban governance? In what ways then open city theory tends to describe a city that its highly controlled streets are not open to people who might challenge those in power? This thesis, contrary to open city theory, shed light on other forms of the power relations, processes and challenges of the production of closed

and open city in Tehran. And in this, women and other marginalised groups such as young groups, have a much more prominent role, both in re-defining and in re-inventing openness and closedness. Therefore, based on these line of arguments, the thesis set out to answer the following questions:

- Which aspects of open city theory can possibly be implemented in the city of Tehran?
- What are the elements and characteristics of openness in Tehran?
- How might the concept of 'openness' in Tehran be different from that of open city theory?

I began by discussing Sennett's open city theory. He successfully argues that cities today are created as closed systems, full of gated and homogeneous communities; that is, they are segregated, regimented, and controlled. Instead, he suggests ways to design an 'open city' in which citizens with all their differences are active participants in city life, and designers and planners, instead of imposing, *experiment* with urban forms to make it easier for residents to cope. The question is why only designers and planners seem to play roles in his experimental model of the open city? Where do politicians and other top decision makers stand in this ideal city? In the search for an answer, Tehran was taken as the example because many of the architectural, urban, and social interventions in this city seem to be destabilising to these very western concepts of open and closed. One way to make sense of this argument is to look at the political climate of specific eras in those cities, in which – if they were not run by a totalitarian regime – their architecture and planning could promote difference, discovery, interaction, complexity and exploration.[1]

Take, for instance, Prague in the 1960s after the Soviet Union invasion, when its government was based on a hybrid of communism and dictatorship.[2] In this specific era, the city's architecture and buildings, and their locations within the [porous] urban fabric, all ceased to be physically representative of social relations, in the way that they used to organise Czech people in space before the invasion.[3] The best way to illustrate this argument is to look at the main element of street/public life in European cities: the town square or piazza. Sennett argues that

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[1] See for instance, Sennett's 'The Open City' (2006, p.6), in which he indicates 'there is interaction between physical creation and social behaviour', so that by implementing specific ways, 'an open city can be well designed'.
[2] A coup in 1948 led totalitarian rule to emerge in Czechoslovakia and Communist ideology permeated citizens' lives and dominated all aspects of society until 1989.
[3] See Kim (2003) for a detail analysis of Prague's Romanesque, the Gothic culture of Czech's pinnacle age, Baroque, Neo Classicism, the Art Nouveau style buildings.

based on the discovery of perspective, the Renaissance and early Baroque city planning of the late-sixteenth and early-seventieth century created public spaces full of discoveries, full of life and full of time (Sennett, 1990, p.152). This argument is valid, not just in Old Town Square in Prague, but also in Rome, in the Piezza del Popolo, which, according to Sennett (1990, p.158), is 'an example of 'coherence' in urban design.' He shows how the rebuilding of Piazza del Popolo at the end of the 15th century was based, not on precise drawings, but on *conversations* between craftsmen, engineers and Pope Sixtus V (Sennett, 1990). He does not go beyond this, however, to examine the streets and public life of the same piazza under Mussolini when the fascist state had complete control of society and architecture was made to serve totalitarian doctrine, which means that the city – regardless of how its architecture, planning, urban squares and labyrinths could be put to democratic use (Sennett, 1998, p.277)[4] – was used to foster control, obedience and discipline. And this is the argument of this thesis: if a city lives under totalitarian doctrines, should we come to the conclusion that it is a closed city because there is no active, vivid and diverse life in its under-control streets and urban squares?

Going back to 1960s Prague under communism can help to understand this question better, because instead of architectural interventions and planning schemes, it was youth underground movements and activism that created pressure for reform and profound change in society. Coming together informally in groups, Czechoslovakian youth – including university students, musicians and an 'underground' subculture of intellectuals in cultural institutions (especially small theatres, film makers and the Czechoslovak Writers' Union) – called for liberalisation in both the political and cultural spheres (Pospíšil, 2012, p.479). They *boycotted* prescribed activities, searching for *new* and *innovative ways* to get around institutional and political requirements; through the *cultural resistance* of subcultures, Czechoslovakian youth were *sending signals* that the party leadership and the majority of society found increasingly difficult to ignore. Among these signals were specific haircuts, for example, or new dress codes, or privately listening to music, organising informal house parties and recording music from the radio in a number of different ways such as *roentgenizdat*, literally X-ray press or X-ray records, as a do-it-yourself technique (Pospíšil, 2012, p.482).

In post-revolutionary Tehran too, while spaces, streets, and squares became Islamised to control and discipline bodies by propagating an ideal Islamic vision though posters, murals,

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[4] Democratic use, according to Sennett (1998, p.279), in Aristotle's sense of the dialogues, debates, and shared deliberations that might take us out of ourselves and the sphere of our immediate self-knowledge and interests.

billboards, leaflets, and media (the press, radio, TV, and magazines), deviant youth began to send signals to those in power by creating new dress codes, holding informal underground parties and creating music studios, drinking alcohol, and so on. However, one difference from Prague was that the dress code in post-revolutionary Tehran was not one attached to a simple socialist outlook. Rather, it required the [female] body to be completely disguised from the [male] gaze in public. As a result, the female body was subject to more extreme discrimination, and women had to hide all their hair and body parts behind the veil, and remain segregated from men in order to be able to appear in public spaces, streets, and urban squares. And this is the other area where open city theory falls short, because by shedding light mostly on the architectural and planning dimensions of the use of public spaces [see the Literature Review, below], it pays less attention to these sorts of discriminatory and forceful dimensions of public space that target marginalised groups in authoritarian cities like Tehran. The aim of this thesis is therefore to re-think open city theory by exploring other possible dimensions of openness in this city.

To suggest alternative kinds of openness, this research needed to strip away the overcharged meanings currently attached to the concept of openness. To uncover these meanings, a detailed review of the literature was carried out, which showed how the idea of open city was an experiment that played out in practice for the first time in WWII, designating a city that did not take sides in the war, therefore abandoning all defensive efforts, generally in the event of the imminent capture of the city to avoid destruction, as seen in Roberto Rossellini's 1945 film *Rome, Open City*. Later, by the 1960s, activists and leaders including Martin Luther King Jr and the Chicago Freedom Movement became more interested in this concept and used it to promote equality in American society (Mogilevich, 2012). The literature review also discussed the 1970s, which somehow marked the emergence of the open city in design and planning as a challenge to modernist urbanism and urban renewal and in reaction to the ever-expanding suburban lifestyle with its spectre of undemocratic conformity, homogeneity, and exclusivity. The aim was to revive the city as a locus of freedom that provides a form of public life that is elective, yet still founded in relations of co-presence (Mogilevich, 2012, p.20); a public life in which people were able to step outside their own concerns and take note of the presence and needs of other people in the city. Advocates of the open city argued that when the city is revived in this way, an open society will emerge, guaranteeing personal freedom and the rights of the individual. For them, professional urban design and democracy were bound directly to each other (see Sennett, 1998). No wonder all western societies with a long history of democracy

are able to promote this vision of cities, taken from American-based planners and scholars including Jane Jacobs, John V. Lindsay, Richard Sennett to European-based architects and planners such as Kees Christiaanse, Tim Rieniets, Angelelus Eisinger, and Dieter Läpple. In his book *Building and Dwelling: Ethics for the City* (2018), Richard Sennett outlines five design interventions to tackle the issues of segregation, lack of tolerance of differences and lack of complexity in cities. But he does not say whether he believes his ideas are practical in the harsh political climate of authoritarian cities. And even if one considers his design interventions to be apolitical strategies that can be applied everywhere, does this mean that they will increase inclusion, complexity, diversity and social interaction as Sennett predicts? This research used a range of methods to examine these questions in Tehran.

To identify the foundations of openness/closedness in Tehran, I explored urban documents and resources and used ethnographic techniques to reveal some experimental aspects of openness/closedness. The documents revealed that the historical structure of the Iranian city was founded on the geopolitical characteristics of what Piran (2005) calls the city of force, where non-citizens (settlers without an urban identity) always looked for a just and fair *Sultan* to rule over the city. According to Vaghefi (2017), this was because the pre-modern history of Iranian cities encompassed contradictory relations of space/place in the dichotomy between the spaces of *Arbab* (master) and *Ra'yaat* (bondsmen), in a way similar to western feudalism. However, according to Katouzian (1997), the history of western countries shows that there have always been laws that limit the will and acts of the most powerful, the government and states. He goes on to say that Iran, historically, has suffered from a state with no limiting boundaries, which not only controlled public spaces via surveillance, but also controlled private space (Katouzian, 1997). For example, reading the history of the emergence of Islam in Persia in the seventh century shows how in the absence of the prophet, caliphs became the guardians of Islam with the total right to rule over their territory, the city. This theocratic sovereign polity had two sets of laws that continually controlled human life on Earth, namely natural (*sunnat Allah*) as well as moral laws (*sharia*) (Benhenda, 2011).

In practice, Islam emerged to invite misguided individuals to surrender themselves to the will of God, and to create moral order out of the existing chaos. Men who obeyed the will of God became the foundation stone of the *umma* (community of believers), which meant that they were also committed to obeying God's messenger, the prophet and his extensions, Caliphs. It is important to note that 'umma had [have] no claim to act against sharia' (Benhenda, 2011,

p.10). Those who refused to obey the will of God, or transgressed the limits implied by his prophet and caliphs were called *tawaghit* (the plural of *taghut*, Islamic terminology denoting a focus of worship other than God). So, by conforming to God's law (that is, sharia) the prophet (as God's messenger) and his extensions, caliphs, had a duty to apply God's law on Earth. This duty gave them the right to rule (Benhenda, 2011). By establishing Islamic sovereignties and in the absence of the prophet, caliphs were in charge not only to set in motion Islamic regulations and rules – namely natural laws (*sunnat Allah*) and moral laws (*sharia*) – within their territory but also to keep them under surveillance (Vaghefi, 2017). This theocratic sovereign polity, according to Vaghefi (2017), had a specific implication in the city, which became the realm of Caliphate (*Dar al-Caliphate*) as a territorial space inside the boundaries of which the Caliph/Shah had a total right to rule over the *umma*. Here, one can distinguish the binary between inside and outside.

Inside the boundary of Dar al-Caliphate, the sovereign established order by the rule of God, while outside the boundary of Dar al-Caliphate, this rule could suspend itself. This is, in part, similar to the early Christian city where the city was made of two parts –the 'City of God' and the 'City of Man' (*cité*/the lived and *ville*/the built) – which was written by St Augustine against the backdrop of the fall of the Roman Empire at the hands of the barbarians in the fifth century. The two cities represented two communities. One, like *umma*, was a fellowship of godly, wise men, and the other consisted of ungodly, wicked souls that, similar to *tawaghit*, had to be punished. So one was the heavenly, safe, eternal city where community transcends space and time, and the other was the earthly city, outside the law of God (Dyson, 1998). The difference between these two examples of the city –*the realm of the caliphate* and *the City of God* – is that the main public square and streets of the Dar al-Caliphate, instead of manifesting the rule of law, were loci of the will of power (Vaghefi, 2017, p.24) to the extent that even today, not *Arbab* nor Caliph, but *Velayat-e Faqih* (or guardianship of the Islamic jurist) has the ultimate power to rule over people's public and private lives in Iran.

In order to investigate the impact of this ultimate power on the city and lives of people in Tehran, I used a range of sources, from archival documents to bureau censuses, ministerial statistics, parliament and state legislation and laws, to cultural resources such as newspapers and periodicals, as well as previous research. Nevertheless, the methodology used in this research has its own limitations which was resulted from a set of top-down imposed ethical and political restrictions (explained in detail in chapter 3). For instance, interviews with three

members of Tehran municipality (in Regions 1 and 12), four prominent Tehran-based architects and four distinguished Iranian scholars in sociology and urban studies in Tehran had to be removed since they have been carried out in 2019 and during the process of ethical approval of this study. The interviews were fruitful in a way that they could offer a better picture of how these groups of municipality officials, architects and social and urban academics understand openness and closedness in general and specifically in the socio-political context of a city like Tehran. Another positive point about interviews was about the implementation of some of Sennett's design interventions, under different banners, by municipality officials on the one hand and architects on the other. Needless to say that while the systematic interviews carried out in 2019 were removed, they were based on informal meetings and conversations, carried out during the pilot works in 2017 and 2018. In a rather thorough departure from the current trend of ethnographic methodology, which is based on systematic observation and interviews, the research has blended all the collected data in a dynamic and descriptive format, extracted the meaning and interpreted the conversations reflexively. Ultimately, Chapters Four and Five set out to examine 'which aspects of open city theory can possibly be implemented in the city of Tehran?' The first step towards an answer was to understand how the history, politics, economy, urbanity, culture and society of Tehran correspond to the formal logic of the open city, which is about tolerance, complexity, coming together and interaction with those who are different. These two chapters therefore reveal the context of Tehran.

Starting with the modern history of Tehran, Chapter Four shows how during the Pahlavis' reign something occurred that had not been considered, traditionally: the implementation of a western order. Western order, in fact, swept away all previous traditional customs and ways of life (the lived) and imposed a new built environment (the built). This new environment, however, created a very different experience of the city, as it was an imitation of the western context with the particular characteristics of the functional city. As a result, certain inequalities and gaps emerged that continue to today. The spatial configuration of inequality showed itself in the form of the north-south binary. If one wishes to study Tehran through the lens of open city theory, therefore, the first step is to understand the north-south dichotomy of Tehran and the fact that these two poles of the city, to some extent right up to the present day, have barely reached the threshold at which the intersection of differences can happen. So urban planning and design in modern Tehran, instead of promoting a just urbanism, worked as a [closed] system of modernisation/urbanisation that fostered inequality between those who lived in the north, which has higher land prices and luxury apartments, and those who owned less capital –

including subaltern groups such as immigrants, non-skilled workers, and the poor – who already occupied cheap plots of land in the south where the polluting industries were also based. This economic inequality was an important element in the spatial configuration of Tehran, which also impacted on the social status, customs, behaviour, and bodily gestures and personalities of those who lived in these two different worlds. Living in north Tehran connoted European or modern lifestyles and personalities, whereas the lower social status of the south Tehranies was linked to the traditional and religious sector of society. It is therefore suggested in Chapter Four that despite the fact that there was never a strict line between south and north, Sennett's border/boundary dichotomy can plausibly be useful here for exploring openness and closedness in Tehran. In fact, the south and north boundaries are created by the zoning schemes of the Tehran Comprehensive Plan on the one hand, and by land prices/value on the other. So at this point, we can see how one theme of Sennett's theory intersects with the value of land in Tehran. But this scenario could also be the case in many other cities around the world. The difference lies in the different types of political actor who have a hand in changing the economic processes of the urban condition in cities. This is where the 1979 Islamic Revolution seems an important factor to consider because, if, before the revolution, The Plan Organisation and its extensions such as the municipality, were in charge of Tehran's 'comprehensive', 'systematic' and strategic' development (Mashayekhi, 2018, p.15), it was the revolutionary institutions that later added new forces to the urban and architectural development of Tehran.

The data presented in Chapter Five, therefore, show how after the onset of the revolution in 1979, revolutionary institutions in Tehran mushroomed, which in turn altered land speculation and correspondingly transformed urban, architectural and social development in the city. The newly born political/economic/urban/social/cultural state apparatuses began their work with the direct permission of the Velayat-e Faqih to realise Islamic ideology within what they called the 'Islamic City', by legitimising a totalitarian attitude to the imposition of Islamic order on both *the built* and *the lived*. So once again the city of Tehran became the territory, not of caliph or shah, but this time of Velayat-e Faqih, which exercised power over both bodies and population; in Foucault's (1977) words, Velayat-e Faqih exercised both juridico-political and biopolitical forms of power. Following the logic of a classless society, new urban land laws paved the way for the state and its revolutionary institutions to intervene in the land problem. In turn, the geographical map of Tehran changed and outgrew its determined boundaries. Sprawling suburbs grew around the city, and the private sector (in the form of the middle-class and state employed individuals who were now able to afford the housing prices of north

Tehran) entered the land and housing market. As a result, the edges between north and south began to blur, changing the characteristics of the modern/European upper-class occupants of the north, who were now mixed with members of the government apparatus, or members of the Bazaar who were traditional allies of *Rohanis* (Islamic clergies). This blurring of the edge between north and south also showed itself in another form, that Sennett would refer to as 'seed-planning'. But this time social mobility was from north to south through the simultaneous expansion of cultural centres in the south. This means that the answer to the first research question is: yes, it is plausible to read and apply open city theory in Tehran. However, the power of *Velayat-e Faqih* and its revolutionary institutions should not be forgotten. The latter not only intervened in land values and the market economy, but also permeated cultural and social spheres to ensure the Islamisation of the atmosphere and the image of the city. This was done by disciplining and controlling bodies in both public and private domains, and by constantly advertising the image of an ideal Islamic society through propagandistic TV programs, songs, slogans, magazines, films and so forth. And this is where open city theory falls short; it is not applicable in this kind of political climate. Chapter Five demonstrated the need to re-think this theory when a city is [re-]ordered, both physically and spatially, in a way that reflects a single homogenised image of an Islamic city. The chapter opened arguments and debates regarding the plausibility/implausibility of applying open design interventions in a space that was re-configured in 1979, to stop different kinds of people mixing and separate them from each other; men from women, revolutionaries from non-revolutionaries, Shia Muslims from non-Shia minorities, gays and lesbians from heterosexuals and so on. The study of post-revolutionary Tehran showed not only how space was Islamised, but also how bodies were turned into a means of manifesting Islamic codes in public spaces. So the main question is then: when a city is under the absolute power of the *Velayat-e Faqih* and its state apparatuses, can a set of design proposals change this closed city into a complex place of full social interactions? Or does it take an equal and opposite power to do this? The answer is that while open city theory set out to create informal ways for people to mix and interact in the city by means of design interventions, this thesis has shed light on different kinds of things going on in Tehran – chaotically, informally or even unlawfully – which create what Sassen (2005, p.2) calls 'a fuzzy logic type of order.' This fuzzy, temporal and momentary re-ordering of the top-down order, in turn, creates opportunities for certain kinds of intervention and openness, especially by/for women and youth.

Chapters Six and Seven therefore, revolve around the quasi-public spaces used by people in Tehran to create, or mark their presence in the city in a sociable way. While some might find these spaces are dissimilar to the very large body of public space and open city developed in the west, these chapters show how they are a foundational element of public and social life in Tehran, through which people exercise complexity, diversity, social interaction, disorder, informality, and so on. Chapters Six and Seven set out to answer the question: what are the elements and characteristics of openness in Tehran? How might the concept of 'openness' in Tehran be different from that of open city theory?

The first question is about the elements and characteristics of openness in Tehran. Therefore, Chapter Six was a reading of Tehran through the lens of open city theory, done by exploring the physical layout (building, street, and public space) of a specific case study: Tajrish Square. By exploring Sennett's five forms of open *ville* in Tajrish Square – *the synchronous form, Punctuated-Monumental Markers, Porosity, Incomplete form, and Multiple-seed planning (type-forms)* – it is suggested that this place 'creates a material condition in which people can thicken and deepen their experience of collective life' (See Sennett, 2018, p.241), a square that promotes synchronous activities, privileges border over boundary on the east side (the old core) and aims to make porous the relations between different parts of the old core. Tajrish Square marks the city in a modest way, using simple materials and placing arbitrary markers to highlight nondescript places. The Square makes use of type-forms in its buildings to create an urban version of a theme with variations, which can be seen, for instance, in the vegetable market, *Tekyeh*, or in the marriage therapy centre in the courtyard of the shrine. Finally, it is suggested that these themes and variations themselves can be developed independently throughout the city, in the Grand Bazaar for instance, yielding a complex image of the urban whole. Moreover, the complex nature of the lived in Tajrish Square was revealed by comparing the formal setting of the west side with the informal life on the east side. But this chapter was not only a physical description of a case study. The chapter went further, also describing sociability beyond the physical, to understand the affective and tactile dimensions of urban life in Tehran and to address the experience of acting in divergent ways, ways that do not fit the rules of the authorities. It showed how in Tehran the body, especially the female body, becomes a tool for re-formulating the quality of Islamic/non-Islamic moral codes in the disciplined and controlled environments of public spaces, including on the streets and in the presence of the morality police, and in quasi-public spaces such as cafés and in the absence of the morality police. While the authorities constantly produce and re-produce Islamic spaces that contain

homogeneous and synchronous relations [5] and treat the body as a component of humanity that can be disciplined and controlled (Foucault, 1977), this chapter explored how the flow of situated activities, talks, energies, mise en scènes, smells, touching and sexual gestures in quasi-public spaces in ordinary times, and in the city in extraordinary times, creates different spatial arrangements that are beyond the control of the authorities. And since these moments are not permanent, the characteristic of the openness they produce is also momentary, subject to happening in specific time-spaces. It is suggested that it is not design interventions, but people and especially women and youth who dissolve the normative social structure and order of everyday life in Tehran and develop a kind of brief sociable experience in this city.

Continuing the same argument and based on ethnographic methods, Chapter Seven showed the differentiation of Tehran's 'openness' from that of open city theory in another set of places: on the roads, and in the tunnels and virtual spaces of Tehran. This was done by reading the traces of the city and exploring moments, episodes, narratives and time-spaces where openness is visible, even beyond the design interventions of the built. This was possible because in a 750 square kilometre city with poor pedestrian amenities (Motamed and Bitaraf, 2016), more than 90% of daily travel takes place by some form of motorised transport (Khalilikhah et al., 2016, p.137). This means that to reach their destination, people need to take several different motor vehicles every day, as some transport modes, such as taxis, only use main thoroughfares and stay within a local area. The result is that motorised vehicles in Tehran can be seen as 'assembled social being[s]' (Dant, 2004, in Featherstone, 2005, p.13) that have a profound cultural, social and political effect on people's everyday lives. This chapter, therefore, revealed that the enclosed and fixed space of the vehicle in Tehran is a 'transitory' quasi-public space in which visual, aural, olfactory, interoceptive and proprioceptive consciousness and stimulation are created. This is to say that in taxis, buses, the Metro and private cars in Tehran there are different levels of sociability, mixing, and interaction, with which people need to experiment, because they are the result of energy, affect, caution, gut feelings, hearing, communication, and observation (see Thrift, 2005, p.46) and can be experienced differently by different genders and age groups. Inspired by personal experience and by stories told to me by people on public transport in Tehran, as well as by ethnographic texts, films, and other recorded lived experiences, I was able to identify and depict different types of sociability in Tehran, as follows:

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[5] As Lefebvre (1991) argues space can be planned, controlled and ordered. This is the 'representation of space'.

- In Tehran, it is not only the face-to-face interaction in a solid physical place such as a square, as Sennett would argue, but window-to-window or car-to-car interaction in a mobile/immobile mode that 'represent[s] wider social transformations in everyday life' (see Bull, 2005, p.243). This is because youngsters in Tehran try to negotiate power relations, to inhabit, appropriate, engage with and occupy the vehicle space within which they communicate with and meet others.

- The enclosed, mobile space of private taxies, buses and the Metro in Tehran are full of possibility, sociability and interaction. The mobile quality of vehicles creates transformative possibilities for people, and especially women, to move beyond their prefigured, fixed, predetermined identities and geographies and to experience different identities. It is suggested that public transport in Tehran is a setting in which the relations between genders, classes and identities begins to blur. Consequently, unlike the Western notion of porosity as a [positive] design intervention that increases sociability and interaction by removing boundaries and making the edges between two states permeable, in Tehran the very act of *boundary-making* in public transport in Tehran gives women an opportunity to better access, re-appropriate and transform the fixed identities that are associated with the Islamic dress code. This can be seen as a quasi-porosity or fluidity of inside/outside that frames boundaries differently in various transport modes.

Another difference lies in the musical, artistic, sporting, or spontaneous groups of youngsters that invent disorder and informality by taking part in specific activities such as graffiti, parkour dancing, and climbing on utility boxes in the street to protest. As 'a form of reclaiming the public spaces and non-violently protesting' (Abaza, 2013, p.128), their performances are unplanned and unpredicted and in turn can 'revitalise and transform the architecture of the city' (Saville, 2008, p.892). It is as if the built, not as designed, but when interfered with and transformed, in a way 'loosen[s] up the fixed habits, to disorder the absolute image of self' (Sennett, 2020, p.8) and to communicate different ways that urban sociomaterial, architectural components and public spaces can be used in Tehran. But all these bottom-up strategies that turn the city into a momentary 'theatre for self-expression and social engagement and complexity' (Sennett, 2020, p.15), are strictly controlled, erased, punished and disciplined by the authorities. Nonetheless, their impact endures virtually (online), beyond their specific existence in time and space. And this is where this thesis offered a final alternative, virtual space, as an example of the different methods used by the people of Tehran to oppose hegemonic Islamic codes of conduct. Through virtual spaces – such as websites, blogs, social

media profiles, posting and recommending – women and youth have begun to blur the rigid boundaries of private and public, inclusion and exclusion, visibility and invisibility, even though the public sphere was (and continues to be) under the rigid surveillance system that *regulates* and *disciplines* this realm from a control centre. This is to suggest that when a space – whether physical, more-than-physical, or virtual – offers variation, complexity, informality, social interactivity and involvement, it can lead the city to evolve, to change and to open up, even if only temporarily. This is because these spaces open up opportunities, connect people to new people, and free them momentarily from the narrow confines of the authorities and as a result deepen their experiences.

Nevertheless, it is important to note that this thesis has its own fissures and cracks, and these need to be investigated, filled and completed by later research. In this study, I have tried to capture dimensions of openness in Tehran other than those proposed by Richard Sennett's open city theory. I did this by analysing the planning and design regulations of the built on the one hand and by investigating the lived experience of social life in Tehran on the other. A final thing to note is the global spread of authoritarian regimes and the control of public life – with China and Russia at the forefront – and the fact that many places, including Iran (which has just renewed its conservative domination in the 2021 presidential election), will utilise new forms of surveillance, the idea of applying Sennett's open city theory directly to cities like Tehran seems ambitious. However, it still is possible to offer empirical and theoretical contributions that indicate the need to re-think open city theory in other authoritarian, Iranian cities, such as Isfahan.

Approximately 507 metres long and 158 metres wide, Naghsh-e Jahan Square (*Maidan-e Naghsh-e Jahan*) is a good case study for investigating the impossibility of opening up a totalitarian city through open design interventions, architecture and planning schemes (Figure 8-1). From a historical point of view, it can be said that, based on the Safavid Shah's ambitious will, the square was one part of Isfahan's redevelopment plan in the seventeenth century that aimed to turn it not only into the Capital of Persia but into the Capital of the Islamic world. By exploring the relations between Safavid power and the landscape of the city, it is shown that the architecture, building, spatial organisation and urban fabric of the square was an important step in centralising the power of the Shah (Zandieh et al., 2014). From an architectural point of view, Naghsh-e Jahan Square is one of the biggest city squares in the world, full of porous edges and labyrinths, with a twisty neighbourhood access network and pedestrian paths with a

curved, organic but unified, open/enclosed space organisation (Figure 108-20). But the main question is whether, under the current sociopolitical rules and regulations, the square can be used for free social interaction between men, women and other marginalised groups? Although one can show that, in ways similar to those discussed in this thesis, people in Isfahan have also unexpectedly and momentarily changed the top-down mechanism of power and the Islamic organisation of space – through the Green Movement for instance (Figure 8-3) – it still worth noting that open city theory cannot be applied directly to the conservative climate of the Islamic Republic of Iran.
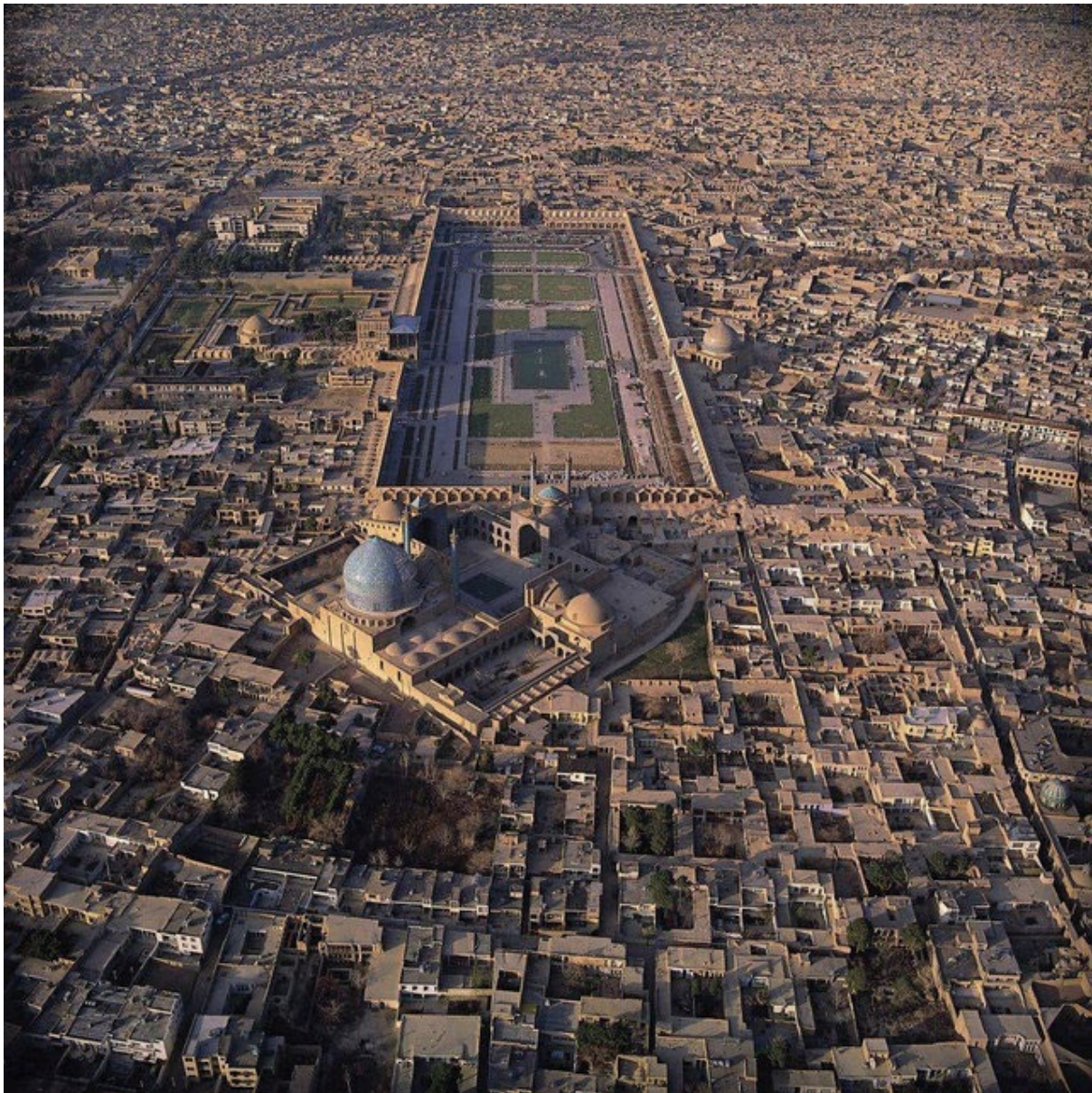
Figure 8-1: Aerial View of Naghsh-e Jahan Square (Source: Bahari et al., 2014)

Figure 8-2: Isfahan historic quarter:

1- The Friday (Jaam-e) Mosque
2- Meydaan-e Kohneh (Old Square)
3- The Bazaar
4- Meydaan-e Naqsh-e Jahan
5- Qeysariyyeh (Royal Bazaar)
6- The Shaikh-Lutfullah Mosque
7- The Aliqapou palace
8- The Shah (recently known as Imam)'s Mosque
(Source: Ahari and Habibi, 2001)
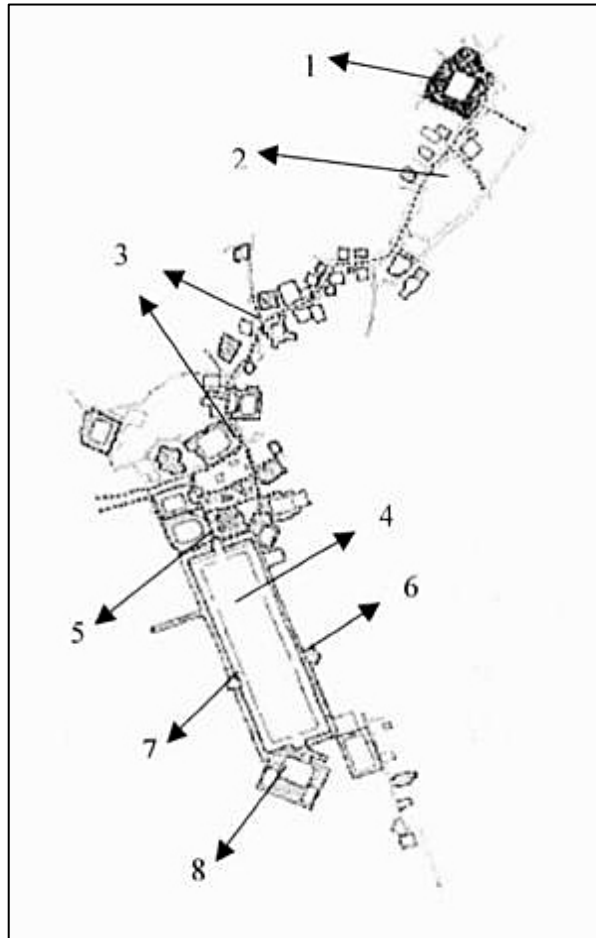
Figure 8-3: 'The Tenth Presidential Election', Khatami speech in Naghsh-e Jahan Square,' Isfahan (Source: Ghanooni, 2009)

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