Bio-Political Machines and Camps of Middle-Class Architecture of Tehran 1921-1979

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The paper addresses the history of the modern architecture in Tehran, which has been unfolded through series of political projects (and counter-projects), within which the new subjectivity of the self-conscious middle-class has been emerged. This reading evaluates the architectural evolution of the city in a cyclic process where resistance and autonomy come as the antithetical forces, marking the conflicts, which mobilize the history.

Keywords: Tehran, Bio-political Machine, Resistance, Architectural Form, Pahlavi.

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Introduction

Tehran is one of the few (if not the only) contemporary metropolises, where the projects of the modern state are manifested explicitly through the spatial apparatuses. Despite reading the city through its complex layers and diverse metaphors, this paper engages with the city on a theoretical level; it takes a provocative position towards the city as such, which is preconditioned by a political understanding of the city as the formal structure of power. While the political engagement seems to have been forgotten by the profession, with its strongly political and complex history, Tehran would be a perfect example of the intersection of Design, Planning and Politics: it has been approached through the prism of several plans and ideas that mirror the relationships between the spatial models and the political wills of the time through various *political projects*.

The chosen way to reveal the dynamics of the city is to highlight the (possibility of) conflict as the very engine of paradigm shifts in the representation and the management of the city. Conflict will be read through the lens of *Schmittian* dichotomy[2]: between the sovereignty of the state and the movements, which contest its legitimacy, between norm and exception, between friendship and enmity, inclusion and exclusion.

In Tehran's case, the different centralized and sovereign political powers have always approached the city as the symbolic representation of the state's power. This process of planning/design, as the explicit act of political will, has consequently activated counter-forces: the city of Tehran resists being constrained and targeted in any ideological or practical framework. This relationship can be seen as a cycle of forces and counter-forces in which movements and reforms are able to enforce or overcome the dominant urban paradigm that reacts and transforms it in antithetical sequences of politicisation and de-politicisation. Beyond the image of Tehran as a metropolis, the city has always made manifest a certain rationale through its evolution.

The project of the city: form the *Hobbesian* to *Foucauldian* paradigm

Through the history, the holistic concept of city as a *project* has been arisen whenever an absolute power in the form of a sovereign state gets an explicit and operative dimension. In the crisis of paradigmatic approaches, the political reading of the city, indeed, aims to trace back series of spatial definition in which the fundamental concept of the city has been shaped, developed and manifested through. In fact the exercise of power in a territory has been always bound to the idea of exclusion; the autonomy of the state can only be maintained when it clarifies to whom it opposes. This idea shapes the very core of the Carl Schmitt argument when he defines sovereign as he 'who decides on the exceptions' (Schmitt 2005: 5). The project of the state, therefore, is first to subjectify the *others* and then to demonstrate the absoluteness of its own. This *Schmittian* dichotomy is basically rooted in the Hobbes' concept of state. Hobbes illustrates the state as an absolute power whose utmost task is to provide people safety and security. To sustain this relationship, the sovereign produce 'fear' in the forms of conflicts.[3] The need for security, therefore, makes people to obey the sovereign. In the other word, for Hobbes and Schmitt the source of political order lies in the possibility of conflict. In the *Hobbesian* paradigm, the sovereign state is the terrifier and the protector at the same time; it is depicted as a monster – the *Leviathan*–, which in fact is constituted out of the bodies of the people.

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[2] C. Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, trans. G. Schwab (Chicago: The University of Chicago press, 1996).
[3] T. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, C. B. MacPherson (ed.) (London: Penguin Classics, 2003).

Holding all the juridical, political and social legitimacies, Hobbes' *Leviathan* comes very close to the image of God in the political theology, and thus the city becomes an 'earthly paradise'[4]. As the life of the *Leviathan* is guaranteed by the constant possibility of confrontations, this fact, nevertheless, implies very specific spatial configuration through which the political idea of city is spatialised: it instrumentalises the idea of border (wall) as the core of the projects on the city. This tension however is embedded in concept of its very architecture as separated autonomous objects in which their monstrous monumentality ought to represent the utmost order.

By the rise of the modern subject – Man–, the role of the power is not limited to the process of subjugation but must be seen as simultaneous project of subjectification and subjugation. As Wallenstein puts it:

'That power is something productive means that it is always both power *over* (application of an external force that moulds matter) and power *to* (the work of shaping a provisional self as a response to external forces); and its operations are always connected to a certain knowledge that is formed of the self' (Wallenstein 2009: 5).

In this definition, understanding Man as a '*living* being' will define a power relation that Foucault calls 'bio-power' or 'bio-politics'.[5] This power not appears anymore as a killer monster whose power is constituted in the right of 'taking or giving life', but it provides the security and safety through the 'administration of life.' In fact it is a productive power; 'the production of a bio-political body is the original activity of sovereign power' (Agamben 1998: 11). The mechanism of the power here is fundamentally different; 'the terms bio-politics and bio-power should then not be understood solely in terms of an action that imparts form to some amorphous mass, but as a complex of action and reaction, control *and* resistance. Therefore the problem of the city, which historically was the walled, secured and protected space comes as *environment* in which the representation of power is substituted by the economy and management, and the idea of urbanisation takes over the concept of city. Plans, as political apparatuses, utilise these forces to *manage* and therefore to govern the society. This form of management ought to guarantee the happiness of the society by conducting security and order, not in form of representation of power, but as the ordering and administrating machines (modern institutions) that maintain the political stability through enhancing the performance of collective *bios*: population.

The Middle-class in the Shaping

The political scenery of the nineteenth century Iran can be simply portrayed as the power game between two major players in the Iranian territory: Brits and Russians, best known as the 'Great Game'. The constant power shifts among those in addition to lack of an internal centralized, sovereign authority had led to an extensive political, military and economical manipulation of the foreign advisors in the Iranian political system. As a consequence, the legitimacy of the central power, and above all, the *Qajar King* as the political figure who was bearing the title 'Shadow of God', was weakened.

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[4] The word paradise (*pairi-daeza*) literally (and originally) means '*walled (enclosed) estate*'; it insists on the idea of the wall as the 'divider of space' when it defines what does/ does not belong to the dominant power (the owner). The wall here is not a defensive wall; the word '*daeza*' is literally rooted in a verb that means 'to construct from the earth' or 'to be made of clay'. It divides and separates therefore it produces space. The original description of Paradise in *Avesta*, explicitly illustrates an image of an earthly place. It signifies and has the sense of a dwelling place, defined by an earthen enclosure; the place where you should eat and wear clothes, the place that you should *live in*: the city.

[5] M. Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the College de France 1977-1978,* trans. G. Burchell (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

This situation was explicitly apparent in the social and physical construction of the capital city. The first king of *Qajars* had chosen Tehran in 1786, as the capital of Persia. Despite the radical imbalance of social structure in favour of the royal family and the military forces, the physical structure of the city did not have any major transformation till the end of the nineteenth century. The architecture of the city was an amalgamation of European elements and traditional Iranian construction techniques. Even the exceptional structures and buildings, which were mostly palaces and residences of the royal family, did not have any role in the life of the city; they were either hidden in the isolated walled quarters (*Arg*) or were located outside the city in the countryside. Therefore, just like the political scene, there was not any representation of the central power in the architecture of the capital city. Though, the role of Tehran was not realized until the massive changes that happened during the late nineteenth century.

The increasing European penetration, which weakened the state, made the *Qajar* regime to initiate a series of military, administrative, educational, and judicial reforms. As the result the development of new institution caused the emergence of new social stratum of intellectuals. These changes were reflected in the new form of the city when in 1879 *Nasser al-din Shah* ordered to enlarge the boundary of the old Tehran. The new city had an 18-kilometre long octagonal wall, decorated with 58 spearhead shaped bastions, which were pierced with twelve gates. As it was clear, at the end of the nineteenth century there was no threat for the city to be defended; the extensive fortification was indeed the very first attempt of the king to express his will and power into an architectural manifestation. However the other new institutions such as *Polytechnique* School and banks were housed in the traditional buildings and they did not possess any formal structure in the architecture of Tehran.

The beginning of the twentieth century not only had a major impact on the global power balance but also radically influenced the Iranian political system. The global event of the First World War followed by the October Revolution of 1917 in Russia, fundamentally changed the foreign policies of the involved countries; the conflict of interests among the power blocs hindered their global missions especially in Iran. Moreover the constitutional revolution, which resulted the establishment of the parliament in 1906, empowered the nationalist forces and led to the coalition of the political fractions inside Iran in the form of political parties.[6]

However the uprising of *Reza Shah* (1921) can been seen in the scope of a series of the political shift in the global scale but also it was an inevitable step along a socio-political mobilisation of the Iranian society since the late nineteenth century. In fact the social movement of 1905-1911 was the spark though which, for the first time, the Iranian civil society was activated: it mainly addressed a particular group, the city dwellers. This grassroots movement became organised in the form of the Constitutional Revolution, and later on, found its socio-political position in the life of the society and therefore the city.

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[6] In 1908 the first two parties were founded, under the name of Popular Democrats and Moderate Socialists. The Moderates who were in the majority, were nominally socialists (and were supported by the Russians), but the party represented the privileged class: the aristocracy, the rich merchants, and a few liberal clergy. They were in favour of gradual and moderate reform. The Democrats, the party befriended by the British, were a revolutionary party and were often accused by their opponents of heresy and atheism. Both parties rearranged themselves during the First World War and changed the directions: in 1921 some members of the old Democrat and Moderate parties formed a new Socialist party. Very soon the latter coalition divided in two fractions: a young Communist group in the direction of the Soviet Russia; and the other group mostly composed of the elder members of the former parties, were suspicious of both Britain and Russia and labelled themselves as Reformists. The Reformists were the majority of the fourth parliament in 1923 when Reza Khan established the new dynasty: Pahlavi. A. Banani, *The Modernization of Iran 1921- 1941* (California: Stanford University Press, 1961).

Streets and public squares of the capital, which previously were just used for the daily life of the citizens or the royal ceremonies, at that time became public stages for the meetings, demonstrations and rallies: the city was mobilised.

The major political event that has commonly noted as *Reza Khan*[7]'s leap towards officialising his power is the *coup d'état* of February 1921, while the unfinished Constitutional Revolution had set the stage for his political performance. However the period of *Pahlavi I* (*Reza Shah* 1921-1941) has been pictured by as a historical rupture which imposed a state modernisation project on the traditional-religious Iranian society of that time, here it will rather be read in a much wider and, at the same time, more inherent cultural project, as the project of *modernity*.[8] For *Reza Shah*, the key for overcoming this chaotic and charged socio-political situation lied in the extensive project of rationalization. His military background as the commander of Cossack Brigade helped him to find the fastest and effective means of intervention throughout the entire country. In fact, the ordering logic of the military discipline was expanded into every governmental and societal aspect through the administrative apparatuses.[9]

In 1922, *Mohammad Taqi Bahar*, a leading journalist, poet, scholar and politician of modern Iran, wrote in his article in the periodical *Now Bahar*, speaking of the absence of a modern and viable political principle as the chief deficiency of the reforms. He attributed this to the social structure of Iran and the absence of a politically conscious and articulated middle class.[10] In fact, there is paradigm shift in *Reza Shah*'s nature of power; emergence of a politically conscious society resulted in a shaping of a modern state with all its apparatuses. The concept of security, which traditionally defines the *Hobbesian* paradigm of the state, comes not any more as the matter of *taking* or *giving life* (war) but as *enhancement* and *administration* of the collective *bios*: population. The exertion of power therefore was exercised through the means of management to control and monitor the individuals. In this sense 'bio-politics becomes a privileged form of intervention, which is the condition of possibility for the discovery of the individual in political philosophy as a *subject* with all his rights and duties' (Wallenstein 2009: 13).

Among the modern governmental apparatuses that *Reza Shah* immediately developed was the management of the civil services. On December 12, 1922 the fourth parliament enacted the first law regulating civil service in Iran.[11] In fact, they established a new formal framework through which the new social class ought to be shaped and fit in the newly reformed society. It was evident that the new state's bio-political machines, in order to perform, needs to be productive. The production of the bio-political bodies was initiated in the project of formalisation of an urban middle-class.

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[7] Before coronation of 1923 and foundation of Pahlavi dynasty, Reza Shah was called Reza Khan.

[8] Max Weber characterized cultural modernity in terms of the separation of substantive reason, formerly expressed in religious and metaphysical world-views, into three moments, now capable of being connected only formally with-one another (through the form of argumentative justification).

[9] For example On June 6, 1925 the parliament passed the law of compulsory military training program. This law provided that every male citizen should be drafted at the age of 21 for two years of active duty, in uniform and under arms, in military service. Indeed this single law brought with it considerable social changes in the whole country. During two years of service, literacy classes were conducted, and attempts were made to provide rudimentary instruction in trades. The influence of urban life on the rural and tribal recruits proved so strong that upon completing their term of active duty they often remained in the towns. If they returned to their villages, they brought traces of the West with them: the sanitation facilities of the urban areas undoubtedly impressed them, and their uniform jackets and caps were the first examples of Western clothing the villagers had seen. But more important than these superficial changes were the effects on the young men of exposure to the more secular, Western-influenced morals of the city. A. Banani*, ibid.* pp. 55-56.

[10] See *Now Bahar*, no. 4 (October 1922), pp. 61-63.

[11] A. Banani, *ibid.* p.59.

The government employees and officials were no longer princes of royal blood but they, together with civil servants were the educated men who were shaping a true middle-class, who reclaimed their space in the city.

The City to Be Tamed

The capital city was the urgent problem to tackle; after the coup of 1921 and the change of the state, the first plan was to neutralise the socio-political tensions of the city, which was bearing a loaded mass. The first step was to relocate the centre of power. The centre of power has been moved to *Shemiran*, a small town by the foot of *Alborz Mountain* in the north side of the city core. Despite of the relocation of the residence of the king to the palaces in the north, most of the administration offices were remained in the city centre. The traditional formal status of the city, as a walled, secured place shaped around the seat of power, was changed into an amorphous shapeless flows of urbanisation stretching between the mountain and the previous centre. As the centripetal force was missed, the boundaries lost the meaning without the centre. The wall of the city was demolished during 1927-1932. It was a step toward re-conceptualisation of the 'subjectivity' of the city, a confrontation of the autonomous state with a religious 'inertia' of the urban space.

The power was exerted in the urban space through the new regulation and infrastructural interventions. The remaining corpus of the city was channelized with new boulevards and streets, re-directing the central tension of the space outwards. Two north-south boulevards – *Shemiran* and *Pahlavi* Boulevard– were planned and the constructed in 1921. They both planned to connect the old city centre to the new growing northern quarters, which hosted the residence of the king and the royal families. In 1933 the new law of 'Construction and Enlargement Streets and Passageways' was approved by the parliament. Accordingly almost every street was re-planned and re-adjusted to the new regulations. New streets, in a grid-shaped pattern, were imposed on the fabric to regularize the old congested areas and ease the circulation. Due to technological and sanitary advancement of the city, the new streets were not only conducting the public circulation but also they became the main routs for the other infrastructure such as electricity, swage system and piped water. All this changes were recorded and registered as the plan of 1937 of Tehran. It was the first time that the city was shown with no boundaries; it was not map of Tehran but a plan for the city: a *project*. The streets were left open-ended and the gates were replaced by the traffic squares, which precisely implied the idea of connection and expansion. The city was ideologically illustrated not any more as a city but a floating urbanisation, with no centre.

As the result of this reconfiguration, building typologies were radically altered. It influenced very much the social structure of the city; the houses that were traditionally accessible only through the narrow labyrinthine passageways now were exposed to the streets. Moreover the rationalisation of the socio-spatial structure of the city inevitably caused the differentiation of the functions; all the shops were forced to have a transparent public façade to the main street, houses got direct access from the main street. In fact by channelizing the dead-end alleys, the apartment block typology overcome the courtyard houses and became the dominant type.

The state's political project was conducted into sets of construction regulation that municipalities forcefully applied them on the buildings. Every building was numbers and registered and any new building construction was conditioned by the municipality permission (law of 1924). The new construction permits were issued just for the building with two or more storey high. In fact the very formal structure of the city was planned, regulated and controlled through the bureaucratic and administrative apparatuses of the state.

There is an important passage from the notion of militarisation of space to policing[12]. Despite the military background of Reza Shah, in Pahlavi period the issue of the city was problematised through series of administrative and juridical practices developed to manage the city. His state performed as a modern bio-political state.

The practices of police, the institution that mostly controlled urban transformation; and second, a profound cultural change in the way the city, in both its material and political sense, was conceived. Indeed, quite contrary to the idea of militarisation, the fundamental object of police was to leave man in the most perfect happiness that he can enjoy in his life.[13] Nevertheless, in police ideology, man's happiness is not antithetical to the idea of control; on the contrary, it is control and management that guarantee individuals' happiness and social welfare.

Bio-political Machines and rise of Modern Institutions

The rationalisation project of *Reza Shah* was initiated through emergence of new institutions aiming to govern the society, *i.e.* the city. It employed inevitably the language of modern architecture 'as an essential part of the bio-political machine' (Wallenstein 2009: 20). These bio-political monsters were not only a formal representation of power but also they performed as bio-political machines for administering and enhancing the lives of the population: A tool for ordering, an ordering machine. While traditionally in the Iranian cities, the architecture of palaces, congressional mosques or the religious schools were of the most distinguished and exquisite typologies, in *Pahlavi I* period, the most flourishing architectural language was employed in design and construction of the new institutions. For instance the architecture of the Police Headquarter of Tehran, in terms of the wealth of the detailing, material and above all the scale of the building, was far more advanced than in the palace of *Reza Shah* – the Marble Palace–, which was constructed at the same time.[14]

There are three main areas in the city, which were the focal points of project: The *Qajar* Royal Quarter (*Arg*) and the Parade Ground (*Meydan-e Mashq*) inside the previous boundary of the city, and the University of Tehran campus located just outside the former wall. Similar to the nature of the project itself, the dominant architectural language, which was extensively used and promoted, was the modern architecture. As Wallenstein puts it the project modern architecture is an essential part of the bio-political machine, it 'is intertwined with the ordering and administering of life and with the production of subjectivity' (Wallenstein 2009: 31). The monsters that invaded the city –new institutions in the form of ministries, banks, modern schools and universities, etc.– not only occupied the space of the city but also captured the life of every individual.

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[12] Terminologically, until the mid-eighteenth century, the term *police* did not refer to a kind of organized administrative agency or specialized body of men; police designated not really an entity but an act. Indeed, it is more convenient to read it as a verb: 'to police,' rather than 'the police.' By this definition police stands for a set of functions instead of an actual institution. In 1694 the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française* defined police as 'order.' Later the *Encyclopédie*-the key text of Enlightenment-equated police with 'government.' As a whole, eighteen-century definitions of policing focus on the 'governing human beings and making them happy in light of the general interest. […] The public interest was thus linked to the idea of 'civilisation', which permitted a nation to live according to orderly and reasonable customs.' A. Farge, '*Police'*, in M. Delon (ed.), *Encyclopedia of the Enlightenment*trans (Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2001).

[13] N. de La Mare, *Traité de la Police* (Paris: Michel Brunet, 1705).

[14] M. Kiani, *Architecture of the first Pahlavi era*, in Farsi (Tehran: IICHS Press, 2004), p.115.

The Arg (The Royal Quarter) project

The centre of the 19th-century Tehran was the *Arg* (The Royal complex). It was a rectangular walled quarter, containing the entire urban element in itself.[15] It was the cultural, aesthetic and political heart of the city during the *Qajars* and remained so through the reign of *Reza Shah*, who took it as the focus of his reconstruction program. Aiming to dissolve the loaded centre of the capital of *Qajars*, *Reza Shah* superimposed the new administrative buildings on the *Arg* quarter. The modernist slabs attacked the previous royal centre; Ministry of Economical Affairs and Finance, Ministry of Information, the Palace of Justice, National Radio Headquarter, together with some other office buildings and banks housed part of the bureaucratic heart of the city on to of traces of the royal past. By turning it to an administrative centre, the *Arg* complex which was very close to the Bazaar and two main mosques of the city (*Arg Mosque* and the *Friday Mosque*), the state consequently put literally all the social activities of the city under control. The autonomy of the aesthetic, offered by the state in the architectural language of the buildings, was thereby explicitly constituted as a project.

Meydan-e Mashq (Parade Ground) project

Simultaneously to the *Arg* project, the second half of the administrative centre was planned and constructed on the former *Qajar*'s parade ground, *Champ de Mars* or *Meydan-e Mashq*. It was a square-shaped filed, marked out by a chain of chambers, which were the military warehouse and the accommodation spaces for the soldiers. The architectural vocabulary and proportions of the *Meydan-e Mashq* followed the typical Iranian *meydan*s like *Naqsh-e Jahan* in Isfahan and *Toupkhaneh* in Tehran. However due to the military purposes, *Meydan-e Mashq* had limited public event and was not openly accessible to public. During *Reza Shah*, the *meydan* and its surroundings were heavily reconstructed. Among the numerous buildings that were constructed was the Military Barracks, Post and Telegraph Headquarter, Iran National Museum, Ministry of War, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Police Headquarter, Officers' Club and later the *Sepah* Bank. The architectural forms followed the same style of the *Arg* complex. In fact these building were the prototypical examples for the constructions, either private or governmental, that came after in the while city.

The Counter-project: Camps of Middle-class

While the *Pahlavi I* state run the project on the city, *i.e.* the society, through various bio-political apparatuses, the socio-political counter-forces consequently were activated; the state's power which was conducted in the society through different means of control and policing, inevitably faced a social resistance emerging from within the social structure. The new middle-class, which was born as a result of reformation program of the late nineteenth century, found its position in the city and reclaimed a spatial dimension during the *Pahlavi I*. Although the Pahlavi's extensive project was successful to neutralise the dispersed tensions of *Qajar* era and to unify the country, but at the same time, it provided an opportunity for the new rising class to be involved actively in the life of the bio-political machines. The graduated students, intellectuals, officers and civil servants became actually constituent parts of the new power system. As Foucault describes it, 'while the human subject is placed in relations of production and of signification, he is equally placed in power relations that are very complex' (Foucault 2001: 327). This bio-power, in fact, is a complex of action and reaction; it produces the counter-forces to sustain an antagonistic relations. The life of each opponent is dependent to the existence of the other's.

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[15] The complex included the Royal residences, mosque, religious school (and in the late 19th century the School *Polytechnique*), *meydan* and public buildings such as theatre (*Tekye Dowlat*) and the royal museum.

The new subjectivities (urban middle-class), in form of a counter-project, started to occupy the city. This occupation project, however, was not just limited to the public actions (demonstrations and manifestations), but was emerged as spatial organisation. The area just located on the north side of the previous wall of the city was very strategic; due to the growing quarters on the north and the construction of the two main north-south boulevards, the royal family, higher middle-class and foreign missioners had chosen the mountainside for the residence, however for the middle-class the centre of the city is always of the most importance. Being connected the growing importance of the northern neighbourhoods and being located in proximity to the centre, attracted the middle-class. This area, which was marked by the construction of the University Campus in 1934, had turned to a centrality for major academic institutions, international offices and new emerging businesses and it gained relatively high social status comparing to the other areas around the centre. These factors resulted in raising the price of the land and therefore the building typology of this area, was dominantly overtaken by 4 and 5-storey apartments, containing of 2-3 bedrooms units on top of a shop on the ground floor.[16] This typology, spread between the *Shah Reza Ave.* (Now, *Enqelab Ave.*) northwards to *AbbasAbad*, became the typical housing type of the pre-war in Tehran. Very specific social order of the first groups of residences in addition to the high quality of architectural design and use of advanced techniques of the construction (reinforced concrete) was turned this area to a new centre with exceptional political and spatial characteristics. This trend immediately forced the state to decentralise the social structure of the city centre.

In the late 30's, for the first time, the state started massive housing projects to accommodate the government employees who were fundamentally shaping the main part of the new social strata. The old structure of the city centre was incapable to house a large urban project, however, because of the political risks the intention was to accommodate those outside the centre. Therefore the projects for governmental housing complexes, in the form of residential camps, were initiated outside the former octagonal wall of the city in the eastern and western sides. The act of foundation of these new camps was instrumentalised by marking out autonomous gridded quarters, these traces, however, are still visible in the structure of the city. Indeed the spatial configuration of these new towns was absolute representation of the surveillance and policing through the very planning apparatuses: the detachment of the units, laid on the wide gridded streets, high level of visibility, and lack of traditional and religious communal centres in the sites were used to neutralise this social class and secularise the very idea of the house which was originally the locus of the political activity. In the plans of the units the central void (courtyard) and the inhabitable structure were separated, the mass occupied 60% of the plot aligned to the main street while the courtyard turned to a leftover planted backyard, just accessible from the ground floor apartment unit; this changes consequently eradicate the centrality of the courtyard as the main communal place and through which the different units were connected to each other, and de-politicised the traditional housing typologies of the city. It was precisely designed to produce and control a social class that constitutes the power of the sovereign.

One of the best examples of those projects is the Farah-Abad housing project, located in the eastern part of the former city wall. The first phase designed in 1944 by *Ali Sadegh* as *Four hundred Housing Units* (*Chaharsad Dastgah*). 400-housing units were designed in four housing typologies: Single-storey, with three rooms (one bedroom, a living and a dining room) and a front courtyard. Others were two-stories, with a ground floor and a main level, with five rooms and a kitchen, a courtyard and stairs to the rooftop terrace.[17]

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[16] H. Bahrambeygui, *Tehran: an Urban Analysis* (Tehran, Sahab Press, 1977).

[17] M. Marefat, *Building to Power: Architecture of Tehran 1921-1941* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1988)

Common facilities including post office, police station, school, municipal office, laundry and hospital were provided for the residential town. The community centre was a planted open space, used for parking, surrounded by commercial buildings and shops.

Quite contrary to the traditional Iranian housing typology, the separation of functions, in the new apartment plans proposed in 400-units housing project, radically imposed a new lifestyle; the living space was divided into bedroom, living room and dining room. Kitchen in all the typologies is placed separated from the living activity, and often combined with the service rooms, such as bathroom and storage. In fact the role of the woman/ housewife, which was traditionally very central in the spatial dynamism of a house, here became marginalised. While all the rooms were previously multifunctional and the living space was quite flexible to be adapted to the different time-based activities in the house, the rationalised logic of plan in the proposed apartments dictated very specific activities, a certain controlled family size and a lifestyle. Indeed the project of secularisation of space, not only happened in the reconfiguration of the city as such, but also was very well developed in the design of the very plan of the houses.

Conclusion

As mentioned the *Pahlavi* state tried to neutralise the socio-political tensions of the early twentieth century by the means of control and surveillance. However, as Foucault suggests, the nature of this state, as a modern power, should be understood and analysed as a form of bio-power; a complex of action and reaction, control and resistance, as a project of subject formation. The new subject, as a *living being*, a biological body, is instrumental to this power relation. Architecture, therefore, as a spatial apparatus of this power, comes as form of ordering machine, an administrative and managerial apparatus. Therefore the emergence of the modern architecture in this period should not be seen as a hired westernised order, superimposed on a traditional society, but as a very political project, which was inherent in the nature of the modern state. The modern architecture as Wallenstein indicates, as a 'bio-political machine, is located at the point where Life and Man appear together in a process of production' (Wallenstein 2009: 39). Resistance comes as an inevitable counter-force, which from its very inception is inherent in the bio-power. 'The moment of resistance here is very significant since in fact the bio-political machine 'only works by also breaking down and not working, by producing, at its margins, a *resistant* but by no means *preexisting* multiplicity' (Wallenstein 2009: 39). Modern architecture becomes a means through which the cycle of project and counter-project revolves.

The paradigmatic cycle of 'project, conflict, and counter-project' is eligible for reading the dynamism of the active layers of Tehran. This cyclic project, during *Pahlavi* era (1921-1979), has led to development of a self-conscious middle-class who reclaimed their space in the city. These two projects, rise of the bio-political machines and camps of middle-class, can be seen as paradigm shifts in the construction of the image of the city today. The project of secularization of space which initiated by the rise of *Reza Shah* in 1921, re-formulated the historical inertia of the urban space, however, by its very nature, released the social resistance. The counter-project was activated when the politicised working class started to occupy the space. As a direct consequence the planning instrument had employed to capture the mobilised mass into residential camps. It is precisely unified the forces that later, in the mid-seventies was emerged as a mass middle-class movement which finally turned to the Islamic Revolution of 1979.

The life of the city was revolved when the revolutionary state, once again, tried to neutralise the middle-class in favour of the 'oppressed'. It was an attempt to refound the original roots of the post-revolutionary power, in the political theology.

The theological differentiation between faithful and none-faithful, oppressed and oppressor, was a calling back of the *Shcmittian* dichotomy; the border appeared and materialised in the very threshold of differentiated public and private spaces: house. The house once again became the epicentre of the political life. Tehran is a paradigmatic case in this phenomenon, in which collective life proliferates almost entirely in interiors. Commercial, productive and living activities are confined between the same architectural, which stretch throughout the metropolis as a continuous field of urbanisation. In particular the house become the place where all the economic, political, social, theological and class conflicts are deployed. Instead of being a 'space of appearance', the political space of Tehran is rather a walled 'space of concealment'.
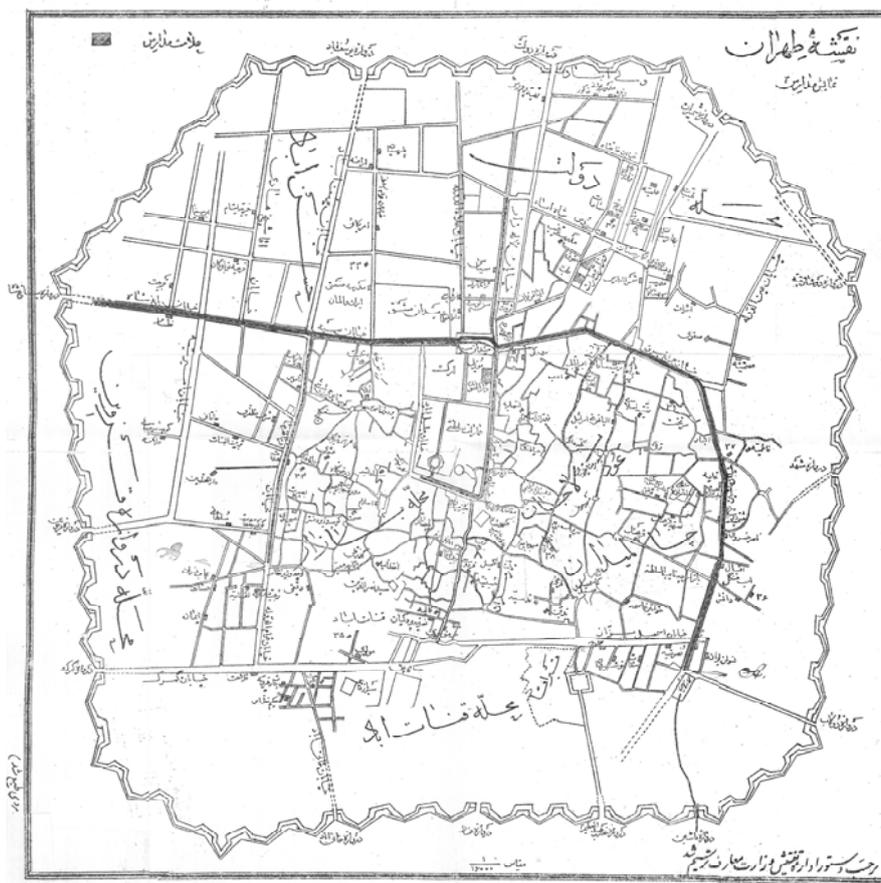
Figures

Figure 1. Map of Tehran, circa 1920. Redrawn based of the map of 1889. The Octagonal Wall of 1879 marks the limits of the city. Source: Archive of Sahab, published online: http://nimrouz.com/
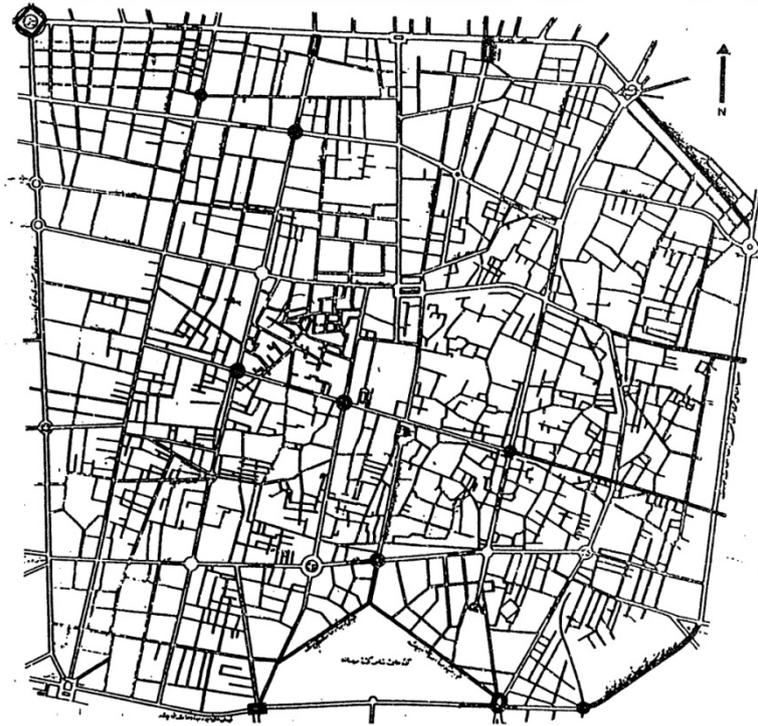
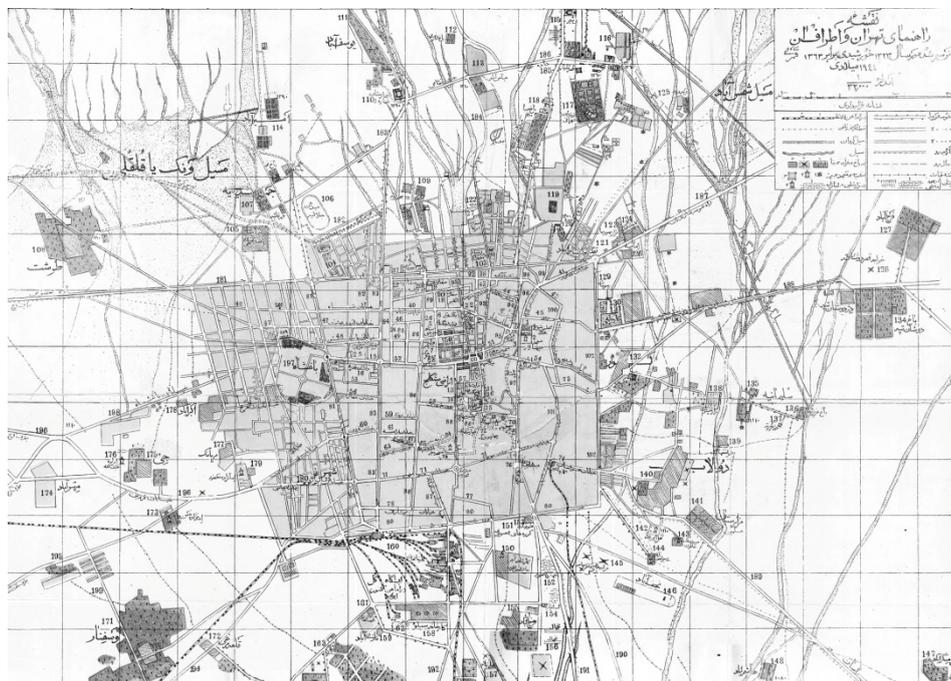*Figure 2.* Tehran, proposal of 1937. Source: M. Marefat, Building to Power (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1988)

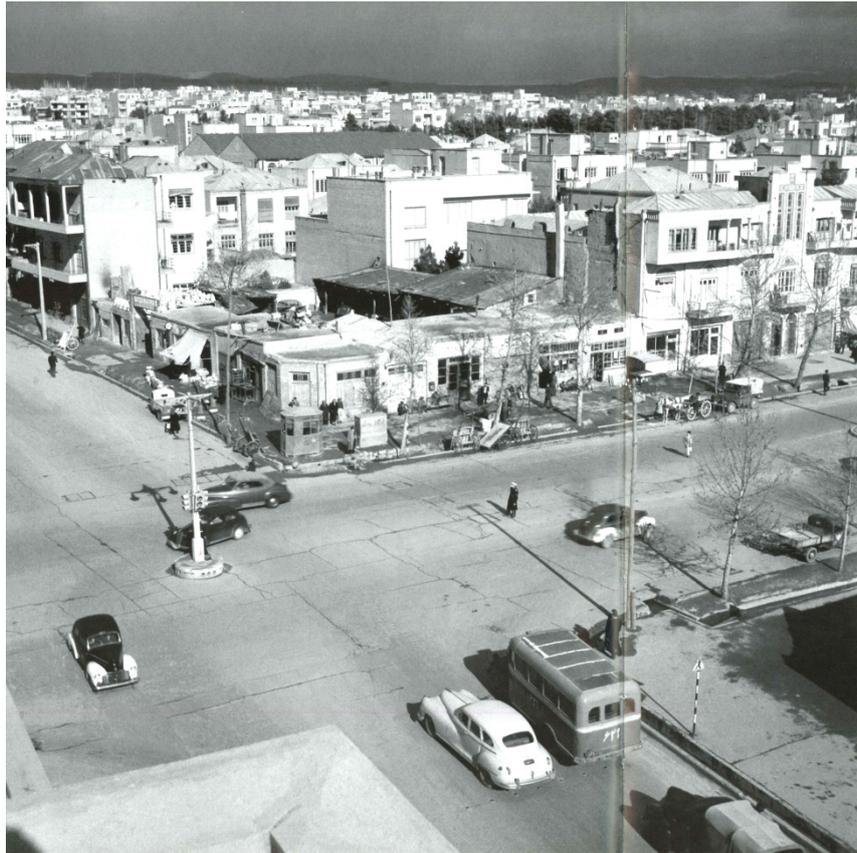*Figure 3.* Map of Tehran- 1944. Source: Archive of Sahab, published online: http://nimrouz.com/blog/

Figure 4. Tehran, College Crossing- 1957. Source: M. Pakzad, Old Tehran (Tehran: Did Publication, 2003)

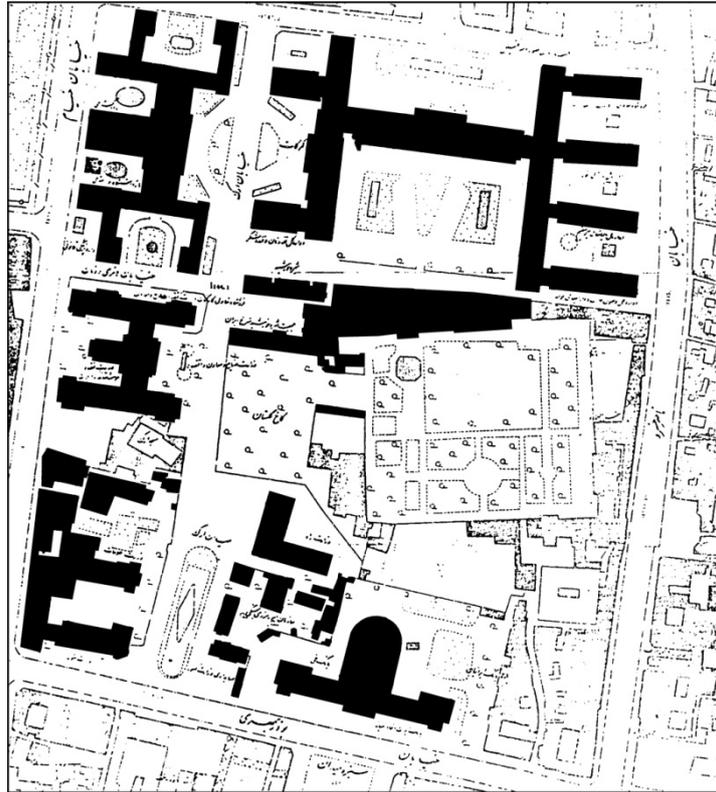*Figure 5*. Tehran, Shah Reza Ave.- 1945. Source: Dmitri Kessel, LIFE Archive.

Figure 6. Map of the Arg after re-construction during circa 1930. Source: M. Marefat, Building to Power (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1988)

Figure 7. Tehran, Arg, construction of the Ministry of Economical Affairs and Finance on the site of the former Qajar palace - 1939. Source: Ali Khadem Photographs

Figure 8. Tehran, Ministry of Economical Affairs and Finance- 1945. Source: Dmitri Kessel, LIFE Archive

Figure 9. Tehran, Ministry of Foreign Affairs- 1945. Source: Dmitri Kessel, LIFE Archive

Figure 10. Tehran, Takht-e Jamshid Ave. (Taleqani Ave.)- 1963. Source: M. Pakzad, Old Tehran (Tehran: Did Publication, 2003)

Figure 11. Tehran, Kuy-e Farah, Housing master plan- 1963. Source: dr. Mohsen Habibi Archive.

Figure 12. Tehran, Piroozi District- 2008, 400-Housing Units district, 60 years after construction. Source: Private Archive
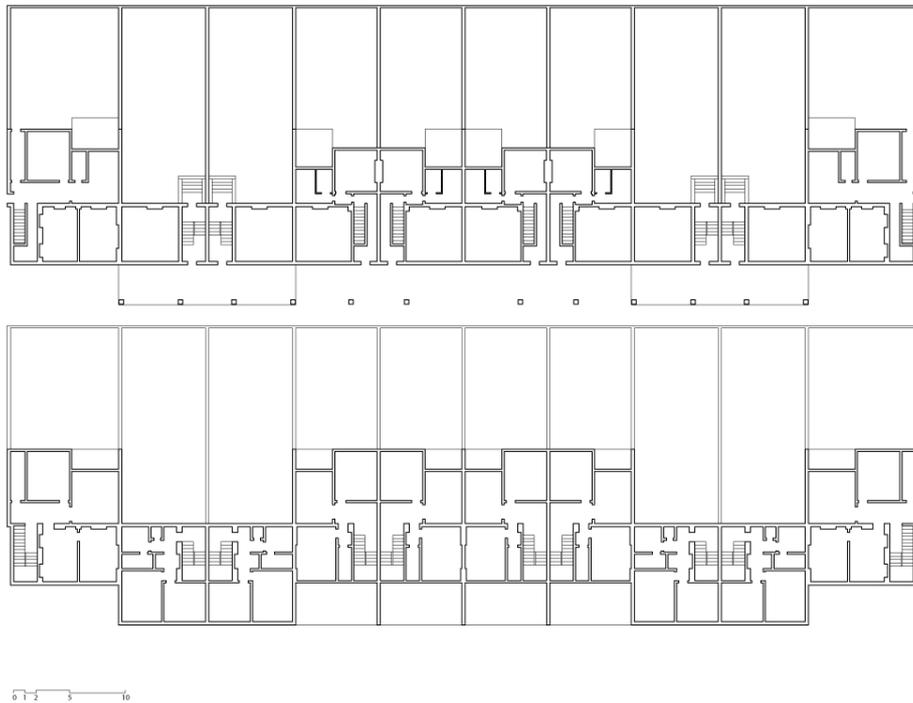

Figure 13. 400 Housing Units, Plan Typologies. Redrawn by the author based on, Source: M. Marefat, Building to Power (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1988)

Figure 14. Tehran, The pro- Mosaddeq demonstration by university students - 1953. Source: Nasser Sadeghi Archive

Figure 15. Tehran, Summer.2009. Chanting on the rooftops. Source: Pietro Masturzo, World Press Photo

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