

THE IMPACTS OF STATE POLICIES ON SOCIAL HOUSING AND URBAN
IDENTITY: THE CASE OF MASKAN MEHR IN URMIA

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MOHAMMADJAVAD SHAHRI

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submitted by **MOHAMMADJAVAD SHAHRI** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of **Master of Architecture in Department of Architecture, Middle East Technical University** by,

Prof. Dr. Gülbin Dural Ünver
Dean, Graduate School of **Natural and Applied Sciences**

Prof. Dr. T. Elvan Altan Ergut
Head of Department, **Architecture**

Prof. Dr. Güven Arif Sargın
Supervisor, **Architecture Dept., METU**

Prof. Dr. Aydan Balamir
Co-Supervisor, **Architecture Dept., METU**

Examining Committee Members:

Prof. Dr. Güven Arif Sargın
Architecture Dept., METU

Prof. Dr. Aydan Balamir
Architecture Dept., METU

Prof. Dr. Ali Cengizkan
Architecture Dept., METU

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Neşe Gurallar
Architecture Dept., GAZI Üniversitesi

Assist. Prof. Dr. Olgu Çalışkan
City and Regional Planning Dept., METU

Date: 10/09/2015

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name, Last name: Mohammadjavad Shahri

Signature:

ABSTRACT

THE IMPACTS OF STATE POLICIES ON SOCIAL HOUSING AND URBAN IDENTITY: THE CASE OF URMIA

Mohammadjavad Shahri

M. Arch, Department of Architecture

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Güven Arif Sargın

Co-Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Aydan Balamir

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Maskan Mehr is a mass housing project for low-income people, initiated in the 9th administration of Iran and was started in 2007. As one of the biggest centralized housing project in the history of Iran, the “Maskan Mehr” project in Urmia (Oroumieh) still needs further analysis for urban and architectural points of views, as it experiences social and political turmoil. It was believed that this housing project was of necessity in Urmia as Maskan Mehr was regarded as a logical answer to the said problems. In this regard this thesis is an inquiry in Maskan Mehr to understand how and to what extend the project offers a complexity within the Iranian context.

Keywords: Maskan Mehr, Urban Identity, Social Housing, Social Policies, Urmia.

ÖZ

LİNEER OLMAYAN KAYMA ÇERÇEVELERİ İÇİN YAKLAŞIK KAT ARASI YER DEĞİŞTİRME SPEKTRUMU

Mohammadjavad Shahri
Yüksek Lisans, Mimarlık Bölümü
Tez Yöneticisi: Prof. Dr. Güven Arif Sargın
Ortak Tez Yöneticisi: Prof. Dr. Aydan Balamir

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Maskan Mehr, 9. İran yönetimi tarafından kabul edilmiş ve 2007 yılında başlamış olan düşük gelirli insanlar için bir toplu konut projesidir. İran tarihindeki en büyük merkezi toplu konut projesi olan Urmiye'deki 'Maskan Mehr' projesi sosyal ve politik çalkantıları deneyimlemiş olarak kentsel ve mimari olarak birçok analize ihtiyaç duymaktadır. Söylenen problemlere karşı en mantıklı çözüm olarak addedilen Maskan Mehr'in Urmiye'nin ihtiyacı olan toplu konut projesi olduğuna inanılıyordu. Bu bakımdan bu tez Maskan Mehr'i İran bağlamında nasıl ve ne tür zorluklar ortaya çıkardığını anlamak için yapılan bir sorgulamadır.

ANAHTAR SÖZCÜKLER: Maskan Mehr, Kentsel Kimlik, Sosyal Konut, Sosyal Politikalar, Urmiye.

To My Family.....

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Problem Definition

This thesis is about a social housing project which was exercised in 2007 by the Iranian government. The primary aim of this research is therefore to understand the very complexity of this mass housing project in terms of its implications in urban environment as well as in urban life. To be able to understand how this social housing complex made a huge impact on contemporary urban environments in Iran, this thesis will specifically question “Maskan Mehr”¹ project which was one of the largest implications of the government initiatives taken place in 2007 and question how it was executed, how it was put into implementation and what are the social and political issues embedded within this particular project. Even though there are different government initiatives taken place in different cities in Iran, this thesis is specifically going to be all about Maskan Mehr project in the city of Urmia since it is one of the largest implications of the state. The thesis is going to question the project in terms of its urban complexity as well as its architectural complexity to fully understand what sort of urban programming and architectural programming were implemented by the state itself. As a consequence of this project, the thesis is also going to question the very outcome of the project with all the difficulties and problems and will question what sort of urban identity this project has ever offered to today’s society.

¹ Literally translating “Maskan Mehr” to English it means “Mehr Housing”, however in Iran this term has become a proper noun, in other words people don’t recognize it as a housing by the name of Mehr but rather Maskan Mehr itself is the name, therefore through this thesis it will also be referred to as “Maskan Mehr”

Maskan Mehr is a mass social housing project for low-income people, initiated in the 9th administration of Islamic Republic of Iran and was started in 2007 and continued in the 10th administration throughout the country (till 2013). It is the biggest centralized housing project in Iran in the last century and according to the official data, construction of at least 1.7 million units was contracted.² As for the case study of the thesis, Maskan Mehr project in Urmia (Oroumieh), a city with the population of about 850,000 was chosen.

In the last few years with the globalization process, public image of many cities, especially metropolises has been pushed into a monotonous similarity in form and content; such that the urban landscape in these metropolises more than being in coordination with the local context, is similar to other metropolises around the world. This is despite the fact that urban identity is shaped and based on indigenous and cultural differences and distinctions rather than similarities. This thesis with the aim of studying the impacts of state policies on social housing and urban identity, attempts to investigate the background of modernism in Iran and the government policies in housing throughout history, in order to achieve sustainability in social housing and urban identity by using Maskan Mehr project in Urmia as a case study.

By the beginning of the first Pahlavi era, housing architecture in Iran began a development process; however this development was not accompanied by evolution. Although this development began at the end of Qajar era, but it was in the first Pahlavi era that with the change in power structure and the global wave of Modernism Movement this process accelerated.

The Iranian traditional housing architecture was proportional with cultural, religious, climate conditions and designed for the comfort and peace of people; and for many centuries, people had privacy in their houses and ultimately their houses was a place of comfort and dwelling for them. But today, some believe that houses are a place for “habiting” and not a place for “habitat” and their usage are more like a bedchamber rather than a habitation.

² Ministry of Roads and Urban Development. (2013). Evaluation of Mehr Housing Project. Tehran: Azarakhsh. 18.

In this thesis, with respect to the above hypotheses, in the first chapter a contextual analysis of Urmia will be done in respect to the Modernism, by studying the urban developments, historical, social, economic background especially since the Pahlavi era and afterwards. In the second chapter an inquiry into social housing projects in Iran especially Maskan Mehr will be done, which is under direct impact of state policies. Theoretical and global achievements to provide housing for low-income groups, theoretical principals and objectives of Maskan Mehr project, economic assessment and spatial planning assessment of Maskan Mehr will be discussed in this chapter.

The third chapter appertains to the discussions of identity and urban identity. What is identity? What is urban identity? How are they defined from the viewpoint of people of a city? The relation of identity and space would be investigated and how “social space” defines urban identity. Why the identity of a city shows the identity of its citizens, and vice versa. How the built and natural environment along social factors such as history, culture and religion can define place identity. So how can a city keep its identity if it is undergoing change? As the world rapidly urbanizes, exciting changes and innovations will naturally evolve and influence our lives. But with this comes a price. More and more cities around the world are in a phase where they are forced to completely re-think their impact on the world. Solutions to this have the potential to drastically change cities, but hopefully for the better. The goal is to study, discuss, and create ways to define urban issues and design around them to create significant places for interaction, safe places for connection, and better facets for living in the changing urban community. In the fourth chapter, as the final chapter, after the assessment of Urmia, social housing, urban identity and the impacts of state policies on them in previous chapters, thesis will try to find a common point for conclusion.

1.2. Theoretical Framework

The first Pahlavi era with short or long delays in comparison with Europe started following them in different areas. By using new construction features and making

roads, railway, bridges, factories and multiple and large buildings stepped into a process of developments. Along the king's development and modernization program, these new functions took a governmental identity and character that indeed was one of the principles of Pahlavi era and the government knew itself as its custodian. So construction was in the hands of government and this included all functions such as administrative, military, cultural, educational, civil and even services.

It was obvious that new social requirements needed new functional systems and in these functions as far as it was related to architecture and urbanism new spaces was needed. These new functions had no precedents in the history of Iran's architecture and turning to a new and imported architecture was inevitable. In other words, an idea was formed and governmental modernization has created this induction that society of the day didn't need mosques, Bazaar, forts, castles and walls but rather ministries, town halls, police, universities, hotels and factories, a city which is full of motion, different occupations and broad streets.

The time factor and its concept had a decisive role in this transformative contemporary movement. Fixed positions and slow changes in the past turned into a dynamic, non-uniform and a hastily status in the contemporary time. Slow pace of developments in the past gave the possibility of implementation and coordination with the architectural requirements but with the new social changes, architecture was confused, so architecture had to match itself with the new social requirements.³

Implementation of a new urbanism in the first Pahlavi era began with a change in the power structure. European urban planning models of nineteenth-century became the pattern for development. Government at first used direct pressure and militant force to enforce its ideology in change from tradition to modern, but the effort was in vain and couldn't achieve much. So by using new urbanism, government was able to create a psychological background to change the needs and taste of people and for achieving this they used all possible facilities. In this regard, in the relation between the old and the new urban planning in Europe, the course of modernization in West

³ Kiani, M. (2004). Architecture of First Pahlavi Era. Tehran. Institution of Studies for Iranian Contemporary History. 146-147.

in addition to respect and protect the old tissues of the city, made new movements in accordance with the previous process. In contrast, urban planning in the first Pahlavi era had a hostile sense towards the past and a forthright fascination with modern designs.⁴

In this period municipality as the largest executive of urban plans became a vast and powerful organization and personal opinions in the form of rules and successive guidelines and also non-futuristic and put traditional system that was mostly based on religious norms, customs and traditional rules that believed in private property rights and non-interference of government aside. In this system state laws transcended the laws based on religion.

By the implementation of new urbanism in Iran, city formations changed. Some of the major changes in the 20 years span are: Removal of city gates and replacing them with squares, destroying city walls and building streets, land leveling and destruction of some neighborhoods for the construction of large public and state buildings, construction of the first intersecting streets that split the cities old tissues, widening of alleys and streets that caused the destruction of adjacent buildings.

Even though in the first Pahlavi era the architecture of ancient Iran was considered and their symbols were used but the urban planning was completely based on western urbanization and there was no interest or inspiration from ancient Iranian cities. So for the first time, urban planning is based on a schedule and a conscious interference. This resulted in a negative impact on the identity of cities and their cultural origins, and from that time terms such as rootless city and a city without identity entered the literature of the urban planning in Iran.⁵ Transformations that began in Pahlavi era also took place in Urmia as well.

Urmia as the capital of West Azerbaijan province in the west of the Urmia Lake with a few thousand years history has always been one of the major cities of Azerbaijan. Urmia is the 10th city of Iran by population and migration is a growing trend. What is important is the continuity of residence in the city of Urmia from ancient times to

⁴ Kiani, M. (2004). Architecture of First Pahlavi Era. Tehran. Institution of Studies for Iranian Contemporary History, 208.

⁵ Ibid, 209.

the Islamic period and even now. Evidence such as Grand Mosque, Bazaar and the gates of the city indicates that the city was prosperous and thriving in the Islamic era. This dynamism continued till the Qajar dynasty. In this time as a result of insecurity, gradually prosperity fell and it is mentioned as a deterioration time. In the Pahlavi era, the city once again prospered and flourished. One of the main challenges in the city is the vast number of slums in the city. About 150,000 people live in edge of the city.⁶ As a growing city a mass housing project is a necessity in Urmia and Maskan Mehr is a logical answer to this problem. Yet by experience it could be predicted that in such projects some issues will engender.

Maskan Mehr project is not just a project in subdivision of economy. This project is not just one of the most important economic and social projects of the 9th and 10th administration but rather is the most extensive program focused on construction and supply of concentrated housing in the last century in Iran. This project is a broad, multi-dimensional and widespread plan that requires serious attention and a deep and comprehensive assessment. The outcomes of this project will be evaluated in different aspects: population, Social and cultural, economic and financial, physical and spatial and political and intergenerational aspects.

Urban Identity

Discussions about identity first began in areas such as philosophy, logic and psychology. However considering the scientific developments in the last few decades, it has been drawn to man-made environments. A city, in the context of the formation of society and exhibition of public opinion plays an important role in the "national identity". The metaphor of the urban identity despite its widespread use in urban texts and dialogues is a simple yet vague and blur concept. Simple because by recalling historical background, cultural roots of society and the old premises in mind, everyone can have an image of it. Vague and blur because most questions about the identity of the city at the present time are unanswered. What happens over time and results to the current day, what place does it have in the urban identity?

⁶ <http://www.mehrnews.com/news/2365571/> حاشیه-هایی-پررنگ-تر-از-متن-سکونتگاه-های-غیرمجاز-ارومیه-هر-روز

Therefore, should we consider a city that has more ruins and historical symbols and uses more historical forms and figures, as is a city with identity? Is urban identity, the product of historical events or the result of city's body structure and its formation?

The importance of identifying and explaining the formation and promotion of urban identity, not only stems from the belief that architecture and urban of each country can reflect valuable cultural, artistic and technological, achievements of the community and by preservation the urban identity of cities, also allows the recovery of individual and social identity in a national, regional and local scale, but rather this area is one of the most vulnerable areas in the globalization process.

Planning to achieve a sustainable urban development requires the utilization of all opportunities which can help to the development of the urban identity within the all development proceedings during the twenty first century. Because, utilizing the civic contributions of local communities to improve the quality of urban environment, which is considered as one of the pillars of sustainable development planning, calls for increasing the attachment of the citizens to the urban environment and strengthening the citizens sense of belonging to the community which in turn has a direct relationship with local identities. In other words, one of the most important factors in a sustainable urban development is taking advantage of the presence and efforts of the members of local community in the process of urban development. Undoubtedly, such participation is not possible without a sense of belonging to the community. Thus, one of the ways of achieving a sustainable development in cities is contribution to the creation of urban identity so that we can enhance people's sense of belonging to the community to provide the driving force for dynamic of the city.⁷

One of the troubling aspects of the development process in the urban centers, particularly in developing countries, is the loss of urban identity and its undesirable consequences. The lack of identity and harmony and the monotony dominating today's urban space which is expanding increasingly, not only has created an undesirable appearance and an unfamiliar environment for the residents but also has affected all aspects of social life and the environment in urban communities.

⁷ Memarian, G., & Ardeshiri, M. (2010). Urban Identity of Shiraz. Shiraz. Navid, 17-18.

Because the physical form of cities is in fact the core of social world which is effective in all aspects of society, from economics to aesthetics.⁸

In many cases, in order to success in globalization and to be able to compete in economy, policies and programs of local administrations accelerate the process of identity loss in many cities. These measures causes the intensification of feeling estrangement, loneliness and being lost in people and indifference of the citizens towards others and towards their living environment which in turn is followed by the reduction of the amount of civic contributions.

Considering the process of modernization and urban renovation in the cities of Iran, suggests the effective role of these factors in the elimination of urban identity in the country. This process that began in the First Pahlavi era with the construction of wide streets in the center of the cities and demolition of old neighborhoods, today continues with greater intensity through urban master plans, housing policies and attempts to attract private sector investment in urban developments. Neglecting and disregard for the definition and formation of city structure and urban spaces in the urban master plans and their emphasize in the zoning and maintaining international standards, the domination of economic forces in the housing sector and prevailing of the economic assessments in the policies of this section and the lack of rules and principles for the regulation of the private sector participation are all of the factors that result in the loss of urban identity.

It is not possible to build cities with identity, unless the required knowledge is acquired from the process of physical transformation of cities and effective factors and criteria in the urban fabric and method of space production. In order to have an understanding of the urban identity of a city, it is necessary to develop a framework that can be used for analysis. The first step in the development of this theoretical framework is the identification of elements that form the urban context. In this regard, Spiro Kostof in "*The City Assembled: Elements of Urban Form through History*"⁹ (1992) identified five elements for the grouping of urban forms. He introduced the organic fabric of cities which is the production of a gradual and

⁸ Bentley, I. (1999). *Urban Transformations: Power, People and Urban Design*. New York. Routledge.

⁹ Kostof, S. (1992). *The City Assembled: Elements of Urban Form through History*. Boston: Little Brown.

historic development over time as the first element. Organic fabric is actually the product of demands and needs of social system. Hence the daily decisions of individuals, institutions and corporate have a great influence on the formation of organic fabric. The second element is the urban network, the roads and streets. For example, cities with a grid plan, which are mainly constructed in new countries like the United States or Australia, help the land transactions and trade. Although some researchers consider grid plan as a clear example of authoritarian controls and find it void of any artistic imagination, but Kostof with a neutral approach believes that this fabric is indeed a good geometric form that can provide multi-purposes in urban planning. The third element is the regular and ordered urban fabric. This fabric is actually designed based on military projects, regular symbolism and experimental aspirations. These fabrics are idealistic and are imposed from the top down. Kostof believes that this fabric is non-human, usually because they are merely the product of a mental sequential order. The fourth element is constituted of the fabrics that are built in a magnificent style and are made of high quality materials. Behind this glory and splendor is a strong government and in fact this fabric is constructed to show the political power in the country. In other words the buildings of these fabrics are indicative of the features of the political regime prevailing in the country. The fifth effective element in categorizing the forms of cities is the skyline. Kostof calls the skyline as the rapid articulation of urban identity. From the domes of mosques to today's flat roofs of buildings, all express the desire and aspirations of man and the level of technology. City's skyline reflects the concern of the society. Large mosques reflect the power and influence of religion in the past centuries and today, commercial towers represent the power of capital in contemporary cities. What results from this classification is the role of government, individuals and municipal officials in the formation of the physical form of cities and the importance of the influence and power of each of them in the process of decision-making.

In another approach, forces shaping the urban fabrics are considered. Some believe that the factors shaping the urban form are forces that are out of the range of options and choices of planners and decision-makers. Bentley in "*Urban Transformations*" (1999) categories these factors in four groups and believes that these forces are like

an interconnected network that lies in the complex culture of society.¹⁰ He calls the first force "Zeitgeist". As a result of this force, the physical fabric of the city changes with cultural and social changes. Natural conditions, is introduced as the second force in the physical transformation, which is also out of the range of options and choices of planners and decision-makers. Factors such as weather conditions, natural features, building materials existing in the nature are all effective in shaping the built environment. The human ability to control environmental factors using technological developments leads to the emergence of a third force by which technological developments is considered as a factor in shaping urban spaces. However, new technologies can not in itself define the physical form of the city. But this factor leads to provide a greater capacity to create urban spaces. The fourth factor in shaping urban form which Bentley believes is more complex is urban functions. Of course the status of man and his role in shaping the built environment should not be forgotten. Of course, these factors should not be considered as agents of space production, but rather it should be considered as determinants of limitations or possibilities which define the conditions for human interventions.

This study attempts to inquiry the urban identity in Maskan Mehr of Urmia by using above mentioned theories. There is no doubt that urban identity can't be achieved by insisting on repeating the past models, But it is expected that by studying the process of physical space production in the past and analyzing the situation in the economic, social and political context in any historical period can reveal the factors affecting the formation of national and regional identities, factors that have caused the persistence of indigenous identity.

Methodology

The research methodology is qualitative research, in which after collecting data from official reports, books and articles, by a descriptive approach, the study will try to analyze the data and finally achieve a conclusion by an analogy of them with the observations. So by locating the theoretical discussions within the context of reality,

¹⁰ Bentley, I. (1999). *Urban Transformations: Power, People and Urban Design*. New York. Routledge.

the observations from the case study would support the theoretical discussions. The hypothesis of this study is, urban identity is the main issue which is neglected through the design stage and suffers significant deficiency.

1.4. Scope of the Study

To better understanding the thesis, having a better understanding of Modernism in Iran is crucial and in this case Urmia, a survey on historical, social and economic background of Urmia and its urban development can help us comprehend it better with an inquiry into Maskan Mehr project and a redefined identity in Maskan Mehr.

Housing is one of the most important architectural issues. During a certain time and for many reasons, housing in Iran developed, but as housing developed many issues raised with it. I believe a historical-descriptive inquiry in the architecture of housing is necessary to understand the process of housing and issues of this process, identifying its pros and cons and utilizing them in guiding the architecture of housing to perfection. Most parts of the cities are formed by housing and the image of different cities finds their identities with their housing architecture, so we can say that a city comes closer to perfection that has perfect housing architecture.

The government's response in Iran to the rising housing needs was Maskan Mehr and because of the huge funds invested in this project with all its advantages and disadvantages, Maskan Mehr is the answer for housing needs in Iran for the years to come. Since this is the first time a project in this size has been performed in Iran, there is no experience and knowledge about the outcome of this project, and this is why a study in this subject is crucial. By the experience and results of similar cases, we already know that there will be issues on different levels – in this case identity is investigated –. If the issues are identified beforehand and solutions are prepared, it is way easier to help the process of urbanization for residents while change is still simple, rather than to wait years and trying to find solutions for them later. Obviously prevention is better than cure. As one of the first studies about Maskan Mehr by a view from urbanism it can help with future projects and studies.

Even though a lot of useful studies and researches has been done in the cases of social housing or identity, but in the case of Iran and Urmia, while the government as the main decision maker has completed only a part of Maskan Mehr project, no studies has been conducted on this subject and since state policies will determine housing and its future for the generations to come in Iran, its issues must be discerned beforehand, to lead the development process of housing to the right direction; and that is why a study in this field is crucial and important.

In overall, by totaling the studies conducted, analyzing the social housing and identity and the impacts of state policies on them, the hypothesis of thesis is obtained and by proposing solutions to eliminate factors that have adverse effects and valuing the factors that have positive effects, strategies to achieve the evolution of social housing will be proposed. So the aim and objective of this thesis is to understand the past and the moment of social housing, identify and analyzing its problems and proposing solutions for it, so they can be used in the future projects and to have a better understanding of what should be done in macro plans of similar projects in future. Because without understanding the past, future cannot be conquered.

1.5. The Expected Outcomes

There are four outcomes expected from this thesis

- Understanding the historical as well as the contemporary examples of social housing in Iran; exemplifying the role and the power of state interventions as a leading agency in space production;
- Specifically identifying and analyzing the short-comings of Maskan Mehr in regard to the desired urban identity;
- Questioning the significance of social housing in Iran, emphasizing recent state interventions and such urban and architectural models;

- The role and the proponent of Modernity in the Iranian context: its history, ideological instruments in the production of space in modern era.

CHAPTER 2

CONTEXUAL ANALISYS of URMIA

The vast territory that is now called Azerbaijan is located in the northwest corner of Iran. It has a glorious history and due to natural conditions and geographical privileges, is considered as a rich region and one of the old cradles of civilization. Azerbaijan is one of the ancient centers of human history. Archaeological excavations in the territory of Azerbaijan, indicates the presence of human life in this area back to the Paleolithic era. The geographical position of West-Azerbaijan province and its capital city Urmia¹¹ is very important and noteworthy, throughout history the region due to being positioned in the passage of the Caucasus, Anatolia, Armenia and Mesopotamia, has always been of interest to the kings and conquerors. Its story in being handoff by several different victors throughout history exhibits its rich history.

Urmia as the capital of West-Azerbaijan province is located in a plain on the west side of the Urmia Lake. The west side has long been in the center of attention since before Islam (by noting the number of ancient hills) and afterwards (as the second important city of Azerbaijan). Since the fifteenth century that the Ottoman Turks overpowered and replaced the Byzantine Empire, Urmia as a border town had always an extraordinary importance and had forts for its protection. In general, Urmia since ancient times was one of the prosperous and populous centers of Azerbaijan and its biggest agricultural region and even though as a result of historical events it has been ruined several times, but it has always regained its significance quickly and has been rebuilt. Urmia throughout its long history has undergone various events, in periods of

¹¹ In Iran, Urmia is called “Oroumieh”, however since Western sources recognize it as “Urmia”, through this thesis, it will be referred as Urmia.

time the population of the city was recorded about two hundred and fifty thousand and in another one, twenty thousand.¹²

Northwest of Iran, as a result of being positioned in the Silk Road and several neighboring countries and the emigration of various ethnic groups to live in there has a high culture. Urmia in this regard has an outstanding position. Urmia has always been a residence for groups of people with different cultures and religions. Cultures of the people of this region are also associated with many geographical, historical, and religious factors and have been shaped under the influence of many historical and social trends. A high percentage of the populations are literate, and many also have higher educations. Numerous universities such as Urmia University, Urmia University of Medical Sciences, University of Payam Noor, Islamic Azad University and ... have turned the city to an educated and cultural city.

There are strong religious beliefs among the people of city, performing various religious rites are a proof of these beliefs. Shiites are the majority inhabitants of Urmia, the second largest religious group are Sunnis and after them Christians and Jews.

Relative growth of Urmia not only is mainly due to the continuation migration of the rural population to the city and its increasing speed in the last decade but also has been influenced by the movement of the population of other urban centers of the province. With the changes in socio-economic and spatial construction of the environment in Iran, continuation of migration of the rural population to urban centers has emerged in the recent decades, mainly because of limitations of rural areas specially limited economic opportunities in these areas is the most notable reason of these migrations, rather than the attractions of employment in the urban centers, influenced by developments in the early years of the revolution and political and military events of the region.¹³ And thereby a significant population has been drawn to the urban centers, including Urmia.

¹² Padide Samet Consulting Engineers. (2006). Study And Restoration of Shahr bani Building In Urmia. Administration of Cultural Heritage and Tourism. Urmia. 20.

¹³ Ibid, 22.

2.1. Modernization in Iran

In the historical course of Iran's civilization, after two crucial events, the rise of Islam and invasion and dominance of Mongols, tendency towards West, as the third incident is perhaps one of the most important historical events of Iran. An incident in which unlike the previous two, happened without conflict or an invasion force, without a trace of war or conquest, with a gradual and yet a pervasive process – which can be considered as one of the characteristics of Modernity – got the acceptance of the commons and the elite. In Iran, “Modernity” began to form in the middle of Qajar era and was followed by “Modernism” from Western civilization in the first Pahlavi Era. This changed the country's traditional society and with the advent of science and technology, in addition to the effects of the Iranian nationality and religion of Islam, Western identity influenced the national identity. In addition to these cases, cultural, social and ethnic each characteristics of each region have their own effects.

Once the rule of Shah Abbas Safavid was over, deterioration of Iranian society and steps backward slowly began. Changing of dynasties in the next 3 centuries did not change this path. Social, cultural and economic characteristics of Iran in this period of instability and insecurity, eventually led to the emergence of an era in which its idea was transformation and progress in all areas. On the other hand, beginning of this arrear was coincided with renaissance in Europe and the development of Western society. Developments in the West and the results of the industrial revolution caused an influence on other countries, including Iran.

Simultaneous movements that began from Renaissance till 20th century in Europe and from Safavid era till first Pahlavi in Iran were different from each other. In Iran, the result was a Pseudo-modernism that wanted to fulfill Iran's intense needs with rich achievements of Europe. The path of Modernism in Iran was different than Europe, but why? Because as Katuzian says:

“In reality, most intellectuals and political leaders in the third world voluntary chose a shallow understanding of European Modernism that in reality was Pseudo-modernism. Modernism was the production of some certain developments but in Iran's Pseudo-modernism, since authorities and intellectual's social visions and ideals were different than Europe's history

and culture, they rarely had an actual knowledge of European thoughts, values and techniques.”¹⁴

History of architecture is also evidence that after the apex of architecture in the Safavid period, growth and innovation of architecture in Iran stood still. And although this country tried to keep that legacy, it never got back to that point. The main issue is that, the beginning of the Pahlavi era is the time of vast changes, these changes are almost in every area, and they are fundamentally different than the historical past.

The result of twenty years of architecture in first Pahlavi era was a series of monuments and buildings in Tehran and other cities which represents the attention of authority to the proper utilization of these constructions. Ideology of the government towards Nationalism, Militarism and Modernism caused the authority to consider both future and past. Therefore concept of development and progress took two extensions: Modern and Ancient. Also in the first Pahlavi era, formally and publicly new architecture stood against traditional architecture.¹⁵ New political and social ideologies such as religion aversion, archaism and modernization are presented in architecture and authority expresses its ideas by using the new architecture.

2.1.1 The Political Situation in Iran during the First Pahlavi Era

The meaning of the word ‘policy’ is to select a process and defining a method that usually follows a specific goal. Considering the definition above, the political history of a country during a particular period is the set of policies that are made by the power-holders in order to solve different problems in that specific historical period. Since the issues of a society in each historical period is different and also the dominant organizational objectives that govern the society are distinct, therefore policy is a relative thing that in each course it may take a different form. By reviewing the political history of Iran we can realize that despite the administration's relative policies in each period, the common principle in all those periods is the potential impact of policies on every aspects of social life, personal life and finally the living environment of the members of society.

¹⁴ Katuzian, M. (1987). Political Economy of Iran, Volume I. Papirous. 147.

¹⁵ Kiani, M. (2004). Architecture of First Pahlavi Era. Tehran. Institution of Studies for Iranian Contemporary History. 17.

The urban population without any industrial core and any experience in the transition from workshop based economy to factory based economy and without becoming a productive society, found itself in an expanding bureaucratic state apparatus. This society that made its income by commodity trading and capital and the resulting speculative relations started its transformation from a productive society to a service society and then a consumer society. The increasing amount of commodity trading and capital as a result of the global rate caused this society to distance itself from both rural and tribal communities, a distance not based on social division of labor but rather the speculative turn of national wealth.¹⁶

Thus the Pahlavi administration in the first stage of its consolidation was successful to achieve formal changes caused by an external development thinking¹⁷ by announcing Modernization. The administration managed to actualize the old concept of a legislation and enforcement administration in a different format.

Disregard for the rule of law and politics - whether fair or unfair, traditional or rational - is the distinctive character of this state. Thus a society that is dominated by this government, can be considered a pre-civil (pre-law) and pre-political society; that is why the government confronts the nation and places itself beyond the nation.¹⁸ Complete control and the authority of confiscating for the government, which is the most important element and the strongest obstacle against the accumulation of financial assets (and later physical) appears and shows itself in industry and agriculture developments.¹⁹ This factor - in the framework of the New World - makes such a cumulative, illogical and impossible.

The collapse of manufacturing organizations of the country with the separation of its three main societies - tribal, rural and urban - and the influx of capital and foreign goods on one hand and the becoming of oil revenue as the main source of income for government on the other hand, gives the government an importance and a power that has been unprecedented in the history of Iran. In ancient times the income of the state treasury was from the production of society. So the government had to provide the

¹⁶ Khalili Khou, M. (1994). Development and Modernization In The Reign of Reza Shah. Tehran. Jahade Daneshgahi. 75.

¹⁷ In contrast with endogenous growth theory which explained by Romer states that economic growth is primarily the result of endogenous and not external forces. Romer, P. M. (1994). "The Origins of Endogenous Growth". The Journal of Economic Perspectives Vol. 8, No. 1 (Winter, 1994), 3-22.

¹⁸ Katuzian, Homayun. (1992). Mossadeq And The Power Struggles. Tehran. Rasa. 31

¹⁹ Ibid.

minimum facilities and equipment necessary for more production, however now the treasury was filled with oil revenue. The state needless of society productions still made income and in the collapse of production organization, this is the society that needs the government. The legislator and executive government also becomes the supplier government and founds an increasingly important role.²⁰

With external developments on one hand and financial independence of government with revenues resulted from the changes in manufacturing organization of the country - because of the monopoly in the revenue of oil exports - and the role of government as a supplier on the other hand, causes not only a physical transformation but also a contextual transformation in the society.

But this contextual transformation of society resulted from the external developments which were not based on manufacturing and creation of a productive society but rather in consumption and shaping of a consumer society. In other words, the most important goal of external developments are cultural transformations. Lifestyles based on external developments, non-native standards of living, foreigners meme and etc. is widely propagated by the government of the Pahlavi. More consumption in every field is promoted. The service sector - largely depended on the government – is widening in an unprecedented manner to the detriment of both agriculture and industry. Without any movement for production, society more and more is driven towards consumption and the oil revenue instead of being used in establishing the installations and infrastructure equipment for endogenous development, is applied to meet the needs of external developments. The service sector - as the third largest economic sector - without any relation to the manufacturing sectors grew larger and larger and caused speculative capital and cash flow.²¹

In this transformation of values, what in the past was known as social identity, as traditional concepts were abandoned and were put aside. What is propounded as the new social identity found its roots not in the Iranian identity but rather beyond the borders and in a completely alien identity. Space templates and forms used to announce this new identity are also completely alien.

²⁰ Katuzian, Hodayun. (1992). *Mossadeq And The Power Struggles*. Tehran. Rasa. 33

²¹ Khalili Khou, M. (1994). *Development And Modernization In The Reign of Reza Shah*. Tehran. Jahade Daneshgahi. 159.

Pahlavi state in a historic discontinuity, gives a completely new definition of society and consequently a new definition of city. Definitions that will not only be in contrast but also will create conflicts: The conflict between Iranian cultural concepts and Western cultural concepts, the conflict between historical continuity and its sudden discontinuity, the conflict between the prevailing mentality in society and objectivity imposed by the government, the conflict between ancient traditions and new lifestyles, the conflict between the familiar and the unknown, the conflict between self-reliance and dependence, the conflict between city - the symbol of the "civilization" – and village - now the symbol of backwardness - and the conflict between nation and state. Qajar era of confrontation turns into the Pahlavi era of confliction. Economic – political dependence of Qajar era leads into the conjunction and absolute submission of economic – political of Iran to the world of capitalism in the Pahlavi era.²²

Reza Shah's reign can be considered as an era of reorganization and strengthening the government class dependent on capitalism. The goal was a governmental economy and an extreme concentration on military, administration, culture and especially the development of military power and police organizations and consolidation position of the ruling class.

2.1.2. The Role of Science and Technology

In the accelerated pace of developments in the first Pahlavi era, modern scientific achievements and the successive discoveries and the new technologies achieved thanks to these sciences should not be forgotten. These new phenomenon had an effective role in the change of perspectives of different social classes from a traditional view to a modern one and unsurprisingly a change in attitudes also happened in architecture.

In the first Pahlavi era, archeology as a new and unprecedented science in Iran, numerous scientific, artistic and literature conferences, new methods of education and academic training, scholarly communication and introduction to new sciences by sending students abroad, the emergence of new functions and prosperity of industrial

²² Kiani, M. (2004). Architecture of First Pahlavi Era. Tehran. Institution of Studies for Iranian Contemporary History. 31-41.

age and the desirable growth of technology to meet the new needs, city and urban developments based on the new forms and sciences and its growth and development based on modern knowledge and finally, a strong bond between science and technology in all fields and with a global movement led to the idea that Every new thing must have a scientific basis, even considering the past it must have a scientific rationale. Even though in this twenty year period some measurements were done - more superstructure and foundation – to obtain the science and technology but since the foundation of these developments and achievements was in the West, for countries with ancient and traditional structures, they were more superficial consumers of it.²³ So in the third world countries building science institutes, universities or some factories as well as construction of a few bridges and roads or modern streets, was interpreted as being on the road for success in scientific, technical and industrial field.

Thereby a large number of structures built in the first Pahlavi era are the result of modernization and development which relied on that view. But the point was that, architecture which prior to this with a brilliant history was more an insight, practically and primarily became a science and like other changes, this insight was replaced by a rootless and unmotivated knowledge (a scientific thought) and had a few remarks left of its own old self. Thus:

In the architecture of the first Pahlavi the role of new science and technology is undeniable. The result of this social thought - first in ruling class and elites and then the other classes of society - was the attitude and acceptance of scientific and technical achievements, a thought that replaced insight with vision. By today's experience of the first Pahlavi era and particularly its architecture, we can indicate that just by science and technology, we cannot achieve a perfect architecture. It needs an insight in architecture; it demands a social and cultural vision, which it's absent in that era is felt.

2.1.3. The Role of Foreign Advisors in This Period

Contemporary history of Iran has shown that till the end of the first Pahlavi era in no historic period, Iran has been so influenced and dependent by foreign factors and

²³ Rajabi, Parviz. (1977). Architecture of Iran In the Pahlavi Era. Tehran. National University of Iran. 40.

events as much as these twenty years. Although this period claims of national sovereignty but in the period of Reza Shah few signs of independence and reliance on domestic elements can be found. While according to some historians for the first time in the history of Iran, the king seizes power and sits on the throne by the support of foreigners,²⁴ proofs the wide range of the influence of foreigner powers. Besides social, political and economic status of this period of which, the detailed written and documented contemporary history confirms it, there are some reasons to prove the influence of foreign factors in the architecture of this era:²⁵

- As an area of science initiated in West, modern archeology with all its science, exploring methods and its foreign executives was a non-internal factor that had its influence on architecture. Although in this regard, major historical breakthroughs and discoveries in the history of art and architecture of this land was revealed but the idea to look and notice the past and specially how to care about an specific point of the past was a thinking that the explorers of this science – art field as a foreign factor imposed on Iranians.
- An archaic thinking (in architecture, culture, literature, religion, etc.) was a phenomenon which was not the result of historical nationalism of this country (national – religious – ethnic unity) but rather it came from a new nationalism that was defined in the West. A nationalism in which Reza shah wanted to unite the country based on it. On this basis, the architecture of this period was subject to some ancient and national elements but the idea still had a foreign foundation.
- In the first Pahlavi era in the realm of politics and government, a new power structure was defined and a part of it was based on militarism. A unique, decisive and powerful governing which was the result of an international thought after the First World War and was an effective method for governance in emerging countries with changed governments. A power structure which was consistent with military characteristics of Reza Shah. Since then, the military became a part of the top class of society, Militarism became the distinctive characteristic of statesmen and militarism became an

²⁴ <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/coup-detat-of-1299-1921> retrieved at 4/17/2015.

²⁵ Bani Masoud, Amir. (2009). Iranian Contemporary Architecture. Tehran. Honare Memari. 176-206.

ideology which affected all levels of the government as well as architecture and urban design. Architecture of the years from 1931 to 1941 showed this feature of militarism which stemmed from foreign foundations – an obvious example in the West was the Hitler era buildings – in the best manner.

- New functions and modernization were also an achievement of foreign thinking and had a noticeable impact and influence on society and social movements and finally on architecture and urbanism. Perhaps we can say that the acceptance of these factors, due to their nature was inevitable but it is undeniable that the way and how it was put into implementation, defines it as an external and foreign factor which was not localized. The collection of buildings and monuments in this twenty years period shows the great impact of modernization and new functions in terms of both qualitative and quantitative on the architecture as an external and foreign factor.
- The first changes effected from the Western urbanism on ancient and organic urbanism in Iran took place in the Qajar era. In the era of Reza Shah, in a direct and organized imitation of Europe's urban design in a reckless manner, major transformations and changes began in urban scale. Among the external and foreign factors discussed, urbanization was the most significant factor.
- Among the architects of this period, foreign architects with intellectual and physical presence were more involved in the architecture of this period than the other architects. Along were the Iranian architects whom for their education went abroad and brought the new methods of education, design and implementation from the West. So the lowest and weakest role, at least intellectually was the third group, the traditional architects.

So in conclusion, the usage of external factors or non-internal elements in this period is not to blame but rather on various cases and under certain global conditions this connection seems logical and even necessary. But the point is that the influence or the agency of a foreign idea and decision has a key role in the architecture of this period. This is the most important factor that distinguishes the identity and nature of this period's architecture with the prior ones.

Architecture of the first Pahlavi era showed that in return for external factors instead of a logical integrating and combining, it experienced a relatively large submission

and affection towards those factors. And the native or Iranian signs in architecture could only be found in appearance and the facade of the buildings.

2.1.4. The Military Tendency in Architecture

During that period, major powers used classical architectural elements so that in addition to the columns that revived and reminded the might of the past, they could show and verify the new authority. Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin in showing their powers used the Doric columns in the same way that Reza Shah used the columns of Persepolis. These characters more than being recorded in the history as politicians and be remembered for their politic status, became the epitome of militarism. Reza Shah's life since he was just a soldier guarding an embassy till he became a general and later the Sardar Sepah - Commander-in-Chief of the Army - in the 1921 coup had made him into a completely military character. He wanted to define everything in a regular, authoritative and organizational complex and he was able to convey these morals to the growing and powerful staff under his control.²⁶ Military presence in all state affairs continued so far that this organization conducted a large part of the development and construction activities including construction of buildings.

The second decade of Reza Shah's reign was coincided with the rise of the Nazi party in Germany and the close and warm relationship between Iran and Germany. As a consequent, construction and development activities were carried out by German experts and thus increased the military mentality in the construction of this period.²⁷ These impacts were both on the building plans with a predominance in functionalism and also the exterior and the façade of the buildings which in a tangible way had a military solemnity.

The idea of militarism in buildings of this era was formed in two parts which were both influenced by the structure of the government. On the one hand, military buildings which came into existence because of their military nature and requirements for new functionality and included barracks, police, prisons, airports and outpost and on the other hand, non-military buildings that despite their civilian and non-military functions were affected by the nature of militarism. Strength, speed

²⁶ Makki, Hosein. (1982). Twenty Years of History of Iran. Volume 6. Tehran. Kavian. 420-426.

²⁷ Ibid.

of construction and continuous monitoring, were military attributes that were used in the implementation of the numerous buildings of this period meanwhile other military features such as hierarchy, grandeur, discipline, domination, greatness and sublimity in terms of psychological impact was applied on the architecture of this period.

2.1.5. Condition of Urmia at the Beginning of Pahlavi Era

Due to its strategic position, Azerbaijan region in the past decades had endured bitter days. Ruinous, ruthless and violent raids of local thugs on the one hand and invasion of foreign troops on the other hand, bad conditions during the past 50 years, had carved distressful years for the people of Urmia. So much that this oppressed and suffered people, with this perspective that Reza Shah has come to save them from that pitiable condition and they won't have to suffer anymore, welcomed his rise to the power with open arms. On the other hand, in the first days of his reign, by driving away the bandits and villains of the area and providing security and comfort, Reza Shah was able to gain a reasonable satisfaction from the people, so much that with the proposal of the city elders and with discretion of the people the ancient name of the city was converted from Urmia to "Rezaieh".²⁸

2.2. Theoretical Principles and Basic Concepts in Architecture of Pahlavi Era

The first Pahlavi era is the period of transformation in the structure of architecture and urban of Iran. New urban spaces with new identities and new functions that are derived from the development of modernism in Iran could be seen across the cities to the extent that the new wide streets split through the old fabric of cities and new boundaries were established. One of the urban open spaces which represented the thoughts and ideas of theorists in Pahlavi era was squares surrounded by government offices (governmental square). Though prior to this, in previous times we have witnessed governmental squares in Iranian urbanism, like the Naqsh-e Jahan Square in Isfahan in the Safavid era, but at that time this square was also a field for social participation and a symbol for cultural and social and even religious relations. But in the era of Pahlavi governmental squares took a completely governmental and military

²⁸ Dehghan, ali. (1970). Sarzamine Zartosht. Tehran. Ebne-Sina Press. 587.

form.²⁹ So this approach to urban development was a result of Reza Shah's thoughts and his overall goals and policies for the expression of power and to dictate the power of authority especially in some sensitive cities of Iran.

Strategic position of Urmia as a border town, in addition to the volatile situation in the city on the eve of Reza Shah's reign, made him to pay special attention to this region. The formation of "Ayalat" square with a governmental and military nature is a symbol of authority and the expression of Reza Shah's power by using urban elements.

Ayalat square or today known as "Enqelab" square for reasons such as: suitable location in the city, uniqueness, integration and convergence of functions in buildings around the square, integration and convergence of architecture style in buildings around the square and for not just being a symbol of the city but although a symbol of architecture and urban planning in the first Pahlavi era, was and is an important urban space in the city.

2.2.1. Change in West and the Change in the Structure of Iran

Bureaucracy in Qajar dynasty with a combination of mostly traditional and rarely new spaces was the initiator of innovations and changes that slowly took shape. Since social changes were just beginning, the low speed allowed them to have a logical and appropriate relation with social demands. Court houses were still in the shape of a house and administrative tasks were performed in the residence of the Princes and officials. Implementation of new urban planning in the first Pahlavi era began first with a decisive lever of the change in the power structure and the nineteenth century models of European urban planning became the base for development patterns in the cities. Since the government did not gain a rapid and significant success in changing the traditional norms and models to modern ones by forcing and using direct confrontations, by using the new urban planning, the government managed to create a psychological platform for the need and taste for change and all the facilities were used for this transformation. In this respect, while the relation between the old and new urban planning in Europe and the history of modern urbanism in West in addition to respect and protect the old fabrics of cities,

²⁹ Bani Masoud, Amir. (2009). *Iranian Contemporary Architecture*. Tehran. Honare Memari. 185-187.

made new moves consistent with the previous processes, urban planning in the first Pahlavi era had a hostile tendency towards the past and a forthright fascination towards modern and contemporary plans.³⁰

“Baladieh” or municipality as the largest executive of urbanization in this period was turned into a large and powerful organization. Personal views in the form of rules and guidelines replaced the traditional system that was mostly based on the traditional right to private property, customary and religious rules and non-interference of the government. In this system, state laws substituted Sharia laws.

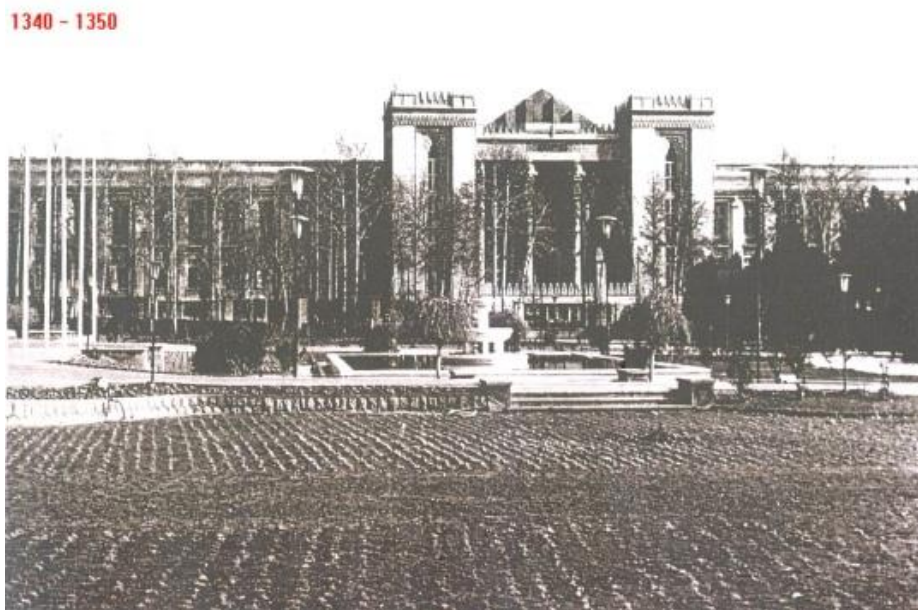


Figure 1: Shahr bani Building of Tehran
Source: Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Most significant changes in the fabric of cities in these two decades are:³¹

- The destruction of city gates that normally were replaced by (for traffic nodes) squares.
- Extensive destruction and leveling of old neighborhoods to build and deploy large public and state buildings.

³⁰ Rajabi, Parviz. (1977). *Architecture of Iran In the Pahlavi Era*. Tehran. National University of Iran. 28.

³¹ Kiani, M. (2004). *Architecture of First Pahlavi Era*. Tehran. Institution of Studies for Iranian Contemporary History. 173-187.

- Construction of the first cross-streets, a process that decisively split the old fabric of the cities.
- Widening of alleys and streets in the old fabrics that consequently resulted in the destruction of margins and main walls of the buildings.
- A remarkable demolition of valuable remains of Qajar era just because of the opposition to the signs of backwardness in that period.
- The formation and growth of new neighborhoods that were in accordance with the new phenomenon of social class distinctions.

Summing it up, in the course of twenty years for the first time in the history of Iran's urban planning; there is an intentional and planned involvement in the ancient fabric of cities. These laws and plans in many cities especially in Tehran, although it shows the contemporary economic origins but imposes a great loss on urban identity and cultural origins of society. Since then words such as "dependent city", "city without identity" and "fake city" entered Iran's urban literature.

During the first Pahlavi, if the traditional and ancient architecture for some reasons were given some attention by the government and signs of the past architecture were used in that period, but urbanism entirely used new European urban models with all their unique features. In these new urban developments any interest or inspiration from the ancient Iranian urbanism was not observed.

Ancient fabric and old fabric are two distinct issues. In these two decades intentionally or unintentionally this distinction was not recognized and in this new urbanism on the grounds that that ancient and old fabric of the cities do not meet the demands of the modern world and today's social needs, removed the ancient fabric as well as cultural and national heritage or brought a lot of transformations and massive destruction upon them.



Figure 2: New Streets

Source: Architecture of First Pahlavi Era. Kiani. p287.

Following these changes, the old foundation of connections is severed and “Bazaar” as the socio - economic and cultural backbone of cities, against the strong presence of street and the transfer of a major part of the economic activities to the sides of it, loses its grip. Indeed, speed, time and the arrival of new technologies on the eve of the twentieth century led to the need to create new pathways causing changes in the foundation of the city. In the past, urban divisions were based on the social and cultural factors; hereinafter urban divisions were based on economic and political factors. City as a physical - spatial manifestation for the transformation of values, casts away the ancient and enduring values of spatial organization. With the degeneration of "ancient" to "old" and "tradition" to "backwardness", city fabric and its spatial organization are considered old and backward. The result of the heavy involvement in the city fabric was the creation of street as a symbol of modernization, representing the European modernity in the twentieth century and following the model of the industrial city. In other words “everything that was a

religious obstacle was removed and everything that was new and Western was used and furthered.”³²

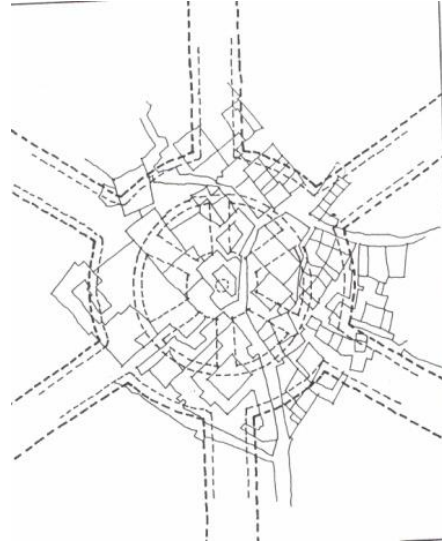


Figure 3: Hamedan new traffic network
Source: Shar ta Shahr. Mohsen Habibi. p175.

2.2.2. Urban Open Spaces

Urban open spaces have long been places for social interactions. However, quantitative and qualitative characteristics of urban open spaces over time and due to several different factors have changed. But citizens and other users of the city has always needed such spaces. The most important urban open spaces are streets and squares. If we take a moment to reflect on daily life, we realize that the role of squares and streets in the image that we remember of our cities are very important.

To define square, square is an urban space with the audience of a wide range of different social strata, age groups and etc. This space should be able to host such varieties for the association and interaction between the citizens. In other words, somehow the citizens define the square and vice versa. The type of activities that take place within the square, functions around the square, it's the public role, organization of physical space, is very effective in the manner and behavior of citizens.

³² Melville, C., & Avery, P., & Hambly, G.R.G. (Eds.). (1992). Pahlavi Dynasty and Religious Forces. The Cambridge History Of Iran Vol 7. (Abbas Mokhber, trans.). Tehran. Tarhe Noo. 38.

City squares convey the citizens the feel of the presence in the space, so in a way their limits and boundaries are recognizable and it is a defined and designated space. A large part of the space appeal is due to its diversity and vitality; So that it can lodge a lot of people in different times and social life occurs in them.

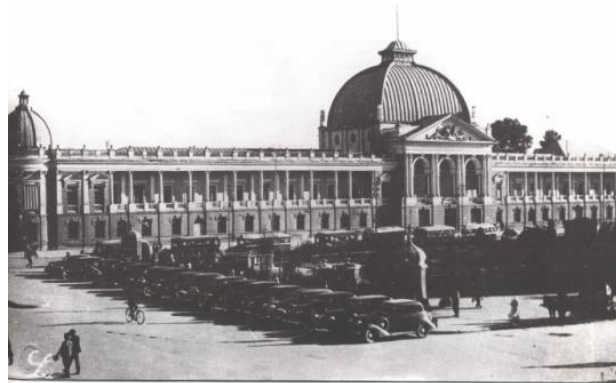


Figure 4: Toupkhane Square in Tehran
Source: Tehran Toupkhane Square. Mohammadzadeh Mehr. P97.

2.2.3. Architecture of the First Pahlavi Era

The first Pahlavi era architecture began with an attitude to revive the sense of nationalism, escaping from the boring Qajar era, following the twentieth century's industrial city models, accelerating the development despite a difficult economic situation and shortages in skilled manpower and specialists. During this period, the government determines the architectural style and for the first time promoting Western architecture as a symbol of modernism and urban structure is carried out by foreign architects. This period led to the emergence of symbols of a national identity, in this context, construction of large-scale public buildings with different functions and technology was a step in the direction of industrialization and modernization in Iran.

In the 19th century, in Iran, Nationalism as a political point of view defined a new definition in contrast with the traditional meaning of Nationalism and was able to replace national interests over ethnic and religious rituals. This phenomenon at the beginning of the reign Reza Shah happened at the same time as renovation,

development and using historical heritage a movement began in all areas. One of its effects was severing architecture with ancient roots.³³

During this period the society trying to be modern, needs new spaces and functions and since the traditional architects of Iran were not familiar with the functionality and the aim of this new buildings, they were not able to turn and associate the long-standing Iranian traditions of architecture with the nationalist expressions desired by Raze Shah as quickly as requested.³⁴ This is the reason that caused for a regular usage of foreign architects and foreign companies in constructions; later the first generation of Iranian architects educated in Europe joined them.

In this period, in the struggle and conflict of old and new that occurs with a revolutionary modernization, new concepts of architecture are presented and since the basis for this changes was made in the Qajar era and for various reasons, including the elimination of traditional architects and also the presence of foreign architects as the main designers in Iran without having an understanding of Iranian architecture and a lack of knowledge in the principles, concepts and prevailing models of architecture have resulted in the transformation of Iranian traditional architecture principles and elements and remaining of only common materials. Based on the given descriptions, architecture and urban planning inclined to a new movement of architecture and shaped the architecture of the first Pahlavi era.

2.2.4. Construction Technology

The first phase of industrialization began in Iran at this period. This modernist movement wanted to orientate the society towards European models, which included construction of cement plants, steel factories and ... based on new technologies, expanding of urban infrastructure networks in the regard of new developments.

New materials such as concrete, glass, steel, iron and cement, which were considered as manifestations of the twentieth century architecture came into use quickly. These materials for increasing the construction speed, ease of construction, the strength and overall performance became popular in Iranian architecture. It is also important to

³³ Kiani, M. (2004). Architecture of First Pahlavi Era. Tehran. Institution of Studies for Iranian Contemporary History. 88.

³⁴ Ibid, 221.

point out that these materials also solved the structural constraints of the Iranian architecture. In total these advantages led the architects to turn to these materials.

Of course, this should also be noted that in this period, many brick brickworks were established for the purpose of mass production and makers with a greater access to brick and becoming familiar with it made novel uses, broad experiences which led to new forms. Consequently all the stated events resulted in a change in the nature of building construction, both in structure and aesthetic. This process gradually reduced the identity of Iranian traditional architectural and provided the ground for its decline and approached the modernism criteria of Europe in the twentieth century.

2.3. Changed Architectural - Urban Elements

Undoubtedly, the issues raised and discussed in architecture and urban spaces are abundant, elements that in a formal format or as a concept can take numerous titles. Here, in a very general classification, some features that were affected by intellectual developments and have gone under major changes are explained.

2.3.1 Extraversion

The state and government buildings of the late Qajar and also the ideological and social changes in the start of Pahlavi changed the most important feature of the architecture of past, buildings in all areas and categories were to suddenly turn from introverted buildings to extroverted buildings. This turnover fundamentally affected other elements of Iranian architecture and caused the emergence of new spaces in architecture.³⁵

Therefore the phenomenon of extraversion first was formed in thoughts and subsequently, according to the wanted or unwanted needs with its acceptance, it spread in the creation of architecture and urban buildings. At first it was implemented in major city buildings such as police station (Shahrbani), municipality. This movement made the outside and outer space of the buildings a more active, more alive, more crowded and more diversified.

³⁵ Khalili Khou, M. (1994). *Development And Modernization In The Reign of Reza Shah*. Tehran. Jahade Daneshgahi. 159.

Extraversion was the most prominent architectural features during the first Pahlavi and because of various reasons and rapid changes of this period; it did not adjust with the introversion architecture of the past or in other words the traditional architecture of Iran failed to keep pace with this phenomenon.³⁶ A phenomenon that was born out of modern thought and it was coherent with the modernizing process.

2.3.2 Plan

If contemporary architecture in the Qajar period made the first changes in decorative elements and the façade and the steps of this influence from the West was taken slowly and with the appropriate combination and these changes almost had the least effect on the architectural plans, during the first Pahlavi, on the contrary, the highest impact and probably the most dramatic change was in the plan. Due to the rapid and uninterrupted usage of new functions in architecture, plans exactly and without local and cultural implementation entered the field of Iran's architecture and growth of this phenomenon with no background mostly was carried out in the fields of administration and government, such as shahrbani, municipalities and ministries, a phenomenon that was completely taken from the West and entered Iranian architecture.

In this period if the appearance of the buildings sometimes could show the elements of the past architecture but the building plans failed to hold and keep the previous spatial relationships. Meanwhile stairs and corridors were given high importance in the regulation of relations and functions of interior spaces and other elements such as water, water fountain, garden and plants were brought outside the building. Buildings depending on their function and scale were divided into two or more halls; a main feature of them was long and uniform corridors with rooms on either side of it. The mentioned feature can be seen in of the architectural plans of the first Pahlavi period from factories to palaces and this characteristic is clearly visible in the smallest units like primary schools to the largest units such as Shahrbani. Use of extraversion in the contemporary architecture caused the function of traditional buildings that worked with a central courtyard as a radial shape to change into plans functioning with

³⁶ Khalili Khou, M. (1994). *Development And Modernization In The Reign of Reza Shah*. Tehran. Jahade Daneshgahi. 159.

corridors and in a linear form. So far corridors were the longest spaces that were created in a closed space in the architecture of Iran and they were not for spatial - architectural aesthetics but only for function.³⁷

The interior staircase of buildings before the contemporary era had a less spatial value than the other interior spaces and this was common in all the buildings such as houses, mosques and palaces but now it had become a large and important and in terms of the composition of space, a great location with easy access was allocated for it. The best examples of the interior wide staircase in the buildings of this period can be found in buildings of the police (Shahrbani), municipalities and generally in Large and busy office buildings. The dominant forms of interior staircases in buildings were either in such a way that it began with wide stairs at first and then at the landing it divided into two stairs on both sides or from the beginning two separate staircases usually in the form of spiral without landings on the sides, all these forms of stairs came to Iran from European architecture.

But the use of the stairs was not only limited to the inside of buildings. Giving grandeur and glorifying the buildings made the use of stairs before entering the building a necessity. Important buildings such as Shahrbani, municipalities, etc. used this non-traditional and non-native feature of architecture in a way that was fitting to the scale of the large and high entrances.

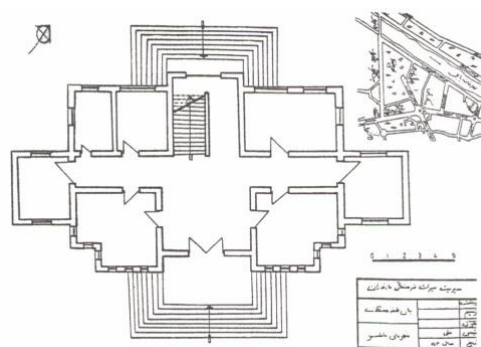


Figure 5: Municipal building in Babolsar
Source: Architecture of First Pahlavi Era.
Kiani. P371.

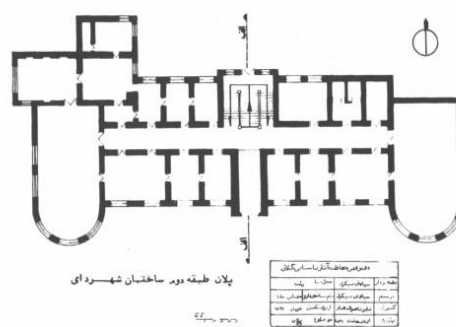


Figure 6: Municipal building in Rasht
Source: Architecture of First Pahlavi Era.
Kiani. P381.

³⁷ Rajabi, Parviz. (1977). Architecture of Iran In the Pahlavi Era. Tehran. National University of Iran. 50-51.

2.3.3. Construction and Materials

Numerous examples of buildings made in the first Pahlavi era suggest that their construction is a combination of different materials. The building materials include brick, stone and wooden windows and doors, as well as metalwork fences and protective windows and also some metalwork ceilings. The material that has the most important role in the arrangement of the buildings is brick. But clearly each material is used in the right fit and place and it doesn't mean this combination is a mix. In addition to a correct understanding in the use of stones, mainly in the bottom as high plinths - Especially in large public buildings - to a height close to the height of a man, they are reminiscent of the great monuments of the past.³⁸



Figure 7: Bricks used as material – Risbaf factory in Isfahan
Source: Architecture of First Pahlavi Era. Kiani. P362.

2.3.4. Facade

Most buildings built in this period were governmental buildings. The following features can be noted about these buildings:

The buildings were perched above the ground level for a clear view. The higher height of the buildings from the ground - Intentionally and not because of the site - in addition to help the buildings express themselves better to the surroundings and significantly separating it from the environment, also creates a false yet pleasant elevation and emphasis's on the façade and the view. This difference in form and

³⁸ Rajabi, Parviz. (1977). Architecture of Iran In the Pahlavi Era. Tehran. National University of Iran. 58.

space that breaks the uniform visual continuity is a characteristic of the buildings of this period. All Shahr bani buildings, municipalities, banks and governmental buildings are the epitomes of this characteristic.

Entrances located at altitude and elevated and stretched columns in buildings, on one side looks up to the architecture of mighty Germany and the beginning of the twentieth century and at the same time looks up to the grandeur and power of the ancient Persia and in a sense tends to an Iranian Neoclassicism, either way it is seeking authority and majesty. Comparison of buildings in Hitler's Germany, Achaemenid era and Reza Shah's Iran confirms the similarity of shape and form.³⁹



Figure 8: Shahr bani Building in Qaem Shahr

Positioning of building is in the middle and higher than ground

Source: Architecture of First Pahlavi Era. Kiani. p298.



Figure 9: Shahr bani Building in Tehran

Using big entrances and high columns to display glory and power.

Source: http://fa.wikipedia.org/wiki/کاخ_شهربانی_تهران

(Last retrieved at 6/3/2015)

Facade of buildings in Reza Shah's era made the most use of linear - vertical elements and signs. In this regard, columns and windows had the most important role, so that they can increase the sense of grandeur and glory for the viewers. Despite the move vertically, horizontally stretching their buildings and so heavy and bulky sitting on the ground, despite the vertical components, buildings are stretched horizontally and sitting heavy and bulky on the ground, a combination of horizontal and vertical linear elements in facades of buildings offers a repetitive non-uniform image. So that is why the length of the building for the observer walking in front of the building whom for comparison has only seen small buildings of Qajar

³⁹ Rajabi, Parviz. (1977). Architecture of Iran In the Pahlavi Era. Tehran. National University of Iran, 66.

architecture (only in this sense) will not be finished so soon, but rather will be more intensified and effective.

Windows in public view as used by the government in the architecture and later by people emerged for the first time in the first Pahlavi era. Before this, in accordance with the culture and social attitudes and a long desired introverted architecture, buildings in most cities – except for special climatic conditions – did not have a connection with outside except for the main door of the building. Windows along with Porches that previously opened to the yard, now with plans that its relevant criteria was monitored and was put into implementation by a municipal urban planning turned into new windows, sometimes with a balcony facing the street.

In windows in addition to the use of wood and glass in a simpler form yet more functional, for the first time metal in the form of fences and guards was used. In accordance with the balcony railings, metalwork with new design - which was more reflective of the metal works from the nineteenth-century Europe than the old and traditional designs – gives elegance to the city's buildings and facades, an influence that comes straight from the West.⁴⁰

2.4 Housing in the Second Pahlavi in Urmia

The desires of government in the design and construction of buildings was an effective factor in various architectural trends. The development of modernism in West along with the importation of certain goods and industrial productions and new technologies in Iran and the emergence of changes in the urban fabrics, building materials and changes in the social system of the country brought attentions to modernism in Iran and this tendency was expanded through Iranian architects educated in Europe, so that in 1950's two major trends of modernism and traditionalism and several sub-trends in Iranian architecture was formed. With the advent of modern technology and modern architecture during the reign of Pahlavi's in Iran, an integration of Western architecture with decorations of Iranian traditional architecture was created that its examples could be seen in the palaces of Second Pahlavi. The height of coordination and alignment with modern architecture occurred during the Second Pahlavi. By entrance of the changed architectural and urban

⁴⁰ Rajabi, Parviz. (1977). *Architecture of Iran In the Pahlavi Era*. Tehran. National University of Iran. 66.

elements, the highlights of the integration between the Western and Iranian architecture began in the 50s and reached its peak mainly in the 60 and 70s during the reign of the Second Pahlavi.

Given that Urmia has a cold and mountain climate, the fabric of city was dense and compact and most houses in Urmia had an extrovert form and often the houses were positioned in the northern side of the land to use the light from south. Urmia is one of the few cities in Iran that did not have feudalism in its traditional form, the majorities of people were smallholders and had estates and private gardens to cover for their needs and to earn a part of their income and as a result the basements of houses were throughout the whole building and were used as cellars for the storing products.⁴¹

In general, the following characteristics could be mentioned for the architectural types of houses in Urmia:⁴²

- Houses were constructed with at least 80 cm to 1 m in height due to the basement.
- The use of three types of open, semi-open and closed spaces (yard, porch and room).
- Construction of space towards the sun light or against it (the side of the house facing the sun light was often the main part of the house).
- Mostly the houses were aligned in the direction of North East to South West (consistent with the direction of Mecca).
- Using local materials, usually rocks.
- An overall symmetry could be seen in buildings

During the four decades of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi's reign, a housing architecture with in a new form, different from the past took place in Urmia, an architecture using new materials, plans and designs. By the end of the Second Pahlavi, housing architecture reaches a point where there are not many changes in it and reaches a relative stability in design that with a mass imitation and repetition that used

⁴¹ Shahri, Kavos. (2014). Architectural and Urban Heritage of the West Azerbaijan Province of the Islamic republic of iran. Doctoral Thesis, Baku: Azerbaijan Architecture and Construction University. 73

⁴² Ibid.

modernism in a monotonous, boring and stereotypical manner. The following buildings are examples from the last 3 decades of the Second Pahlavi reign:⁴³

Example 1 (built in 50s)

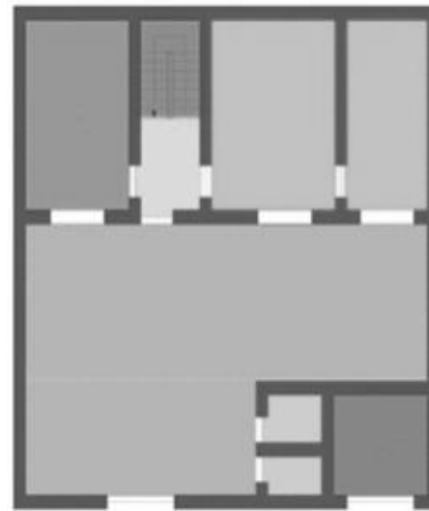


Figure 10: Brick-made Building of 50s
(Photography by Saeid Khoshniat, 2015, Urmia)

⁴³ Keramat Azar, Z., & Hajeb, S. (2012). Housing typology in Urmia during the Second Pahlavi. First national conference on new ideas and technologies in architecture. 7-9.

Example 2 (built in 50s)



Figure 11: A house From 50s with an L shaped Yard
(Photography by Saeid Khoshniat, 2015, Urmia)

Example 3 (built in 60s)

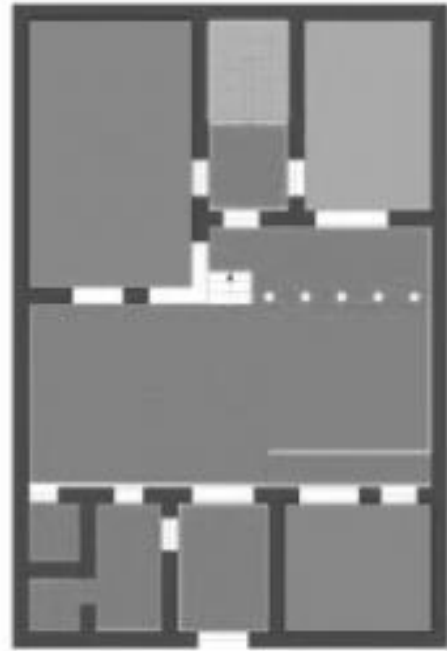


Figure 12: A Two Story House from Second Pahlavi Era
(Photography by Saeid Khoshniat, 2015, Urmia)

Example 4 (built in 60s)



Figure 13: A House from Second Pahlavi Era with Steel Structure
(Photography by Saeid Khoshniat, 2015, Urmia)

Example 5 (built in 70s)

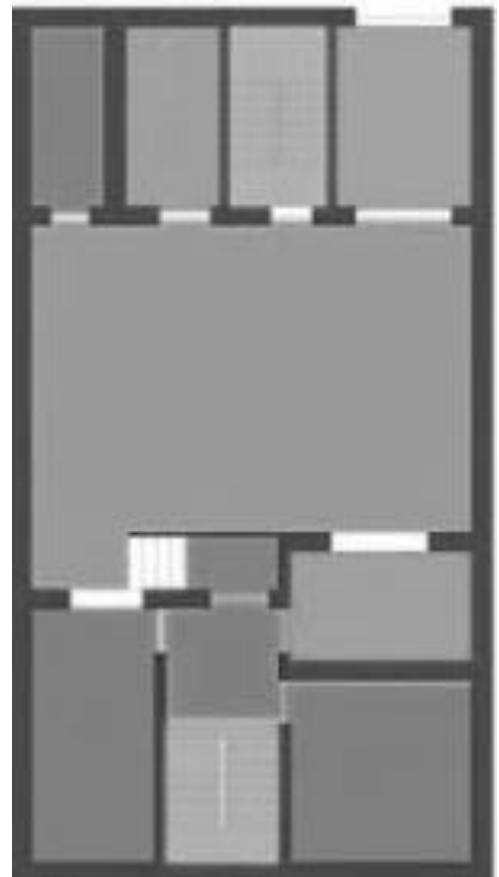


Figure 14: A House from Second Pahlavi Era with Steel Structure
(Photography by Saeid Khoshniat, 2015, Urmia)

Example 6 (built in 70s)



Figure 15: A House from Second Pahlavi Era Partly Affected by Western Architecture
(Photography by Saeid Khoshniat, 2015, Urmia)

2.5. The Physical Changes in the Structure of Urmia

2.5.1 The Physical Structure of Urmia Until 1921

The history of changes in the physical structure of Urmia in the distant past is not known very well. But one thing is clear and it is that the whole city and its physical structure, in the period till 1921 which was the age of fundamental transformations in

the urban structure, had the similar and immutable characteristics of the Iranian cities.⁴⁴

With a survey of existing maps, the old city of Urmia is perched in an area of a pear-shaped form. Bazaar as the central core of the city was considered as its functional pole, it was like the heart of urban life and as for the city's attractions, the focus of public activities was Located in Bazaar.

Till 1920s, the old city limits was approximately an area of 300 hectares. As a correlated and integrated whole it was like a living organism which its range has been defined by the rampart around the town. The gates of the city connected it to the outside world. In fact, the only way to connect from inside the rampart to the world outside was through the gates, seven gates positioned at appropriate locations in the rampart, on the way of the main roads to the city were built and with the main routes were connected into Bazaar and residential parts of the city were branched off from the main pathways.⁴⁵

2.5.2 Urmia in 1920s

Urmia from the middle of the Qajar era with the visits of Iranian kings to European countries went under the influence of Western thoughts and transformations in development process and aesthetic aspects and social symbols emerged.⁴⁶ Following the Constitutional Revolution, the involvement of foreign countries in order to create dependent government were intensified and then with Reza Shah coming to power local powers were beaten down and a new order was established. In the field of architecture, modernization and emulation from Western architectural styles, functions and forms regardless of its philosophical and historical status, created an incomplete modernity that led Urmia to alter its urban identity. Access to new technology and materials for construction, affected the identity and nature of the buildings construction. Modernization programs of the first Pahlavi era gradually reduced the identity of traditional architecture of Urmia and ignored the oriented culture of residents, identity and buildings and monuments with architectural, scultural and historical values from the historic fabric of the city.

⁴⁴ Raeis Nia, Rahim. (1389). Azerbaijan In The History of Iran. Tabriz: Nima Publications. 16.

⁴⁵ Dehghan, ali. (1970). Sarzamine Zartosht. Tehran. Ebne-Sina Press. 388.

⁴⁶ Bani Masoud, Amir. (2009). Iranian Contemporary Architecture. Tehran. Honare Memari. 74.

During this period, with the new street system and the destruction of the old fabric of the city, the main focus of activities including governmental or commercial activities is concentrated in a linear range and does not follow the model of the past and a scattered set in the sides of the main elements of movements (streets) is formed and the city has a strong axis North - South (former Pahlavi), which is in line with the state and the market square. The city has a strong North - South axis, which is parallel with Bazaar and Ayalat square. Therefore, unlike the old fabric which has an organic pattern, the new fabric is in a linear pattern and its main passages have intruded into the old fabric and have made new divisions for it.

It should be noted that during the Qajar period in Urmia, there was no streets in the sense we understand it today and around the town was surrounded by the gardens of the higher class society. Public roads and paths throughout the city were constituted by long bent alleys and roofed markets with low width.⁴⁷

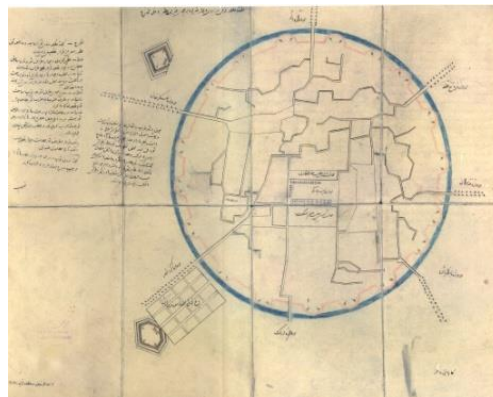


Figure 16: Map of Urmia city fortress
Drawing date: likely between 1919 and 1926. Source:
Journal of Asar. Number, 35. p278.

Towards the end of the Qajar and early Pahlavi for various reasons (the accumulation of urban population, lack residential units, rural migration to Urmia, personal independence, etc.) confinement and staying inside the city walls was ignored and this time outside the walls of the city, construction of residential units based on the urban development and architecture of Europe began. From this time the new roads

⁴⁷ Dehghan, ali. (1970). Sarzamine Zartosht. Tehran. Ebne-Sina Press. 598.

were built in and around the city, many homes and buildings were constructed around the town and the size of Urmia began expanding.⁴⁸

2.5.3 Changes in the Physical Structure of the Old City

In the 1920s, following the changes in the political structure of the country, grounds for change in the physical structure of Urmia was also provided. This changes and developments which were based on the tenets of modernity and modernization of social life, following the development efforts under the influence of Western modernism disintegrated the old structure of the city. The rampart of the city was destroyed and the city lost its outer shell, boundaries that defined the inside and outside of the city disappeared.

The gates also lost their functions and through measures such as the opening of new streets and construction of modern functional spaces, the traditional fabric of the city has undergone a radical transformation. Construction of new streets in the city made the existing pathways seem useless and the possibility of using the sides of the new streets, propelled architecture and urbanism towards extroversion and showing off.⁴⁹ With the destruction of rampart, the city found itself with the possibility of extending to all sides and endogenous development turned into exogenous growth.

The most important consequence of the transformations in the old structure of the city which became obvious following a new urban development measures was the displacement of the center of urban life from Bazaar into the margins of the new streets.

The above-mentioned measures were done within the framework of a performance-oriented attitude and with regard to the aims and objectives and the consequences of such interventions in the context of the old fabric of Urmia were ignored.⁵⁰ The main objectives of building these streets were the creation of routes suitable for vehicles and also connecting the key points of the city.

The displacement of the city center to the margins of the new streets resulted in Bazaar as the old city center experience a functional transformation even though at

⁴⁸ Dehghan, ali. (1970). Sarzamine Zartosht. Tehran. Ebne-Sina Press, 601.

⁴⁹ Raeis Nia, Rahim. (1389). Azerbaijan In The History of Iran. Tabriz: Nima Publications. 71.

⁵⁰ Ibid, 72.

the beginning this process was very slow. Many of the main actions and businesses related to the cycle of urban life left Bazaar and were replaced by other actions and businesses or were completely abandoned. Nevertheless, in areas that had a high economic power, Bazaar still remained active and alive (by wholesale, etc.) and as the areas not so prosperous shopping center Bazaar maintained its activity more or less. Nowadays it is not the citizens but rather the villagers from around the town that use Bazaar and the market is now full of goods for these costumers.

2.5.4 The Formation of a New Urban Network in Urmia

With Reza Shah coming to power along with modernism and development, the neighborhood system of the city was gone and a centralized administrative system was formed. Wide streets went straight to the heart of the cities and split them into new divisions and created new boundaries in order to destroy and prevent the formation of local powers and communities in cities such as Urmia. This action caused the formation of two disparate urban fabrics, the old one and the new sections that were formed along the new streets. Till this time the performance and structure of the historic fabric had integrity and a clear identity.⁵¹ But the construction of streets led to the loss of integrity in this context.

Former “Pahlavi” street, today known as “Imam” was built during this period. Changing into a street system based city made many effects on the cities fabric, as mentioned before this process ripped apart the cities old structure and its relations, created a new fabric. The main road network in the city was formed in coordination with the main axis of the old city and created efficient urban elements with new functions. Some of these elements took shape in open urban spaces such as Ayalat square. During this period, the city had a strong axis (Pahlavi Street) that was perpendicular to the primary axis of Bazaar and the city, so that it interfaced the Ayalat square and Bazaar. In this way, streets were formed as shown by the map and the image of Urmia was reformed in this age.

⁵¹ Kiani, M. (2004). Architecture of First Pahlavi Era. Tehran. Institution of Studies for Iranian Contemporary History. 208.



Figure 17: Map of Urmia in the first Pahlavi era
Drawing date: 1938
 Source: Journal of Asar. Number, 35. p271.

2.5.5. The Formation of Ayalat Square (Enqelab Square)

Between the years 1921 – 1925 for security and political reasons two large gardens named “Delgoshā” and “Siavash” in the southwest of the city and next to the rampart were converted into barracks. Concurrent with this action, the necessity of providing a proper access to barracks from outside the city in order to facilitate the movement of military forces and vehicles, led to the proposal of measurements that resulted in the creation of streets suitable for vehicles.

The positioning of barracks with respect to the city’s main roads required a connection from the main entrance of barracks to the city center and from there to the two main gates of the city. Thus in the 1920’s, the former Pahlavi Street (currently known as Imam) was built from the entrance of the barracks, along the biggest length of the old fabric to the city center and after that two streets connected the northern and southern gates to the city center. At the junction of these three streets, in the most northern point of the Bazaar complex, “Markaz Square” was formed.

Although, the mentioned streets connected the city center and the Bazaar complex to the farthest parts of the city but the construction of Pahlavi Street split Bazaar to two

parts. Also the construction of Markaz Square caused the disappearance of the northern parts of Bazaar and separating "Doshabchy Bazaar" of the central part of Bazaar.

Meanwhile, "Ayalat Square" as governmental square was formed at the entrance of barracks and the first office - state buildings of the city was built around it. The oldest building was the municipality building. During construction, it was called "Ayalat building" and was the seat of the city governor. The army headquarters building was built between 1933-1937.

The aforementioned measurements were done within the framework of a sheer functional view and in accordance with the desired objectives and were ignorant towards the consequences of such interventions in the old fabric of Urmia. A map of Urmia was prepared in 1933;⁵² it is the oldest document related to developments of the city in the 1920s and clearly shows the above actions.

The construction method and the formation of Ayalat Square had an effective role in the implementation of activities and spaces around it. Usually the squares that were formed gradually and simultaneously with the development of city and in its corner buildings were built; the activities and spaces did not follow a proper hierarchy and order. But since Ayalat Square was initially designed and then was put into implementation, the order and coordination of activities and the surrounding areas (Shahr bani, municipality and the army headquarters) is seen.

Spaces around the square were in commensurate with its characteristics. At that time, soldiers marched in front of their commanders and even people circled around them to watch.⁵³ Simultaneous construction of spaces around the square, the relation of architectural characteristics of buildings with each other and the predefined designs, set in a specific architectural period and monitored and implemented by a specific system despite the abundance of functional spaces around the square induced a single spirit from it. The impression of audience from the square was a single and interconnected complex and not, single and individual buildings.

⁵² Padide Samet Consulting Engineers. (2006). Study And Restoration of Shahr bani Building In Urmia. Administration of Cultural Heritage and Tourism. Urmia. 68-74.

⁵³ Ibid, 74.

Ayalat Square in Urmia still has the same function as before, though it is noteworthy that this square is located at the crossroads of major urban routes and plays an important role in urban transition. Circular geometry of the square facilitates the movement of cars and helps its effectiveness in transition.



Figure 18: Aerial photograph of Ayalat Square
Source: Az Asemane Iran. Ghazbanpour. P32.



Figure 19: A view of the municipal building in Urmia
Source: Study and Restoration of Shahr bani Building in Urmia. Padide Samet. P75



Figure 20: Urmia Judiciary Building
Source: Study and Restoration of Shahr bani Building in Urmia. Padide Samet. P75



Figure 21: Shahr bani Building in Urmia
Source: Study and Restoration of Shahr bani Building in Urmia. Padide Samet. P75.

2.6. Conclusoin

History of architecture in Iran is not a history of Iranian architects but rather the history of powerful people who wanted to leave a legacy in the form of architecture and urban planning. Reza Shah from the beginning of his reign to expand his power and domination, as well as to meet his political objectives such as the country's

security, sought an urgent need for immediate action in the construction of state and military buildings. In this process he had a special attention to the development and prosperity of cities, to the extent that the Shah himself was pursuing the implementation of buildings.⁵⁴

As described in order to achieve an appropriate structure for the administrative system of the country, Reza Shah built several buildings. In this procedure one of Reza Shah's objectives was modernization and also promoting the technical and engineering achievements of Europe in the construction of buildings in Iran. During this period, in addition to development of municipalities - known as "Baladieh" back then - and their executive power, under the orders of Shah, commanders of military units and barracks supervised and monitored the civil developments and supported the municipalities.

Sensitive position of Urmia and disturbances in the area at the time gave reason to take some measurements in order to reinforce the city. During this period, construction of Ayalat Square as a governmental square was the first move to achieve the above goals. The buildings in the premises of Ayalat Square were fabricated during the years 1928 to 1937 and were actually forming the new mechanism of government and bureaucracy in Iran and consisted of the following buildings: Shahr bani (police station), Baladieh (municipality) and army headquarters.

In Reza Shah's modernization program, a large number of architects were selected to carry out government projects due to their education and skills that distinguished them from traditional architecture. Nature of architectural activities in Reza Shah's time - a period of speed, breadth and diversity - raised issues that naturally gathered the professional community around itself. The new and inclusive role of these modern architects, combined with the individual reputation gained in this era is just the opposite of their former colleague's obscurity for centuries. New patterns of urban development, new types of buildings and search for new styles raised important questions and prompted Western architects to actively participate in the transformation of society in order to determine their roles. Construction scale and scope created circumstances in which the foreign engineers and architects were influential in terms of style and form and did some experiments in blending the

⁵⁴ Kiani, M. (2004). *Architecture of First Pahlavi Era*. Tehran. Institution of Studies for Iranian Contemporary History. 97.

traditional architect of Iran with Western styles. During this period, the presence of foreign engineers along with Iranian architects led in a Western designed plans and the usage of Iranian materials and to some extent manufacturing technology in its traditional way.⁵⁵

One of side effects in construction of public buildings by Reza Shah was the changes in design principles that were common for years and in some cases even radically different designs that replaced them for layout of new spaces. As already mentioned in this era the government determined the architectural style and most of the architectural projects were also performed by the government. These projects were in the interest of public and also changed the face of the cities. Thus, changes in architecture since then if not completely but mainly is due to the collision of Eastern or traditional society with unwavering values and norms, with Western and modern values.⁵⁶ In this period we face spaces with new styles and values that despite being eclectic and having resemblances of past, are completely new.

The buildings in Ayalat Square are perfect examples for what happened in this era. Although the designer of these buildings were under the influence of Western architecture, but also they considered the traditional architectural elements and used them in small quantities. Turning to a extroversion design and windows towards outside, profound changes in plans and importance of spaces such as stairwells and a attempting to present a progressive, modern, tradition-breaking ideology with a military characteristics.

Programs of reform, modernization and development, and then the abundant constructions in the new government, practically placed the civil renovations in the hands of government agencies and gave validity and priority to the construction of public buildings, therefore the impact of government in the architecture of these years became its leading characteristic. The variety and vast number of buildings in this era reveals that the government in its first historical experience in Iran left significant features and teachings and gave an example for future in how successful is the impact of state policies in architecture.

⁵⁵ Bani Masoud, Amir. (2009). *Iranian Contemporary Architecture*. Tehran. Honare Memari. 193.

⁵⁶ Ayatollah Zadeh Shirazi, Bagher. (1999). *Architectural History of Iran*. Tehran. Iranian Cultural Heritage Organization. 25-29.

Since transformational ideologies from a government are intended for governmental programs and often doesn't have many supports from the nation and people, in order to deliver their programs in architecture the government needs a strong intellectual - executive leverage or organization. The only powerful tool in the possession of Pahlavi was its military organization. Despite some certain positive traits this organization in the execution of programs practically implemented its militaristic features in the architecture, in other words the state used it as leverage for influencing the architecture.

Since governmental architecture only matches thoughts and programs of its own time, it gives less attention to the architecture of past and this is only if it doesn't destroy the previous works in order to induce their superiority compared to the past. With the practice of modern urbanism of Europe, urban planning in the first Pahlavi era and the new architecture created in the sides of streets did both the above mentioned actions. In this urban planning, streets and squares became the stage for displaying the state buildings and for the first time this idea was created that the mansions and palaces are not the seat of government but rather the city itself is a symbol of government.

CHAPTER 3

AN INQUIRY INTO SOCIAL HOUSING

From the early days of mankind on Earth, housing as one of the most basic human needs has been used as a place for protection against heat and cold. Today after thousands of year's people still have the same need, however because of significant complications raised in people's lives such as Living conditions, regional climate, religious beliefs, financial situation and development of science and technology, new needs and demands has emerged in housing production for human societies.

With the increase in population and the formation of cities and metropolises and by directly affecting the economy, housing has become a special commodity containing different aspects.⁵⁷ Pressing need for housing as a result of population growth and migration has influenced the planners and managers to intensification of housing manufacturing process and sometimes causing the quality to be of secondary importance, leaving governments with housing problems.

If solving the housing problem without considering the population characteristics of a country is not impossible, it is very difficult. Because demographic indicators such as the number and trend of population growth, migration, employment status, etc. directly affects the housing needs. In the case of Iran, despite warnings about the country's population growth, there were no large-scale solutions to deal with the housing problem. In each period, a policy was adopted and after being unresponsiveness, it was changed and a new policy was adopted.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Dalal Pour, M. (1995). *Housing and Building: Policies and Difficulties*. Tabriz: Faculty of Literature and Human Sciences of Tabriz, 153, 97.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 99.

In the second half of the twentieth century and especially in the last three decades, countries are going through urbanization more quickly. Cities are expanding and enhancing faster along urban population. This is was in contrast with the continuing evolution and social changes of recent centuries in Iran, as a consequence of an accelerating capitalism within a single product economy dependent on oil exports, reducing the importance of the agricultural sector and thus creating a migration from the countryside to the city.⁵⁹ The housing crisis and the necessity of urbanization in the world, primarily reflects the transition from agricultural-based societies with a traditional system into an industrial and service-based societies with modern systems.⁶⁰

So if the phenomenon of tall building could be considered as mass housing, by imitating the world's major cities it has been practiced about half a century in Iran. However, the construction of these buildings was not the product of a need for functional, social and cultural development but rather due to the increasing demand, it was reflected in the country's development plans. These residential buildings are used to help solving the housing problem, especially in a city like Tehran.⁶¹ In this respect, to solve the housing problem of low-income class, in 2007 the government founded a great housing project called Maskan Mehr. The aim in this project was to reduce the housing cost by cession of free lands for the applicants and providing them a cheaper house.

3.1. Definitions

3.1.1. House

What is a house? Is a house only a shelter that protects us against the wind and rain? After thousands of years on Earth, what is the definition of home in human culture and how this definition has been determined in the spatial pattern?

⁵⁹ Raghfar, H., & Ghasemi, A. (2010). The causes of migration and demographic-economic characteristics of immigrants in cities: a comparative study of rural-urban and urban-rural migration during 1375-1385 in Iran. Tehran: Demography Association of Iran, 4(8), 41.

⁶⁰ Lefebvre, Henri. 2003. The urban revolution (Robert Bononno, Trans.). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 15-16.

⁶¹ Dalal Pour, M. (1995). Housing and Building: Policies and Difficulties. Tabriz: Faculty of Literature and Human Sciences of Tabriz, 153, 100.

Researchers and thinkers, who have studied this issue, have offered various definitions of house and home and each of these definitions has clarified different aspects of this concept. But all of them are common in this that house is a place with meanings beyond just a shelter and has several layers of content and meaning. Here are some descriptions of house:

“Home is where the residents don’t feel uncomfortable and the inner house or where women and children are living must have a large diversity so (they) don’t feel boredom.”⁶²

“Home is a shelter that in accordance with certain conditions places the right relationship between the outside and the phenomenon’s of human life. At home an individual or a family should live. It means that they should sleep, walk, lie down, see and think.”⁶³

“Home is the center of world for its habitants and for its neighborhood; it is the most prominent building in the consolidation space.”⁶⁴

“The house is an institution, not just a structure, created for a complex set of purposes. Because building a house is a cultural phenomenon, its form and organization are greatly influenced by the cultural milieu to which it belongs. Very early in recorded time the house became more than shelter for primitive man, and almost from the beginning "function" was much more than a physical or utilitarian concept... If provision of shelter is the passive function of the house, then its positive purpose is the creation of an environment best suited to the way of life of a people-in other words, a social unit of space.”⁶⁵

Among the spaces in where human beings attend, home is the space which is intersected and affected by them on daily basis and affects them. A home is the first place for family and domestic life. It can be said that it is the first place where humans experience the sense of belonging to space. Home is the place where in

⁶² Pirnia, M. (1992). Introduction to Islamic Architecture of Iran. G. Memarian (Ed.). Tehran: Iran University of Science and Technology Press, 154.

⁶³ Le Corbusier. (1975). How to Think About Urban Issues. (M. Katebi, Trans.). Tehran: Amir Kabir Press, 45.

⁶⁴ Moore, Charles, et al. (1974). The Place of House. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 50.

⁶⁵ Rapoport, Amos. (1969). House Form and Culture. Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall, 46.

solitude or among others first direct experience with space takes place, privacy with self, spouse and children, friends and others without the disturbance of others.⁶⁶

With the developments of the industrial revolution in Europe, industrialization and standardization happened in all aspects of life, including housing and caused changes and transformations in the spatial organization of houses. In some cases achievements of industrialization precisely replaced the elements of house or matched it and in some cases greatly changed them.

In studies conducted in Iran to identify contemporary houses of the 60s, the trend in the reduction of space could be seen. The process of elimination of space and lack of attention to the organization of creative space in contemporary residential units is acute and fast and has affected the true concept of house and residence. Several factors can be used to outline this process such as “replacement instead of restoration” and “the dominance of objects in the spatial organization of the house and fading of space role”.⁶⁷

What happened in the cities of Iran was the lack of early interventions in historical fabric, not harmonization these fabrics with automobiles and restoration of them. The result was that in the choice between automobiles or historic fabric, automobiles were chosen and by the emergence of new urban look, historic fabric underwent change and this was one of the most important events in lifestyle change that substituted replacement instead of restoration. What happened in contemporary Iran is the inclusion of the concept of life in concept and reducing function to biological needs, such as sleep and food. In this process space has lost its effective role.

What has occupied macroeconomic policies in housing of Iran is increasing the number of housing production. The phenomenon of mass housing is common in many cities of the country. The sole purpose of this policy is to provide a shelter to be owned by people and the concept of house has distanced from what historically has been shaped through thousands of years in human culture and there is no place for dialogue about quality of house in this approach.

⁶⁶ Haeri, M. (2009). *House, Culture, Nature: An Architectural Review on Historical and Contemporary Houses*. Tehran: Research and Development Center of Urban Planning and Architecture, 49.

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 53.

3.1.2. Social House

Based on common understanding, social housing is generally defined as housing provided on a non-profit basis, managed either by the state or by various permutations of not-for-profit or community agencies that range from housing associations to cooperatives.⁶⁸ In this definition, the effects of income distribution, the tax system, and other income support programs on housing are not taken into consideration. As a social policy theorist, John Hills proposes that any factor effective on housing system is important and must be measured: “in designing social housing finance and housing benefit systems, potential reforms should be judged in terms of the fundamental aim of the system—to support those who would not otherwise be able to afford an acceptable standard of housing”⁶⁹. Theories in the field of economy also cover a wide concept of social housing; in general the decisive feature in this notion of thought is a combination of a price lower than the market or rent with a distribution system based on need. For example, social housing policy is described by Maclennan and More as a field including “provision in owner occupation as well as private and non-private rental units and the term relates to the purpose of policy rather than the means”⁷⁰.

Hegedus explains:

“Kemeny’s highly influential housing theory also implicitly identifies the social sector with the public rental sector. Kemeny’s typology distinguishes between the residual and unitary rental regimes as the two basic options of the social housing model. The analyses involve explicit and implicit judgments that imply that the unitary model is superior to the residual model because the latter results in the stigmatization and territorial concentration of the poor, and thus contributes to the poverty trap. Kemeny claims that the size of the social rental sector (whether residual or unitary) is itself an important symptom of existing social structures and social values. For instance, in *The*

⁶⁸ Burke, T. (2004). *Governance and Social Housing: Can Good Governance Be Bad Practice?* Australia: Institute for Social Research, Swinburne University of Technology, 1. Source: <http://www.sisr.net/publications/0402burke.pdf> (Last retrieved at 20/06/2015).

⁶⁹ Hills, J. (2000). *Reinventing Social Housing Finance*. London: Institute for Public Policy Research, 1.

⁷⁰ Maclennan, D., & More, A. (1997). “The Future of Social Housing: Key Economic Questions”. *Housing Studies* 12: 535.

Myth of Home Ownership (1981), Kemeny describes Australia as a society that does not take responsibility for providing its poor with housing, as the size of the sector was only 5 percent. However, if we want to use a truly broad concept of social housing, then categories such as the size of the public rental sector are not an adequate gauge of a social housing regime. Instead, we need to take the effects of income distribution, income benefit programs, and the tax system into account to establish whether the private rental sector is affordable for a broad swath of the population, particularly low-income households.”⁷¹

So there are some deficiencies in these theories, one of them results from the elimination of an important factor that influences the housing situation of low-income people, especially in less developed countries. It is related to the income of low-income households and their capability to find housing in private sector; it is possible that by using income benefit programs they might be able to afford housing in the private sector. Though, while these programs are effective in gaining the same objectives, they are not considered in analyses of the social housing sector.

3.2. Theoretical and Global Achievements to Provide Housing for Low-income Groups: effects of social policies on housing policies, the government’s approaches towards housing and housing market and an overview on global experience on housing for low-income groups.

What has made housing an issue today is arising from the formation of the modern world that began with events such as the Industrial Revolution and continued with the rapid growth of migration to cities and subsequently urban expansions. In fact, although the provision of housing has historically always been a concern for people and the state and governments have considered it important, but only since the beginning of the twentieth century, the need for housing as one of the most basic human needs has become a critical issue to the relationship between state and nation, such that housing became a social issue and a special position was assigned for it in the social policy.

⁷¹ Hegedus, J, et al. (2013). *Social Housing in Transition Countries*. London: Routledge, 5.

With the formation of the theories of economic welfare in developed countries and especially since the 1970s, with the generalization of social planning and policy making in developed countries, very broad theories of the necessity and implementation of these policies have begun and during the last 4 decades, was the basis of many state programs and policies with different objectives and trends. Therefore a very important criterion in the evaluation of social and economic programs and policies is their theoretical assessment and the evaluation of the actual performance based on the same theories.

3.2.1. Housing policy in the reflection of social policy

Social policy is a policy oriented towards social welfare and deals with the relation of welfare, politics and society. Thus, social policy is the part of public policy that is related to social issues. Social policy is defined as: actions that affect the well-being of society through shaping the distribution and access to goods and resources of that community.⁷²

Since a house is the most important asset of most people as well as the main factor in determining the other welfare services for families, in all countries whether developed or developing, housing policies has an important and pivotal part in the formation of social policy. The relationship between housing policies and social policies is because of the significance of housing in the social aspects of life. Some of the most important social aspects of housing can be expressed as the following:⁷³

- Every day more evidence is found on the effectiveness of housing conditions on mental and physical health of families and individuals. This relation has important practical results in policymaking, because improving housing conditions will lead to improved public health. Studies show that for children, the cost, tenure, quality and sustainability of a house as well as its location is important for their health, education, security and social participation. From this, the provision of affordable housing should be the main component of any policy that is planning to invest for the future.

⁷² Cheyne, Christine., & O'brien, Mike., & Belgrave, Michael. (2005). Social Policy in Aotearoa New Zealand: A Critical Introduction **Social Policy** Journal of **New Zealand**, July 2005(25), 3.

⁷³ Carter, T., & Polevychok, C. (2004). Housing Is Good Social Policy. Canadian Policy Research Networks

- On the impact of housing conditions on academic success researches shows that although socio-economic status of parents is one of the main factors determining academic success, but there is also a relationship between housing and neighborhood in academic success.
- Investment in the housing sector creates a significant number of jobs and through this, results in success in other areas of social policy and employment costs such as insurance and social assistance will decrease.
- Quality of housing and the rate of physical and environmental construction standards is a very important and decisive factor in the health and safety of citizens living in the face of diseases and natural disasters. Thus, the necessity of defining the standards and quality criteria in the construction of housing and local environment makes the government intervention in the legislation a requirement.
- The necessity of having house for specific groups of society such as the elderly, the sick, the poor, etc. in addition to ideological and moral considerations and support, has development concerns and performance-based objectives as well. This means that providing housing for low-income groups, while tackles poverty symbols such as slums or homeless on street, is also a very important factor in social and political stability, the establishment of public security, participation of the poor in national development process and reducing the cost of rebuilding the urban and housing environments.

3.2.2. The government's approach to the housing market and regulatory policies

Despite the fact that housing has always been one of the most essential need of humans, but usually in different countries the demand and supply for housing is not in balance. It should be noted that in the literature of economics, there is a difference between the concepts of need and demand; Need is a requirement that is necessary regardless of the ability to fulfill it. Whereas demand, only includes requirements that can be fulfilled by paying a certain price. This imbalance mentioned above covers four specific forms:⁷⁴

⁷⁴ Ezati, M. (2007). New Approaches to the Provision of Housing. *Housing Economics*, 39, 1-2.

- Static imbalance: which represents the difference between the number of existing houses and the total number of households;
- Dynamic imbalance: reflects the lack or excess of supply and its changes in regard to need through the time;
- Regional imbalances: shows deficit or excess for the supply in different parts of a country, region or even metropolitan areas.
- Qualitative imbalance: this means that some families may be living in houses below the acceptable standard to the general public.

Governments usually try to reduce or entirely eliminate the imbalances in the housing sector with involvement in some parts of housing market or by reforming the weaknesses of the existing policies. However, in developing countries, quantitative and qualitative deficiencies of housing supply are intensified due to the rapid increase of population and migration from rural to urban and in addition, issues such as overcrowding and air pollution are followed. So by looking at the bigger picture, housing is part of the urban issues that have affected and been effected by it. The reciprocal relationship of housing with urban issues, inevitably associate it with social and environmental issues and eventually all of this leads to the complexity of housing problem. Ignoring this relation may create new problems, sometimes far larger and intense from the provision of housing as the first issue. In general in the economic sphere, the most important issues related to housing include:⁷⁵

- Economic relations of housing and other economic activities;
- Influence the labor market;
- The effect on and affection by the banking system and capital markets.

Housing policy from an economic perspective is usually examined from the perspective of the market. In theory, market through complex mechanisms of supply and demand will lead to efficient allocation of goods and resources; this mechanism is dependent on competition and information. But this issue in housing has a very limited usage. Market failure in the housing sector happens at different times and in different ways and fails to meet the needs of society. Sometimes the market fails to meet the minimum standards required for residents and sometimes fails to produce

⁷⁵ Yazdani, F. (2007). Introduction to the Theoretical Relationship Between Economic and Housing Policies. *Housing Economics*, 42, 3.

enough housing. The results of this failure are critical and largely affect the economy of the city and the country and welfare of people. Unfavorable results are families living in nonstandard conditions,⁷⁶ lack of housing and its indirect results, the reasons below are purposed for limitations of the housing market:⁷⁷

- Enclosed market: production and finance of housing is limited to only a few;
- Effects of location: location in the housing market is very important and that's why perfect information and fair competition, without fees cannot exist;
- Externalities: Housing affects the environment, as well as being affected by it;
- Allocation of credit: financing in the housing market is done mainly through loans which should be based on its expected value in future;
- Uncertainty: because of the uncertainty about future, there is also uncertainty in the housing market. Intervention in the market and adjusting it is important to reduce uncertainty;
- Volatility of market: prices are determined by a limited part of the market. Those who are at the same moment engaged in buying and selling;
- The issue of fulfillment the needs: if only profitability is concerned, the need of people with low-incomes will not be achieved;
- Provision of land for essential functions: lands suitable for allocation of different usages such as residential, services, transportation and green space in the city are facing many constraints. The necessity to provide public and social services on the one hand, as well as the need for proper distribution of these centers in accordance with the distribution and structure of population, implicates the land use planning and determining the level of infrastructure and population density. Spatial planning and state intervention in the determination and allocation of land use, reduces economic and social costs resulting from the market and its irregularities.
- Full divestiture of housing to the market mechanism often leads to poor distribution of investments and housing production among the regions. This means that much of the investments and housing production is focused in central and rich regions with high dynamics and efficiency and

⁷⁶ Harris, I. (2003). *Market Failure and the London Housing Market*. London: Greater London Authority, 47.

⁷⁷ Barlow, J., & Duncan, S. (1994). *Success and Failure in Housing Provision*, Oxford: Pergamon Press.

simultaneously with the oversupply or having a high standard of residential units in some areas, lack of housing or poor housing in other areas of the city or the country will happen.

To deal with the housing market failure, government intervention in the market is required. In advanced economies, governments make regulatory measurements and these measurements are implemented in different ways. Some of these methods include subsidies, receive and redistribute taxes, direct supply of housing and legal regulatory measures to influence prices, the rate of housing construction and allocation of housing.⁷⁸ The necessity of these methods and how the state has entered the market is an issue with many controversies; however, past experiences are a good guide in this regard.

In addition to trying to prevent the failure of the housing market, because of the role of this sector in creating economic activity and prosperity and its significant contribution to job creation and the characteristics of workers in the sector, besides the important contribution of the housing sector in providing the local and national finance by tax, governments have a strong emphasis and attention on the management of the housing market and the economic and social policymaking of this market.⁷⁹ Also the role and share of housing in financial markets is another important aspect of housing market that has a decisive role in the recessions and booms of whole economy.

3.2.3. Housing policy and its features

Housing policy in general, is designed to enhance the welfare of the people of a country. But these policies usually don't have a direct impact on the welfare of low-income groups. To improve the welfare of these groups, new policies should be designed that have specific features and because of these features can be distinguished from other policies related to housing.

- ❖ Health and Hygiene: the first distinction of housing policy for low-income groups is the further importance of health problems in them. As the number

⁷⁸ Yazdani, F. (2007). Introduction to the Theoretical Relationship Between Economic and Housing Policies. *Housing Economics*, 42, 4.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, 5.

of people in a house, which are in a close contact with each other, increases, contagious diseases spread faster and as diseases spread faster, risk of infection for people who live anywhere in the city also increases.

- ❖ Participation: the concept of Participation is the second distinction between housing policy for low-income groups and housing policies. In this case, a problem in connection with the behavior of low-income groups that needs to be reformed. In these groups, generally being a good citizen doesn't mean to participate in the building meetings, neighborhood gatherings and these types of participation. Many experts and researchers believe that growing up in a poor home and neighborhood increases the possibility of the crime.
- ❖ Social Justice: the third distinction of housing policy for low-income group is social justice. Helping the poor is an objective with its unique ethical aspects that puts it in the category of social justice policies. From this perspective, housing policy for low-income groups has nothing to do with economic performance and productivity and economic profit is not the case. In the case of Iran, the important thing is that during 2004 and 2008, on average more than 40% of income in low-income households was allocated to the cost of housing. The housing is a very large part of the well-being of low-income households and the most important asset of most low-income and average families. In many economic norms, helping the disadvantaged class of society is valuable and recommended, even if at the expense of the affluent and upper class. Therefore evaluation of these policies requires an attention to the issue that as a result of the implementation of these policies, which groups will benefit and which ones will be affected and only considering that the gains will compensate the expenses, is not enough. This is possible through welfare and economic policies that are relevant to the issue of fair distribution of wealth. The most important of these policies is the design of a tax system and mechanism that makes redistribution of wealth possible. Policies that are implemented with the intention of social justice, but they are not properly designed, mainly lead to the formation of inappropriate incentive structures that are in conflict with the primary objective of the policies and as a result eventually the groups that were supposed benefit of it, will suffer.

- ❖ Environment: Also in terms of the environment, the need to organize housing for poor has been proposed. Sometimes, it is argued that low-income groups who don't have access to adequate housing, attempt to destroy their living environment and thereby threaten the stability of others and their own habitat. But this view has been criticized by some. They believe environmental reasons are not the main reason for housing for the poor, but rather it's only a tool to justify the elimination of slums around the city that make the city look jarring and undesirable.
- ❖ Affordability: in the reference texts on this subject there is a tacit agreement on the finance potency for provision of housing⁸⁰ that if the cost of housing is more than 30% of household's income, the provision of housing for these families will be difficult. This problem cannot be solved by increasing the housing supply, since it is caused by poverty and not lack of housing. In other words, more than the lack of physical access to housing, it is the financial inability to access it. The root of this inability lies in the structure of income and assets of the society and to solve it, along the housing physical development policies, requires policies that increase household financial ability to purchase and their acquisition of affordable housing. If society would like to reduce the share of housing costs in poor households, they need to transfer resources from the society to these families. Although the 30% boundary is not quite a good criterion for determining disable groups, but still it is the basis for many housing indicators and policies.

The reason for inappropriateness of this criterion is that equivalent ratio of household income for various social groups are different. Also the affording ability is an issue both personal and social and in different societies depending on their institutional and economic structure, it can differ. And therefore the criterion of 30% for the societies, regions and different groups with different cultural, social, ideological and climate conditions and even diversity of age, gender, education, employment and household composition will vary. However, regardless of differences in definitions and criteria, the growth of housing problem by not being able to rent and buying a house is evident and even after the introduction of housing empowerment strategies

⁸⁰ Glaeser, E., & Gyourko, J. (2008). Rethinking Federal Housing Policy, How to Make Housing Plentiful and Affordable. The AEI Press.

by the United Nations and implementation of it by the countries of the world, still in many countries, there is the issue of low-income housing and efforts to improve this situation continues. Accurate predictions for the need of housing can be useful for this purpose, but quantization of these estimates is not easily done. Changes in demographics, socio-economic conditions and cultural preferences make the quantitative estimation of need for housing difficult. However, these estimates are useful in determining the scale of the needed housing and facilitate national planning.

- ❖ The direct intervention of the state: A review of provision of housing policies in developed countries indicates the direct involvement of government agencies in the provision of housing. This, especially in the years after World War II has found a larger scale and dimensions and its examples is the spread of social housing. Social housing are houses built by the state or public institutions, with facilities dedicated to low-income people and based on low rental rates and as government subsidies were granted to low-income people. But over time, the emergence of other problems including social problems in unsuccessful cases, as well as the unwillingness of residents to improving the habitat in its successful cases, made the governments orient from provision of housing policies towards other policies such as land tenure and empowerment policies.⁸¹

3.2.4. The government's role in the housing market and the provision of low-income groups housing

Summarizing the historical course of programs and policies for the provision of housing for low-income groups in the 5-year development programs from before and after the revolution of Iran shows that direct government involvement in the provision of housing causes distrust in the private sector and thus limitation or recession of activity in this sector. On the other hand, direct government involvement in housing, due to the limited government funds and the prevailing bureaucracy of

⁸¹ Sartipi, M. (2004). Pathology of Housing Problems in Iran. *Soffeh*, 39, 24-33.

most governments is not effective.⁸² Other reasons can be mentioned for the failure of direct government intervention in housing supply, including:

- The government, instead of investing to create jobs that allow poor households to be able to pay for housing by their income, builds houses;
- Despite the high cost, the number of built houses does not respond to the needs;
- This limited housing that is delegated to a small portion of low-income groups, is bonanza for some and creates barratry;
- In short, the result of government intervention in the provision of housing could be seen in the declaration of Human Settlement Commission in 1976⁸³, “That all governments have reached the bitter truth that the policy of housing production directly by government from the perspective of quantitative scale, as well as the acceptance and suitability to needs, has serious limitations”.⁸⁴

After the failures of direct experience of governments in housing, today the governments have assigned the task of housing to professionals and are engaged in macro policymaking, legislation, and monitoring. Legislations and policies to deal with the problems of housing, typically demonstrate the amount and manner of government intervention in this process. Health and building regulations, rules related to the participation of various sectors, rules and regulations for construction, financing rules, rules governing the purchase and sale of land, rules and regulations of the technical aspects of buildings and laws relating to the distribution of housing and rent controls and the payment system can be named for such laws.⁸⁵

In this context international policies employed include:

- Hire-purchase: This aims to convert the residents from tenant to owners in the future. In other words, the amount of rent received during a specified period is equivalent to the price of house and after the stipulated time, becomes into the possession of the tenant;

⁸² Ahari, Z., & Amini, S. (1996). *The Experiences of Different Countries in the Provision of Housing*. Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 12.

⁸³ Report of Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlement, Vancouver, 31 May – 11 June, 1976

⁸⁴ Athari, K. (2004). *The Aversion and Lack of Planning for Low-income Housing*. *Housing Economics*, 34, 41.

⁸⁵ Ahari, Z., & Amini, S. (1996). *The Experiences of Different Countries in the Provision of Housing*. Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, 12.

- **Leased Housing:** The housing is often built by state or is supported by it and is placed at the disposal of needy families in a leased format;
- **Cooperative housing tenants:** In this method, the housing cooperative with construction or purchase of residential units, rents them in exchange for a small amount of money. The units are owned by cooperative companies and their maintenance are the responsibility of the company and generally have official support from the government;
- **Rent control and rent security:** This method is done by determining the maximum rent for units in proportion to their size and type;
- **Rental assistance:** In cases where housing policy doesn't meet the needs, the method of rental assistance is done based on family size and income, in the form of subsidies. Since the '80s, this method of housing policy is considered more over the leased housing.⁸⁶

In general it can be said that to solve the housing problem, different types of solutions have been offered, each based on their own ideas and insights. For example, function scale can be named, which is based on minimum housing, housing consumption patterns; policies could be mentioned, which includes rental housing policy, housing support and affordable housing; and finally how to use housing like social housing.

Each country has chosen the above methods as different solutions for their agenda; of course, all of these methods are discussed within the category of "planning". Obviously, as the housing problem began in the industrialized countries and later arrived in other countries, plans to solve the housing problem also came through these countries to other countries, including Iran and certainly with the development of global communications, new ideas and methods will be accessible even more.

Accordingly, on the one hand, the development of global ideas such as empowerment, civil settlements, increase of the loan amounts for housing purchase, government subsidies, etc. On the other hand environmental issues, cultural, economic and social necessities and requirements have led to the idea of small housing. Small housing is housing with the idea of sustainable development and

⁸⁶ Dejkam, J. (1995). Leased Housing, Proceedings of the Second Seminar on development of housing policies, volume 1, 30-34.

based on the principles of maximum and efficient use of offered space and facilities and eventually will be in the possession of groups who rely on their own income and of course with the help of bank loans, will be able to own it.

3.2.5. Right to Housing in Government Objectives and National and International Laws

For people, most of the concern about the provision of housing is because buying a house is the biggest deal that general public do in their lifetime. Based on experience, unusual growth of housing prices and rents, especially in major cities and lack of attention to this problem is associated with multilateral adverse consequences. Generally speaking, approximately a quarter of the average family's income and for the poor or nearly poor, about 50% or even more of their income is devoted to housing. In addition, every small change in housing prices and rents could have destructive and irreversible effects on a person's life is.

On the other hand, given that the provision of housing for low-income people is not always done in an optimum process, many economists recognize the provision of housing for low-incomes as an example of market failure and the obligation of government to apply intervention in the market. Homelessness and housings inconsistent with the building quality standards are a clear evidence of market failure and also the most obvious indicator of housing shortage. Haunted houses are one of the manifestations of market failure in the allocation of housing, because all over the world in spite of the excess demand in the housing market, houses are still haunted. If these houses are added to the current offered houses, the gap between supply and demand will be largely resolved. For instance, in 2004 in England, per each homeless person there were about 7 haunted houses or in other words, a total of 750 thousand haunted houses. That if with the proper functioning of the market, this amount was added to the annual supply of housing, certainly the problem of homelessness in the country would be settled.⁸⁷

Supply and demand gap, along with the impact on housing prices, also strongly affects the rent. Market inefficiency in the provision of housing for a wide range of people with middle and low income, in addition to the inefficient economic system

⁸⁷ Ahmadi, S. (2005). Reviewing the Role of Government in Providing Housing. *Ravand Quarterly*, 46, 44.

including the disproportionate growth of wages compared to the growth of housing prices and rents, makes the necessity of government intervention in the market inevitable. Therefore, government intervention in the housing market is either to address market failures in providing shelter for the elderly, sick, destitute, physically and mentally disabled and low-income or for the purpose of proper distribution of housing in different areas. In some cases and especially in developed countries, government intervenes in the housing market in order to achieve a tax source as revenue for the government at the times of economic prosperity. In any case, considering any of the above factors, having adequate housing is a right in international treaties as well as numerous domestic laws. In many international conventions and international treaties, the right to housing is known as an impartible part of human rights.

Under article 31 of Islamic Republic of Iran Constitution, "Having a house in accordance with the needs is the right of every Iranian individual and family. The government must accord priority to those who are in dire need, especially villagers and workers and provide the implementation of this principle"⁸⁸. Clearly and unequivocally, the government is responsible for the provision of housing. But housing in Iranian culture and civilization has a broad concept. This may be one of the main reasons for the lack of success in solutions such as "small housing" or "social housing" in Iran; because the basic principle and structure of the living tradition or in a more clear sense, the conception of society from housing is ignored. A conception that believes provision of housing is equal to the provision of all individual and social human needs and finds imagining the fulfillment of those needs in those minimum housings impossible. The extent of this problem in Iran has advanced so much that the housing crisis has converted from "the lack of housing" to "bad housing". On this basis, extent of the importance of government's duty in the provision of housing according to the housing conception could be understood. Also based on Article 43 of Iran's constitution to ensure economic independence, eradication of poverty and deprivation, fulfilling human needs in the process of development and preservation of his liberality, country's economy is based on the

⁸⁸ Ministry of Roads and Urban Development. (2013). Evaluation of Mehr Housing Project. Tehran: Azarakhsh. 72.

following criteria: provision of basic needs: housing, food, clothing, health care, education and requirements to start a family for everyone.⁸⁹

3.2.6. Overview on the achievements of global experience in providing housing for low-income groups

Governments and housing authorities for their actions in the field of housing usually have a limited number of main policies at their disposal. By reviewing housing policies that have been recommended by international institutions and been pursued by governments around the world, It seems that the three groups of measures, here mentioned as periods, has occurred chronologically. These three measures are:

1. Governments can directly attempt to construct housing units and then rent or even sell the built units by the market prices or with subsidies;
2. Governments can take action to reduce the price of housing so that they can increase the ability of households to provide housing;
3. By improving the performance of the housing market, governments can facilitate the possession of housing for its citizens. This can be achieved through measures such as facilitating access to mortgages or residential land.

In this section, three periods of development of housing policies in the world and policies to deal with the problem of low-income housing in different parts of the world will be discussed and the international experience in this area will briefly be referred.⁹⁰

The first period (after World War II to the early 1970s)

During the first period of the development of housing policies which almost began after World War II and continued until the early 1970s, when the World Bank entered into the housing area, the emphasis was on a public housing approach. This approach was taken from a developed model in England. The problem with this approach at the time was the lack of resources and if the resources were provided, the construction of housing was only done for civil servants and the military. Even if

⁸⁹ Ministry of Roads and Urban Development. (2013). Evaluation of Mehr Housing Project. Tehran: Azarakhsh. 72.

⁹⁰ Ahmadi, S. (2005). Reviewing the Role of Government in Providing Housing. Ravand Quarterly, 46, 51-65.

building housing units was possible, low-income groups and the poor could not afford to pay rent. At this time, the World Bank conducted a study⁹¹ about the cheapest housing units built by the governments in six cities and concluded that in each of these six cities, the average income of applicants was below the threshold needed to pay for even such inexpensive housing. Even with very substantial subsidies to these groups, still in most cases, they could not afford to pay the cost of residential units.

The second period (from 1970 to the mid-1980s)

By reaching the fact that the housing problem will not be solved by providing housing for low-income groups, international organizations and governments turned to the second period of housing policy based on direct participation of people in the building process. At the time, it was argued that if poor groups attempt to build their own houses, with appropriate external assistance, housing costs will come down as much as necessary to enable these groups to possess their own houses. This initiative spearheaded by the World Bank and its Sites and Services Projects began in 1972. Sites and Services was a simple concept, the government should prepare pieces of urban land with division plans and basic support services and then allow the poor to build their own houses in the framework of the project. But unfortunately the results of this approach was predictable that even with the lowest government investment, these projects were very expensive for about 20% of most urban populations and in some cases this percentage was even higher. Efforts to reduce the required standards - a move that many local governments opposed because they considered it equivalent to quick creation of slums - also did not help to reduce the cost of these projects. Efforts to reconstruct worn-out fabrics instead of Sites and Service Projects to lower housing cost did also fail.

The third period (from mid 1980s and onwards)

The third period began from the mid-1980s, when the World Bank realized that the program of Sites and Services will not be able to be effective in a scale where it

⁹¹ Grimes, Jr., & Orville, F. (1976). *Housing for Low-income Families*. Baltimore: John Hopkins Press.

could solve the housing problem. So, along with other institutions involved in the field of housing, their thinking shifted towards creating an enabling environment under which each nation could develop its own national policies for housing's problems. Attention was towards designing ways to create environments which could provide the economic, financial, legal and institutional needs of housing section. In 1993, this thinking led to the formal adoption and statement of a new policy which emphasized on empowerment and participation of the housing sector in the macro-economic developments and policies advocating poor groups. While the previous policies, such as housing construction and direct participation in the construction process, directly targeted the problem of housing shortage, the so-called empowerment strategy, in a more realistic approach, aimed at removing the barriers in the path of housing solutions.

Reviewing the experiences of empowerment strategies in the field of housing around the world, besides the achieved successes, shortcomings and some failures could be seen.⁹² With surveying cases from different countries that represent political, economic and social differences, makes it imperative to consider the fact that what is effective in one case may not work in another. Therefore the recommendations in the report of the World Bank should only be applied if they are in accordance with the context and circumstances. However, in the following report, some of the basic principles and operational elements that are usually used are identified. Based on the results of the World Bank report, the most significant proposals are summarized in this section.

1. With the current state of globalization and urbanization, alongside liberalization, it is necessary to support the interests of the poor and vulnerable groups as well. The best way to protect is the government's direct intervention; however experience has shown that intervention of the supply-side, such as direct offers of housing subsidies and rent controls, has problems in benefiting their target groups. In this context, the need for measures, such as enabling the right to adequate housing (targeted subsidies) and the role and capacity of government through the completion of income, exists especially on the demand-side. Therefore, the government should take

⁹² United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT). (2006). Enabling shelter strategies: Review of experience from two decades of implementation. Nairobi: UNON Printshop.

a strong role in creating a proper legal, institutional and regulatory environment and the availability of housing finance. This role enables other agents of the housing field to utilize their own potential and optimize their participation in the development and improvement of housing. Also the presence of trained manpower for the effective implementation of empowerment strategies is essential. To this end, training programs should be widely supported and implemented.

2. Recruitment and organization of public - private participation should be used to maximize the efforts of the public sector. Households are usually very active in providing housing; institutions must find ways to support and use their contribution to build and improving their housing and neighborhoods. All participants should get benefit from their participation. In particular, it should not be expected that poor men and women participate in improving their neighborhood without a fee, but rather they should be involved in this activity as a work force with a particular pay.
3. The challenge of gender discrimination should be settled through education, dialogue and strengthen the legal and institutional framework to protect the rights of individuals. Women should be encouraged and protected to have a role in overcoming gender discrimination.
4. Helping the poor and other vulnerable groups from the central and local government subsidies in developing countries is usually in the form of the provision of land and services with lower prices than the market. Subsidies may also be in the form of housing credits with a low interest rate from the general budget. But since the need for subsidies is much more than the available resources, problems of target orientation of subsidies are very common. Therefore, a special attention to ensure that people who do not need subsidies, do not get them, is necessary.
5. With the amortization of the current supply of housing and public housing, reconstruction of these houses in the old and amortized fabric of cities in many developing countries is introduced as a consequence of reduced government direct intervention in providing housing as proposed in empowerment strategies. In many cases, what was once known as house with quality, now have become slums.

Also facilitating the access to land, provision of infrastructure and basic services, improving the standard of living in informal settlements, developing institutions, Methods and means of financing housing, monitoring and evaluation and sharing of knowledge and information, increasing the scale and stability and political determination and will are other important issues which must be considered.⁹³

3.2.7. Policies dealing with the problem of housing for low-income around the world

Successful experience of Turkey in the housing sector (in particular the problem of slums)

In Turkey after World War II, rapid migration from rural to urban areas led to a severe shortage of urban housing and an unprecedented emergence of the phenomenon of slums around large cities. In 1984, in response to the growing needs and problems of the housing sector, the Department of Housing Development and Public Participation was established and in 1990, the Housing Development Administration (TOKI) was separated from the Department of Housing and Public Participation and as an independent division continued its activities. In this year, TOKI following a holistic policy in their plans, which tried to provide housing and urbanization, in order to solve the problem of slums, commenced working with local authorities with the support of the central government. In this regard, on 17 May 2004, to accelerate the transforming of slums and urban revitalization projects, the office of Transforming Slums was founded. The main objectives of TOKI in transforming of slums and urban revitalization projects are:⁹⁴

- Providing better conditions for shelter;
- Bringing the city to a level that could better meet the changing daily needs;
- The destruction of unsuitable residential areas, where their economic and structural conditions will not allow improvements for them;

⁹³ United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT). (2006). Enabling shelter strategies: Review of experience from two decades of implementation. Nairobi: UNON Printshop, 199-218.

⁹⁴ Ministry of Roads and Urban Development. (2013). Evaluation of Mehr Housing Project. Tehran: Azarakhsh. 77.

- Working with local authorities to include those part of the city in a new planning organization;

In this regard, the office of Transforming Slums does the following measures:⁹⁵

- Technical studies in the framework of the relevant rules with regard to the location and ownership;
- Revisions in the slum neighborhoods of cities, in connection with the formation of a healthy urban environment in the areas of transforming slum projects;
- If necessary, follow-up plans and reforms in cooperation with the Office of Building Management;
- If the chosen area of the city for revival was diagnosed convenient, drafting protocols based on the aim of urban reviving in cooperation with municipalities;
- Preparation for studies and analysis of feasibility;
- Field visit reports and geological and geophysical reports.

In another comprehensive program, the Housing Development Administration attempted to provide housing for low-income groups of the society. Although Turkey at regional level is recognized with comparative advantages in the fields of technical and engineering services and construction; but the Turkish government by avoiding ambitions and with a possible plan built 440,000 units during 10 years. Consistency of citizen and voluntary participation that resulted from this project's special structure is some of the most significant achievements of TOKI. Since living in slums leads to lack of education, mental disorders and resistance against the state their and this eventually will turn into criminal activities such as drug trafficking, murder, thus of other important achievements of TOKI, the reduction of these negative consequences through Transforming Slums projects could be noted.⁹⁶

In the experience of Turkey, the most important learned lesson is that different municipality measures in various cities of the country to solve the problem of slums, as a result of lacking in financial resources and political issues, will not be

⁹⁵ Ministry of Roads and Urban Development. (2013). Evaluation of Mehr Housing Project. Tehran: Azarakhsh, 78.

⁹⁶ Ibid, 79.

successful; but rather solving this problem requires support from the central government in the finance, technical and organizational fields, so with concerted actions, these problem could be solved step by step. In Turkey this action, namely the coordination in the country was done by TOKI.

Latin America

Most Latin American countries are different from other developing countries in terms of high rate of urbanization. The process of urbanization and macro-economic regulatory policies, along with the severe recessions has resulted critical situations in terms of urban poverty. Housing shortage in all countries except for Chile is on the rise. In 1999, housing shortage in Argentina was estimated about 3 million units, and in Brazil and Peru, respectively 2.5 million and 1 million units. In Mexico that the housing shortage in 2000 was approximately equivalent to 3.4 million units, lack of housing per year is estimated equivalent to 700,000 units per year for the next 10 years.⁹⁷

North Africa and the Middle East

Downside economic situation in the North Africa and the Middle East has led to the reduction of housing conditions in the region, especially for the poor urban population. Housing shortage in Morocco, according to government estimates is equivalent of 1 million units and in Turkey, annual required housing is equivalent to 200000 units.⁹⁸ While in 1990, there were nearly 670 million slum dwellers in developing countries, this figure rose to 870 million in 2001 and it is predicted that if current trends continue, nearly half of the added populations increase around the world in the coming years will occur in the population of slum dwellers in developing countries and their the number will be 1.4 billion in 2020.⁹⁹

The World Bank has identified seven main instruments of empowerment which are at the disposal of governments; three instruments are related to the demand side, three

⁹⁷ United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT). (2006). Enabling shelter strategies: Review of experience from two decades of implementation. Nairobi: UNON Printshop, 5.

⁹⁸ United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT). (2006). Enabling shelter strategies: Review of experience from two decades of implementation. Nairobi: UNON Printshop, 5.

⁹⁹ Ibid, 8.

instruments are related to the supply side and the other instrument is to improve the management of housing. The three instruments of the demand side of include: developing property rights, developing mortgage finance and rationalizing subsidies. The three instruments of the supply side are: providing infrastructure for residential land development, regulating land and housing development and organizing the building industry. These instruments are supported and completed by a seventh instrument, developing a policy and institutional framework. On this basis World Bank has a comprehensive assessment of national housing policies presented in should and shouldn't format that is summarized in Table 1:

Table 1. The Dos and Don'ts of enabling housing markets to work

Source: United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT). (2006). Enabling shelter strategies: Review of experience from two decades of implementation. Nairobi: UNON Printshop, 29

Instrument	Do	Don't
Developing property rights	Regularize land tenure	Engage in mass evictions
	Expand land registration	Institute costly titling systems
	Privatize public housing stock	Nationalize land
	Establish property taxation	Discourage land transactions
Developing mortgage finance	Allow private sector to lend	Allow interest-rate subsidies
	Lend at positive/market rates	Discriminate against rental housing investment
	Enforce foreclosure laws	
	Ensure prudential regulation	Neglect resource mobilization
Introduce better loan instruments	Allow high default rates	
Rationalizing subsidies	Make subsidies transparent	Build subsidized public housing
	Target subsidies to the poor	Allow for hidden subsidies
	Subsidize people, not houses	Let subsidies distort prices
	Subject subsidies to review	Use rent control as subsidy
Providing infrastructure for residential land development	Co-ordinate land development	Allow bias against infrastructure improvements
	Emphasize cost recovery	
	Base provision on demand	Use environmental concerns as reasons for slum clearance
	Improve slum infrastructure	
Regulating land and housing development	Reduce regulatory complexity	Impose unaffordable standards
	Assess costs of regulation	Maintain unenforceable rules
	Remove price distortions	Design projects without link to regulatory/institutional reform
	Remove artificial shortages	
Organizing the building industry	Eliminate monopoly practices	Allow long permit delays
	Encourage small firm entry	Institute regulations inhibiting competition
	Reduce import controls	
	Support building research	Continue public monopolies
Developing a policy and institutional framework	Balance public/private sector roles	Engage in direct housing Delivery
	Create a forum for managing the housing sector as a whole	Neglect local government role
	Develop enabling strategies	Retain financially unsustainable institutions
	Monitor sector performance	

3.3. Historical course of programs and policies of providing housing for low-income groups in Iran

Maskan Mehr in terms of financial, economic, physical and geographical distribution is the largest (but not the first) focused production and supply of housing in the history of planning and policymaking in Iran. A review of construction and development program of Iran shows that more than 60 years of planning and state policymaking for the provision of housing, particularly for low-income groups and with the rise in urbanization and its deep complexities, housing policies have also evolved and diversity and evolution of laws and regulations can be considered an indicator of it. Providing housing is a very complex process with various stages, from planning and starting it and continues to utilization and after-sales service. Evaluation of construction and development projects from this perspective can display housing sector's shortcomings and explain the cause of it.

Reviewing the implemented programs and policies in the last six decades and examining the fundamental issues, needs and approaches to problems, as well as the executive methods used to solve the housing problem of low-income groups, can give clear experiences about the effects and consequences of implemented policies and a criterion for measure and feasibility of the new policies. These policies have several key concepts and core models such as a small housing, affordable housing, accessible housing, social housing, etc. Also "small house", with various titles in the country has always been a fundamental chapter in country programs. For example, "affordable housing" proposed in the early development programs is indeed small housing, since because of fixed construction costs and methods of implementation, the most important factor in the low cost of land is the size limit and hence being small. Also other terms such as land use patterns, lease models and many other concepts that aim to shrink housing or increasing the proportion of mortgages are all kind of small housing.

Based on observations, the housing problem in an alarming way has always continued in Iranian society and has become even more complex and apparently there is still a long way remains to solve this problem. In studies conducted on the reasons for failure of housing in Iran, several reasons including lack of understanding the issue from cultural and social perspective, living traditions and the needs of the Iranian society and using type buildings have been listed. Also, many of the studies in this issue have pointed out lack of coordination in planning and executive agencies and organizations in provision of housing.

Reviewing the programs before the Islamic Revolution

Housing in Iran, after the collapse of Large Households¹⁰⁰ and with a meaningful time lag due to the industrial backwardness, became an issue. With the spread of global communications, plans and solutions to solve the housing issue reached Iran. Therefore, measures such as direct involvement in provision of housing or legislation and policies by state that in other parts of the world was used to solve the housing problem, was also used in Iran, even though it happened with delays or deficiencies.

Nevertheless, what is witnessed from the start of the formation of Management and Planning Organization and codification the first Development Program is confusion and constant interference between these approaches in the outlines of the state. To be more precise, regulations and policies were often used as means to help organizing the state measures in solving the housing problem. In this period 5 development program took place that will be briefly explained:¹⁰¹

The First Development Plan (1948-1955): With the aim of promoting knowledge and improving people's lives and livelihoods, policy of direct state intervention in the construction of affordable housing institutions (provision of housing) in long-term installments was made. The necessity of this policy was in the unprecedented expansion of the urban population and their need for housing and also rent increases due to the limited supply of housing and trying to solve it through the construction of

¹⁰⁰ Large Household is household based on family and marriage relativity and includes several generations living under one roof and in a common house. Source: <http://daneshnameh.roshd.ir/mavara/mavara-index.php?page=%D8%AE%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%88%D8%A7%D8%AF%D9%87+%DA%AF%D8%B3%D8%AA%D8%B1%D8%AF%D9%87&SSOReturnPage=Check&Rand=0> (Last retrieved at 7/11/2015).

¹⁰¹ Ghanbari, A., & Zaheri, M. (2011). Assessment of Housing Policies Before and after the Islamic Revolution of Iran. *Housing and Rural Environment*, 132,77-84.

public housing. Programs to achieve these objectives were land submission, using global architecture, predicting service centers, material supply, granting long-term facilities from the Construction Bank for low-income people and putting the building low-cost housing as a sub-sector of the Department of Social Affairs in the law. Of the examples of this period “400 Units Alley” in Tehran could be named. These units were a clear example of social housing.

The Second Development Plan (1955-1962): In this period due to the indiscriminate increase of the number of housing, as a result of growing urbanization and also the expansion of marginalization and changes in social relations caused by the growth of cities, economic development and improving the livelihoods was pursued through development operations. The main policy in this period, in addition to the construction of affordable housing was giving priority to urban development projects and land submission to particular groups. The second plan has the same features as the first plan more or less. During this program, in order to build houses, the state attempted to form constructive government agencies including the Housing Organization in the Ministry of Finance to work alongside the Construction Bank. Due to technical limitations, construction of one or two-story buildings in this period was common, such as workers apartments (204 units in Isfahan) or housing for employees (1,000-unit in Can Alley) and for specific groups (144 units in Nazi Abad for the police).

The Third Development Plan (1963-1967): In this plan, considering the non-compliance of the housing programs with the map of cities, for the first time a comprehensive urban plan was devised in order to adjust and predict the needed infrastructure for urban developments. In the final version of the plan, housing had its own headings and housing programs were considered more seriously. In this period social housing was not a disembodied subject from affordable housing and construction of housing for low-income people and removing slums were the main goals.

In this era the government still was directly responsible for the construction of housing, the difference was that this responsibility clearly rested with the Housing Organization and Ministry of Development and Housing and the involvement of other organs in it was limited. Moreover, the government aiming to transfer the

responsibility for housing to the private sector established a training program that based on it; the individuals would be able to build their own houses. However, in typical neighborhoods and settlements made in this period such as Nazi Abad or Ninth of Aban blocks, specific examples of social housing could be seen in the form of rows of one-story houses. Examples that were presented to the public with a lower cost in comparison with of the buildings of common method, while in terms of quality they were ahead than the standards of the time.

The Fourth Development Plan (1968-1972): In the fourth plan, housing policy mainly focused on two axes with two different objectives. First objective was to reduce the number of people in the room - or units – in other words, increasing the size of housing units and second, to provide housing for low-income groups such as workers, employers and marginalized people; on this basis, many workers settlements were developed in the country. These settlements also in comparison with conventional notions of the time offered a concept of social housing, especially in the form of apartment units. With the difference that the size and quality were relatively higher, this increase in size resulted from the policy of reducing people in a housing unit as well. Apartments built during this plan had a major and undeniable contribution in promoting apartment dwelling culture in the country, especially in the middle classes opinion.

The Fifth Development Plan (1973-1977): Fifth Development Plan which was along the path of the previous plan began with a relative improvement of the country's earnings conditions, the promotion of national income per capita and with two a clear purposes about housing issue. The first goal was to increase the number of rooms in housing unit that increased the consumption of housing per capita and the second goal was the construction of social housing in the form of hire-purchase and affordable housing. In this period, plans to transfer the responsibilities of housing construction to the public and private sector in the form co-operatives, companies and major contractors, as well as the owners of industry was followed more seriously and government executive responsibility was reduced. Also, the incentive policies like increasing loan facilities and decreasing charges and etc. was made available for manufacturers.

Despite the policy of increasing the number of rooms in housing units which leads to an increase in the average size of housing units, in the Fifth Development Plan, rigid policies and programs to comply with norms and standards and preventing the construction of luxury houses were applied. That in consequence resulted in significant improvement of construction quality during this period and therefore in a comparison between social housing and common housing of this period, many qualitative differences could be seen. On this basis, the concept of social housing in this period was declined to the concept of affordable housing. However, in general, the development of modernization and adoption of Western culture caused a broad social approach to urbanization and apartment dwelling in a smaller size than the average conventions of the time.

Reviewing the programs after the Islamic Revolution

Despite the major changes caused by the Islamic Revolution in attitudes, slogans and objectives of organizer and executive institutions of housing, substantive issues in the housing sector continued to remain in place. For example, although efforts such as establishing revolutionary organizations and policies in relation to giving land to poor people, in order to stand against deprivation was done, but first for institutional and historical reasons and second, due to new issues such as war (Iran-Iraq war between 1980 and 1988) and its impact on the demolition of housing units and migration from war zones into the central regions and also devoting a considerable amount of funding programs to war, led to the issue of housing continuing to remain a problem.

First Development Plan in Islamic Republic of Iran (1989-1992): As a result of indiscriminate increase of population, in this period decentralization, preventing the growth of large cities and effective development, proportional to the population with a priority in reconstruction and rehabilitation of war-affected areas was targeted. Policies to achieve these objectives emphasized on preservation of available buildings, increasing the exploitation time and to encourage mass production of housing, especially in small towns and rural areas respectively. In the First Development Plan in the Islamic Republic of Iran, housing policy mainly under the influence of development of infrastructures was considered less and social housing

was relegated to the status of rental housing and affordable housing.¹⁰² During this period, loans with low interest were stopped and responsibility for housing was divided between the government and the private sector and cooperatives.

Second Development Plan in Islamic Republic of Iran (1994-1998): During the Second Development Plan with the indiscriminate increase of housing consumption per capita, returning to downsizing principle as the main axis of the policy by the name of "PAK" (saving, mass production and downsizing) was on the agenda of the government and special incentive facilities were awarded to manufacturers for downsizing. Reducing the area policy was pursued to the point that consumption Patterns like 75 square meters in Tehran and 100 square meters in other cities of Iran had a significant impact on the public participation in "social housing" and effectively reduced the average area of houses from 140 square meters to 120 square meters. Also a large part of task of housing construction, especially social housing was transferred to the private sector and people.

During this period, main policies returned to cheap land submission with the least possible price and social housing by government as the only way to provide affordable housing. The difference is that, this time quantity in construction had more priority than building quality and even designs quality.¹⁰³ Also, small housing in small sizes presents itself in the form of housing support and social housing.

Third Development Plan in Islamic Republic of Iran (2000-2004): In the Third Development Plan, housing policies following the policies and objectives of the second plan continued making small houses and expanded further more. In this period the policy of transferring house construction to mass builders and professional organizations was followed more seriously, although the prosperity of housing market on one side and expansion of the range of people demanding affordable housing caused severe interference of the government in the housing issue. Nevertheless, downsizing of housing was studied from socio-cultural and economic aspects and on the other hand, skyrocketing prices of land and increasing share of housing costs in household spending's indicates the need to pay more attention to

¹⁰² Ghanbari, A., & Zaheri, M. (2011). Assessment of Housing Policies Before and after the Islamic Revolution of Iran. *Housing and Rural Environment*, 132, 85-86.

¹⁰³ Ibid, 86-87.

small housing. All of these, plus the global need for protection of environment forms the outline of this plan.

During this period, the relative success of the transferring the task of social housing construction to investment companies and housing cooperative was obtained. However, due to the fading role of the state in performing their duties and disharmony between institutions and government agencies such as municipalities, public facilities and services from one side and incidence of contradictions between laws, directives and instructions that were now revealing due to the unprecedented expansion of housing construction, created many problems.¹⁰⁴

Fourth Development Plan in Islamic Republic of Iran (2005-2009): In this plan, because of issues such as regional disparities in the distribution of housing and housing market inefficiency and increasing number of young population, goals such as social justice, improving housing market performance, increasing the efficiency and environmental protection was considered. This plan emphasizes on the importance of paying more attention to the housing sector, especially social housing. Implementation of policies such as reducing energy consumption in the process of manufacturing materials, housing construction and exploitation, the maximum efficiency and the development of the housing market including participation bonds, selling by meter and etc., each in a direct or indirect way created an approach to social housing in the first place and changes in the level of expectations from social housing in the next place.¹⁰⁵

In an overview, it could be seen how social housing and small housing were dealt with and their requirements and needs could be identified. While it should be noted that, as the concept of small is a relative concept, the concept of small housing is also relative and therefore, with respect to time, place and space may have different meanings. By dividing the development plans into 5 periods, the following table is a brief summary of the role of small housing and social housing in development plans in different periods.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ Ghanbari, A., & Zaheri, M. (2011). Assessment of Housing Policies Before and after the Islamic Revolution of Iran. *Housing and Rural Environment*, 132, 88-89.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, 89-90

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, 77-90

Analysis and conclusion of the first period, the first, second and third development plans: With regard to the expansion of affordable housing idea in these plans and according to the time conditions and because wages, technology and building materials in all residential constructions were the same, area had a very important role in housing prices and therefore in this period, the concept of affordable housing generally was conceived as small housing.

Analysis and conclusion of the second period, the fourth and fifth development plans: During this period, although due to the good economic conditions of the country, government policy on housing is towards increasing the number of bedrooms in a housing unit or decreasing the number of residents in housing units and the concept of small housing is somewhat faded. Still examining the made buildings such as alleys of workers and employees, are examples of small housing. One of the reasons may be the entrance of technology and industrial production policies that caused the appearance of more efficient type housings, causing the emergence of examples of small housing.

Analysis and conclusion of the third period, Islamic Revolution and war: Occurrence of Islamic Revolution and war blurred the role of government in housing policy and control and thus resulting skyrocketing per capita for housing units in cities. During this period, the examples of housing units built by the Housing Foundation and Jihad of Construction Organization could be found that are a variety of social housing with more attention on housing size aspects rather than efficiency aspects.

Analysis and conclusion of the fourth period, the first and second development plans in Islamic Republic of Iran: Indiscriminate increase of housing per capita in Iran and the expansion of households without a house prompted the government to thinking of ideas for a more proper distribution. The roots of this idea could be seen in the second plan by providing housing consumption patterns. The most basic steps in the downsizing of housing were presenting model and type houses (55 square meters) and “PAK” Policy (saving, mass production and downsizing). Meanwhile, this downsizing has a big difference with the expected concept of small housing, due to distancing itself from the concept of housing and residential environment.

Analysis and conclusion of the fifth period, the third and fourth development plans in Islamic Republic of Iran: with the encompassing ideas of environmental protection and sustainable development in the world and to comply with it in Iran, defined a new position for small housing. The idea of preserving resources and reducing energy consumption and pollution of the environment at a global level, led to setting standards and rules to minimize energy consumption in buildings that is known as sustainable design. Applying and development of these principles in housing, given Iran's cultural and residential models can lead to the emergence of small housing.

A review of development plans shows that social housing and small housing for different reasons and in all programs, intentionally or unintentionally was present. On the other hand, continuing challenges against the plans and their escalation such as indiscriminate increase of urban population and the need for housing, urban space limitations and restrictions on the height and level of development, social changes, the expansion of middle class with certain income level, the environmental consequences of cities expansion and many other factors, reveals the necessity to achieve new standards of housing and residential environment which is known as small housing.

On the other hand, the proliferation of small housing applicants in the coming years, due to the increase of income per capita, development of empowerment policies, social justice and etc., will consequent in increase of demand for social housing in the future. However, there are concerns that as housing projects and programs had little success, social housing and small housing will not be able to solve the housing issue. Perhaps the main reasons for this lack of success could be named as changes in the socio-economic conditions of the country, the absence of a powerful performance system, weak enforcement of laws (despite their efficiency), as well as the lack of necessary facilities for the implementation of laws and programs, including labor, materials, etc.. On this basis it can be said that all of the above issues about the lack of success in housing programs could be summarized in one sentence "the provision of housing management". Actually since the provision of housing has become a social issue and individuals are no longer responsible to build their own houses, responsibility for managing the provision of housing, particularly for low-income people, has become more important than building houses.

3.4. Assessment of Maskan Mehr

3.4.1. Aspects of Maskan Mehr

Maskan Mehr is a mass housing project for low-income people, initiated in the 9th administration of Islamic Republic of Iran and was started in 2007 and continued in the 10th administration throughout the country (till 2013). Maskan Mehr project is not just a project in subdivision of economy. This project, not just one of the most important economic and social projects of the 9th and 10th administration but rather is the most extensive program focused on construction and supply of concentrated housing in the last century in Iran. This project is a broad, multi-dimensional and widespread plan that requires serious attention and a deep and comprehensive assessment. The outcomes of this project can be evaluated in five points:

1 - Population aspects: according to official data production of at least 1.7 million units was contracted and they are under construction. If these units are to be built by demand and registration, it will cover a population of about six million or in other words about 12% of the urban population of country¹⁰⁷, which is an important figure and needs consideration. It shows the great range of individuals and families whom are beneficiaries of this project and accordingly the effects and outcomes of the project will have at least a range of its population. Targets and groups affected by the project are in a wide range from all social groups with maximum diversity in occupations, educations, age, gender, ethnics and culture, in a very diverse range of needs, desires and expectations and also preferences and tastes.

2 - Social and cultural aspects: Social and cultural aspects of the Maskan Mehr project are even wider than its population aspects. Location and social and cultural characteristics, beliefs and behaviors and attitudes of other residents and the relation with their employment location and also particulars of providing for social and cultural needs, are often more important than physical characteristics and size of the residence. Process and scheduling to organize accommodation and settlement and management system and exploitation of the built units and also answering to the social and cultural needs and expectations, has a very close relation with the level of

¹⁰⁷ Ministry of Roads and Urban Development. (2013). Evaluation of Mehr Housing Project. Tehran: Azarakhsh. 18.

social cohesion, quality of life, social justice and social security both in these settlements and the cities and their surroundings.

3 - Economic and financial aspects: Estimates show the very large scale of financial and economic aspects of this project. Calculating the cost of public and private sectors, only the direct costs of construction and occupation, as well as providing infrastructures and public and social services centers, execution of the Maskan Mehr project costs about 1500000 billion Rials which is about one-third of GDP (gross domestic product) and 85% general state budgets in the year of 1389 (2010-2011). Cash needed to pay credit to the creators was about 350000 billion Rials, which is close to 15% of the countries whole liquidity and one-third bank funds.¹⁰⁸ It is natural that at these scales, all financial variables in micro and macro levels of economy in both public and private sectors will seriously be affected.

4 - Physical and spatial aspects: Maskan Mehr project in 31 provinces and almost all big and small cities have been executed. Allocation of land within the limits or in boundaries of the cities with a change in the land use from agricultural or wastelands shows the vast spatial aspects and consequently legal aspects and acquisitions and also physical results across the land. There is also a need to provide land for non-residential infrastructure, green spaces and also essential passages. Even if these essentials needs are provided, considering the time to fulfill it, the quality of life and possibility of residence in these units are facing doubts.

5 - The political and intergenerational aspects: social and economic aspects of the Maskan Mehr project are not just limited to land. As a result of huge financial commitments by the government and also development of boundaries of cities, construction of 1.7 million units, effects of legal and acquisition of individual and collective rights and the effects of physical and spatial will cause large population displacements and also intergenerational and long effects that will shape the future of economy, social and politics of country in the coming decades.

3.4.2. Assessment of the objectives of Maskan Mehr

Based on mentioned discussions, there are some positive outcomes expected from this project including, increase in production and supply of urban housing with the

¹⁰⁸ Ministry of Roads and Urban Development. (2013). Evaluation of Mehr Housing Project. Tehran: Azarakhsh., 19.

construction of 1.7 million housing units, providing relatively high shares of housing loans without a deposit for the purchase of housing units for applying households which includes about 60% of the housing cost, reducing manufacturing costs by eliminating the cost of land and removing the construction taxes which results in about 20% reduction manufacturing costs compared with neighboring areas, the creation of a relative action in a recessed economy and the formation of a competitive environment among the mass producers as a result of their participation.¹⁰⁹ In research based on official data, important results are obtained; the most important results are as follows:

1. Based on written documents and oral statements, Maskan Mehr project follows three general objectives:

- Providing housing for low-income groups
- Stabilizing or decreasing urban housing prices
- Mass production of affordable housing

In objectives for Maskan Mehr project there is no logical hierarchy of goals and process of delivering goals from an idealistic level to a small, quantitative, clear and consistent yet sensible level which could clearly show the vast horizon of the project. Diversity, multiplicity and incompatibility of goals in different levels and in each level itself, is evident. Except for the purpose of building the massive number of 1.7 million housing units, the rest of the goals have no quantitative measure for assessment and evaluation.

2. By taking into account the national and international achievements and in terms of planning, the aim of mass production of affordable housing for low-income groups faces some difficulties:

- Defining the main purpose of mass housing was done with a wrong diagnosis of the cause of homelessness for low-income groups, while the main aim should be to improve the financial capability of these groups through institutional and financial reforms, in order to restructuring income

¹⁰⁹ Chegani, A. (2010). Impact of the implementation of Maskan Mehr on economic indicators in micro and macro scale. *Housing Economics*, 47-48, 22.

distribution and fiscal policies to increase the financial and legal access to housing for low income groups.

- There is no criterion for cheapness, the reduction of construction costs and implementation of targeted objectives and only elimination of the land cost of is considered. Even though the cost of land is eliminated and construction taxes are not required, still in the absence of, the necessary standards for quality and transparent financial and administrative procedures and also attention to the actual construction and operation capacity, the actual cost of the project has increased¹¹⁰ or the reduction of costs is at the expense of disregarding the criteria and common standards.
- Based on observations, the goal of reducing construction costs by mass production requires a sudden increase in demand for housing production agents and producers, which is incompatible with the increasing cost of using these agents as a result of higher demand. Limitations in the provision of some institutions and needed production agents, as well as tangible and significant increase in their prices is a result of placing goals on the basis of slogans and targeting in a linear manner, in which its most serious effect is the disability and limitations of the banking system in financing industrial and service sectors need for liquidity and even inability to finance the commitments made by the government to build Maskan Mehr units.

3. Setting the goal in production of 1.7 million housing units was done without any reliable and valid supporting scientific studies. In the goals, the households need for housing, nor their financial ability and economic capacities of the country has not been considered. In this project clearly the results of the "Housing Comprehensive Plan" study that advised the annual production of 50 to 60 thousand units for low-income and homeless groups has been ignored.¹¹¹

4. In targeting for mass production of housing, alternative and lower cost opportunities with less social and regional issues such as worn-out fabrics (neighborhoods) and poor and informal (illegal) urban settlements were ignored and nearly one-third of the housing units were in the margins of cities or were

¹¹⁰ Chegani, A. (2010). Impact of the implementation of Maskan Mehr on economic indicators in micro and macro scale. *Housing Economics*, 47-48, 29.

¹¹¹ Ministry of Roads and Urban Development. (2013). *Evaluation of Mehr Housing Project*. Tehran: Azarakhsh. 24.

built in new cities¹¹² that faced with the problem of service provision and attracting and stabilizing population.

5. Almost none of the three main objectives of Maskan Mehr project isn't achieved. Financial system of construction, purchase and utilization of these residential units is designed in such a way that poor families cannot buy the units in any way and the buyers will be middle-class households with specified expectations in physical characteristics, construction quality and architectural and environmental conditions of their own, which are quite different from those of Maskan Mehr and many of applicants purpose for application is to invest their savings, in which case they are not willing to settle and dwell in these units and in some circumstances they may also withdraw from buying.

6. The aim to reduce and stabilizing housing prices despite the production of 1.7 million units was not achieved and the uptrend of rent and purchase prices continued and even at the same time of completion of Maskan Mehr units, price increases intensified.

7. The aim of producing affordable housing in comparison with what was the initial goal has not been achieved. It was implicitly expected by the planners that by eliminating the cost of land, cost of housing would reduce between 30 and 50 percent. While in the best conditions for households, the difference between the final costs compared to other existing residential units in maximum is up to 15 to 20 percent.¹¹³

3.4.3. The dominant features of Maskan Mehr project

Lack of sufficient supporting and preliminary economic, social and spatial planning studies

Maskan Mehr project with its size and features was done without scientific supporting studies. There is almost no valid document written in any of the areas of economy, social and spatial planning of the project available. It was expected that in

¹¹² Nastran, M., & Rana, A. (2010). Analysis of the concept of partnership and teamwork in preparations of lands for Maskan Mehr project. *Armanshahr*, 4, 119.

¹¹³ Chegani, A. (2010). Impact of the implementation of Maskan Mehr on economic indicators in micro and macro scale. *Housing Economics*, 47-48, 29.

a project with such a large scale, at least have scientific supporting studies in the following areas:

- Assessment of geographical housing needs (The need for housing in different provinces and cities across the country)
- Estimation of low-income groups financial ability to buy a house
- Estimation of a possible scale for the project and an appropriate schedule
- Locating and identifying resources, infrastructure, climate characteristics and technical requirements

Only 4 years after the approval and implementation of the project, a series of articles in defense of its social and economic goals mainly with an emphasis on the consequential effects of the project implementation on macroeconomic variables such as economic growth, investment and employment (without clear and acceptable documentations) and utilization of land, were published¹¹⁴, that even in these articles, the dominant theoretical and experimental approach to the project, as well as the possible amount of achievement of the main goals and most importantly the direct and indirect costs of the project were all neglected. Although in many cases the results of the studies conducted for the Housing Comprehensive Plan in 2006 were cited, but the scale and the manner of organization for Maskan Mehr project had fundamental contradictions with the results of the mentioned studies that recommended annual production of 50 to 60 thousand units of social housing for low-income groups with specific goals and management and supervision of the government.¹¹⁵

Inattention to national and international theoretical and experimental achievements

Reviewing and analyzing the results of efforts made in the last six decades in planning, construction and development of the country and in particular the three decades after the revolution, it is amazingly consistent and in compliance with the experimental and theoretical achievements around the World, especially in

¹¹⁴ Housing Economics Quarterly, number 47-48, 2010.

¹¹⁵ Ministry of Roads and Urban Development. (2013). Evaluation of Mehr Housing Project. Tehran: Azarakhsh. 24.

developing countries. These analyses suggest that by reviewing the successful and failed experiences of past in programs and policies to provide housing for low-income groups, in order to succeed with a systemic and comprehensive approach and avoiding a linear and one-dimensional one, the following strategic principles and executive policies should be followed:¹¹⁶

- Strong emphasis on participation and organization of low-income groups and the poor as the target applicants;
- Paying attention to cultural, social and economic differences of poor groups and also climate differences in different areas for the design and implementation of programs;
- Emphasis on the provision of basic social, cultural needs and urban facilities;
- A strong connection between housing provision programs with land use plans and policies and investments for employment and development;
- Focusing on general laws and policies, especially property rights, reforming distribution structure of income and assets and the elimination of sexual discrimination in the allocation of housing;
- A systematic design for demand and supply policies and finance for a competent development of production and productivity of housing;
- Accurate identification of social and economic characteristics of target groups and a more detailed guidance of government subsidies and financial support to them;
- Identifying and mobilizing public financial resources to use in financing housing production programs;
- Reforming and strengthening the role of government, from implementation and production of housing to empowerment, facilitating and powerful monitoring in implementation of programs and policies;
- Making advantage of potential and effective capacities of worn-out fabrics (neighborhoods) and unofficial (illegal) settlements in positioning of housing for low-income groups.

Unfortunately, the dominant approach in Maskan Mehr project has clear contradictions with most of the national and international experiences. Haste in

¹¹⁶ Ministry of Roads and Urban Development. (2013). Evaluation of Mehr Housing Project. Tehran: Azarakhsh., 27.

planning, design and implementation, makes the occurrence of these contradictions granted. But the major concerns are arising from the continuation of these neglects and contradictions in the future stages and increased risk of repeating past failures again in the context of the increasing housing shortage and growing poor urban settlements despite the states central planning's to prevent this.

Short time for planning, design and implementation

Critical conditions and unprecedented increase in housing prices in major cities in 2007 resulted in the immediate decision of the government to control prices by the mass production of affordable housing and provide housing for urban low-income groups. This urgency and haste in making decisions and planning and their implementation prevented a good economic, social and spatial planning. In a few cases, former urban development projects (regardless of the size and scale of the previous project) became the physical basis for the implementation of the Maskan Mehr project. But in most cases, uncultivated lands at the limits or territories of existing cities or in new cities were selected as the location of the Maskan Mehr project, regardless of requirements, prerequisites or short and long term economic, social and spatial implications and even without considering other state policies and programs (such as the decentralization of population from Tehran or an Islamic-Iranian model of urban architecture or energy saving). What raised concerns was the prevailing advertising approach in choosing a location for the project or the scale of its implementation and not the physical and climate requirements or even the physical features of the building.

The lack of non-residential spaces and supplier of basic needs

Provision of a decent house has inevitable relationship with personal and social needs (both inside and outside the house) and in planning and urban design supplying these needs are according to the different spatial levels. Mentioned requirements are generally include the following:

- Clean drinking water, sewage disposal networks, electricity, gas, telecommunications and waste collection and disposal system;

- Road network in the city including urban and suburban transport network and public stations;
- Cultural and social centers providing services and essential requirements;
- Administrative service centers;
- Educational centers;
- Commercial centers, providing everyday needs;
- Sectors for activity and employment and income;
- Green space.

Inadequate access to these factors each will determine a kind of poverty and inequality in a city and will have negative effects and consequences on families, social environment, settlements and small and large habitats relevant to those settlements in the short and long run and a large part of these consequences will be irrecoverable. Unofficial settlements and urban worn out fabrics is each a manifestation of poverty and deprivation with broad spatial and social and economic effects and outcomes, which are a result of linear and one-dimensional programs and disregard for a comprehensive and systematic planning. This has engaged a large amount of human and financial resources of the state in the last three decades.

Based on standards and the scale of Maskan Mehr, 22,500 hectares of land was allocated for the construction of Maskan Mehr projects. Solutions could be proposed for the mentioned requirements, however, a very important yet worrying point is that based on calculations, to provide all the needed space for the provision of basic needs of residents of Maskan Mehr based on the standards adopted by the Supreme Council for Planning and Architecture, nearly 27600 hectares of new land will be required that having access to such lands in most areas of the project is facing with doubts and difficulties.¹¹⁷

Direct expansive and interventionist role of state

In organizing and managing the implementation of the Maskan Mehr project, global and national experiences and achievements that emphasized on the necessity to change and reform the role of state towards policy making, facilitating,

¹¹⁷ Ministry of Roads and Urban Development. (2013). Evaluation of Mehr Housing Project. Tehran: Azarakhsh. 30.

empowerment and monitoring as well as the limitations and the capacity of the existing administrative system were ignored and the project finally was formed with the direct responsibility for implementing by the government and its social and economic consequences are completely on the government. This project, unlike all previous national experiences is a focused project on planning, design, financing, implementation and monitoring. The government is committed and responsible for production and delivery of housing to applicants in a very large quantity and has become the employer of the largest construction project of the history of Iran with numerous physical, economic and social aspects. Positioning, design and spatial planning, selection and contracting and financing of contractors and monitoring the execution of their obligations are all done by the government.

The responsibilities of government in this project include:¹¹⁸

- Allocation and land preparation;
- Registration of the applicants in the form of housing cooperatives;
- Selection of contractors and being the original employer, particularly in tripartite contracts;
- Commitment to provide facilities;
- Pledge to pay 4 to 8 percent of the bank interest in the form of subsidized;
- Contracting with mass producers in the form of tripartite contracts to build about 600 thousand residential units;
- Commitment and guarantee to purchase the tripartite units from mass producers and payment of facilities granted to these units.

Less participation than expected from applicants and beneficiaries, along with maximum commitments to the private sector has increased the vulnerability of project and its social and political consequences have become sensitive issue. On the other hand, economic interests of certain trade groups in private sector pervade on all aspects of the project and are very effective in determining the fate of project.

Dominant and decisive role of financial and economic interests of certain trade groups

¹¹⁸ Sumlu, A. (2010). Maskan Mehr: Basic transformation of housing policy and its achievements. Housing Economics, 47-48, 6.

One of the undesirable yet dominant features of Maskan Mehr project is the lack of a mechanism to attract and organize social participation of applicants and beneficiaries of housing units and neglecting their positive role in identifying the needs and goals and determining the characteristics of a housing unit. As well as neglecting to participate the strong and organized society of Economists and social and urban planning experts, which could have been very effective in improving the performance, efficiency and effectiveness of the project.

The impact of practices, abilities and capacities of the contractors and manufacturers is determining not only in the scale of the project, but also in the process of allocating resources, design of district, organizational structure and even allocation the units and their overcoming on all the principles and standards of urban and social planning is evident.

Disregarding the financial, administrative and management capacities

In planning, design and implementation of Maskan Mehr project, institutional and structural factors such as ownership system, the structure of income distribution, employment structure and etc. are overlooked and with a one-sided approach and focusing solely on economic variables, the field for wasting large amounts of national resources, unprecedented increase in government obligations and adverse demographic effects at the national level was provided.¹¹⁹

Neglecting the country's demographic considerations and specific geographical and regional features

In the implementation of mass housing, it was expected that considerations for both national and regional land use planning and indicators on the state of housing in different region would be taken into account and restructuring the regional distribution based on quantitative and qualitative indicators of housing, as one of the most important necessities of the government intervention in the housing market would be the basis of housing production positioning. While not only such an

¹¹⁹ Saedi, N. (2011). Recognition of the endogenous developments in proportion to critique of current policies of Maskan Mehr housing developments. *Studies of human geography*, 75, 113.

approach could not be seen in the design and implementation of the project; but rather it is in evident contrast even other government programs and policies such as decentralization of population from large cities and transferring production, employment opportunities along with appropriate housing to other regions.

3.5. Maskan Mehr in Urmia

In Urmia as a metropolis, Maskan Mehr was practiced in numerous cases throughout the city. Of the prominent examples, Ee-sar complex, Tarzilu complex, Golshahr complex and Golman-Khane complex could be mentioned. Each of these complexes has their own problems and issues. However, in this study due to the size of Golman-Khane complex and also being positioned in the discrete development plan of the city, it is in the focus.

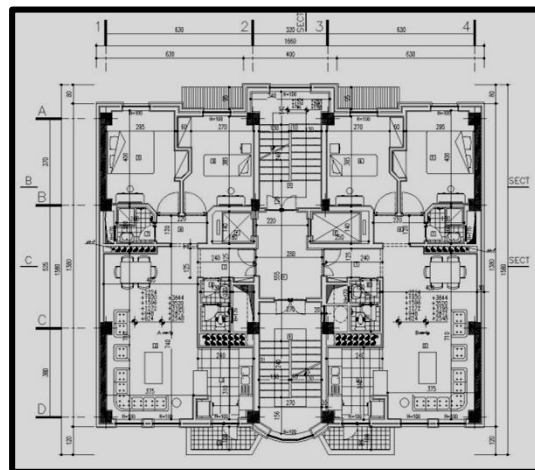


Figure 22: A sample Floor Plan of Maskaneh Mehr Project in Tarzilu
Source: Boad e 4 Consulting and Engineers



Figure 23: Site Plan of Tarzilu Complex
Source: aBoad e 4 Consulting and Engineers



Figure 24: Maskane Mehr in Golshahr District
During the Construction
(Taken by the Author, 2015)



Figure 25: 3D model of Golshahr District Maskane Mehr Project
Source: Farbana Consulting, Engineers

Lands in the East of Urmia (called Golman-Khane) for the discrete development plan of Urmia are at a distance of about 12 kilometers away. These lands have an area of about 3,000 hectares and Maskan Mehr of Golman-Khane is its first phase of its

execution. According to Planning these lands will have a population of over 345,000 in the future.



Figure 26: Location of Maskane Mehr Project in Golman-Khane District
Source: Google Earth (Last retrieved at 20/8/2015)



Figure 27: The discrete development plan of Urmia in Golman-Khane
The yellow areas are representing the one or two story buildings, while violet areas are representing the housings with four stories
Source: Consulting, Engineers of Arseh

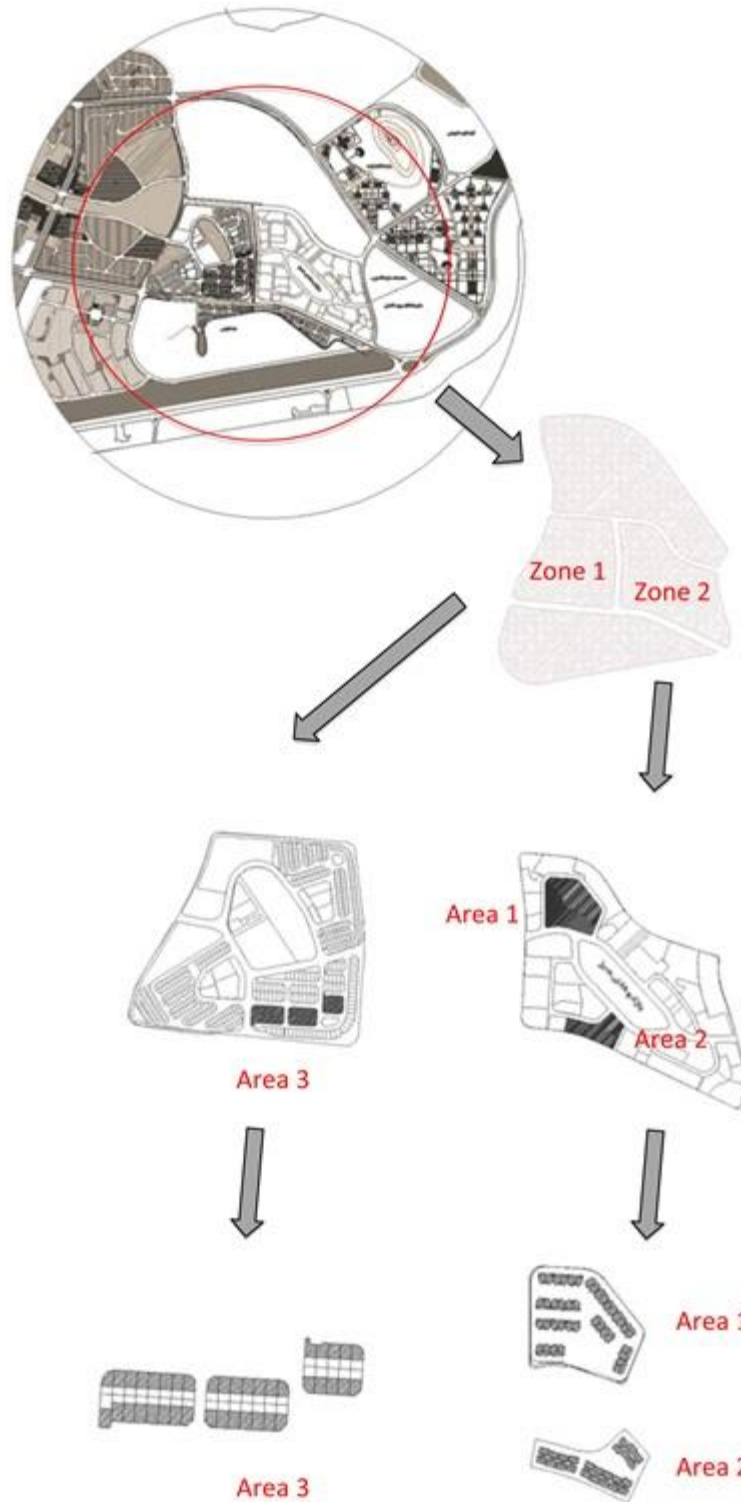


Figure 28: Closer Look at Layout of 4 Story Housings of Golman-Khane District in Maskane Mehr Project
 Source: Mehrara Consulting, Engineers Strategic Planning of Golman-Khane District

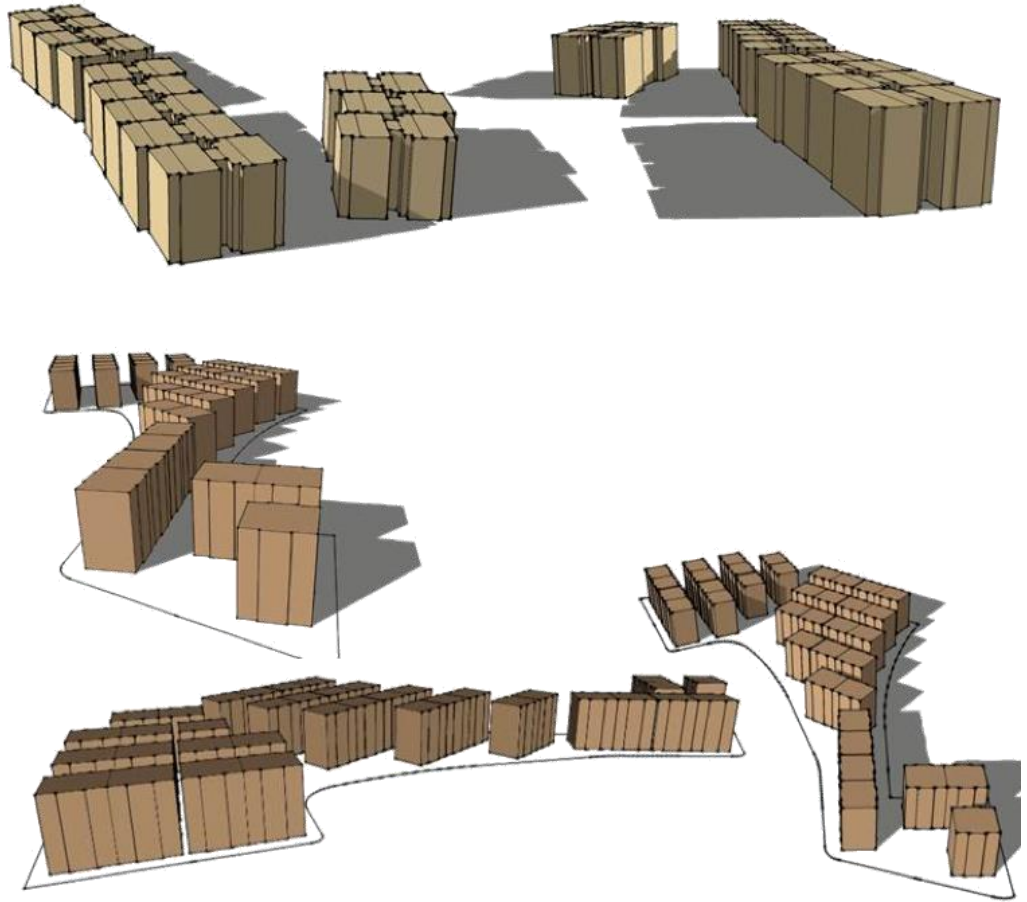


Figure 29: A Sample of Site Arrangement In a Maskane Mehr Project of Golman-Khane

Source: Mehrara Consulting, Engineers Strategic Planning of Golman-Khane District



Figure 30: A sample Floor Plan of Maskaneh Mehr Project In Golman-khane

Source: Mehrara Consulting, Engineers Strategic Planning of Golman-Khane District

3.5.1. Outlooks for Maskan Mehr project and suggested solutions

Continuation of the current situation, in addition to resource constraints of public sector and the banking system, as well as the manner of organizing registration, construction and operation of Maskan Mehr units, is followed by important hazards and concerns in the areas of economic, social and urban development.

Despite the great social and economic objectives, the relevant economic, social, ecological and culturally factors, which are the basic parts of formation of any settlement, have not been considered adequately. Construction has been limited to the construction of housing units and street system and residential environments that attracts people to live has not been created yet. Although the city is not just a collection of houses and the streets between them, if the required services for residential environment is not provided, the residential complexes will face all kinds of problems that depending on the amount of service provision and its execution can result in the displeasure of its inhabitants to even the vacancy of complexes and each has its own consequences. However it is possible to achieve a settlement with a high level of life quality and good economic and social conditions by overcoming the obstacles and shortcomings. Failing to meet the quantitative needs of housing and residential environment, qualitative requirements that guarantee the survival of these settlements is also not met and they will face the degradation of urban space quality and if the services needed by residential environment and the initial conditions of welfare for citizens are provided, the residential complex will act as periphery settlements and residents being employed elsewhere will have daily reciprocating movements to the main city. However, if the required services and employment opportunities are created within or near residential environment, settlements will act as a self-supporting complex.

If the current situation continues and no reforms happens in the spatial planning of Maskan Mehr projects, three pessimistic, optimistic and realistic scenarios could be expected and be possible for this project. The predictions in these three scenarios are based on the evaluations conducted in the “Evaluation of Mehr Housing Project” by the Ministry of Roads and Urban Development.¹²⁰

¹²⁰ Ministry of Roads and Urban Development. (2013). Evaluation of Mehr Housing Project. Tehran: Azarakhsh. 38-57.

A. Pessimistic scenario: desertion of settlements and a large wave of migration from rural to urban areas especially in developed regions and provinces

Economic and financial implications

Lack of needed financial resources and delays in building essential infrastructures as well as social services and health and education centers at the same time of the preparation of the units, makes the ground for the increasing withdrawal of registered applicants and vacancy of the units and will increase the costs of the state for the purchase of units from manufacturers, as well as the repayment of bank loans and maintenance of empty housing units. Concerns about the lack of demand for these units led the government to provide guarantees of purchase to manufacturers, as well as participation of estate agencies for extensive marketing and selling. Obviously, in the absence of the applicant, the cost of buying the units from manufacturers and the repayment of principal and interest of loans will be added to the cost of government.

Spatial implications

If the current situation in the Maskan Mehr project continues and still nothing is done for the provision of services and other necessities and needs of the people in a residential environment and it simply remains a residential unit, the vast built settlements will be almost uninhabited and only certain social classes by force and as temporary residents will live there and applicants withdrawal will increase. Delays in establishing the necessary infrastructure (water, electricity, telecommunications, transport, etc.) and facilities (cultural services, education, health, spatial, security, etc.) will provide the conditions for the conversion of life in settlements into slums that this case along with urban poverty, will cause a wide range of social, cultural and even political consequences. Buildings not being in use will also lead to wearing out and gradually to physical deterioration of Maskan Mehr projects and abandoned spaces will become insecure and indefensible. Issues that are the source of all kinds of social abnormality and will cause the gradual destruction of complexes and large-scale constructions that are devoid of urban environment.

Social and cultural implications

Result of these events can lead to mistrust of people to the government and the system, causing a gap between them. Disappointment of people from governmental actions will cause a decline in continuation of public participation in this project or similar projects in the future, which in turn leads to lack of population stability or formation of social capital. Dissatisfaction of the living conditions due to the lack of population stability and formation of social capitals will lead to physical and environmental deterioration and as a result the incidence of crime and delinquency and lack of a sense of security. The other issue is the reproduction of poverty as a result of failure in achieving social justice.

B. Optimistic scenario: the formation of self-relying residential settlements

If employment and urban services for the residents as factors for the continuation of life are provided in the premises or near Maskan Meh, people by becoming interested in living there, will cause stability and permanence in the complexes and a place for urban life will be created. These factors are highly influential for the growth and moving towards sustainability from many different perspectives such as social, economic, cultural, etc. Construction and operation of urban services in addition to creating jobs for residents is a factor to attract more population and utilizing a greater participation from people and providing security and their diverse needs for them; the desire and persistence to live in such places would be more for people. Employment as the most important factor in attracting people to different places is of great importance. If residents worked in their neighborhoods or close to it and in terms of access to work had no a problem, in other words, a convenient access was provided, complexes would go towards self-reliance and satisfaction and life expectancy of residents will improve. These cases can cause a sense of belonging to the community and finally, stability in all areas. For the realization of this scenario it is apparent that new constructions must be avoided and credits should be allocated in order to organizing the residential environment and improving the quality of urban life.

In the optimistic scenario, it is assumed that the government's promises have been fulfilled and the social policy has achieved all its goals. To make it possible for all

family's to own houses as the main purpose of this policy, has an important role in improving people's quality of life and could be very effective in reducing social inequalities. By owning a house, it becomes possible for middle and low income classes to benefit from social promotion opportunities and distancing themselves from poverty line in the future.

C. Realistic scenario: conversion into neighborhoods and affiliated towns in large cities

In case of providing the conditions and creating an environment for housing, including the provision of commercial, educational, cultural, recreational, sports, etc. services, attracts population and residence is achieved, but due to lack of employment and the lack of focused activities within the area, daily movements and round trips to the main city will happen to the residents that in addition to the economic costs and human resources used for these movements, demographic balance of the complexes will differ in day and night and this will lead to insecurity for residents during the day. Difficulty of daily commute will also cause dissatisfaction for residents, they will try to leave at the first opportunity and move to a location closer to their work place. Change and continuous replacement of residents will not allow the residents to make the required sense of belonging in order for their participation in the creation of urban space and civil life; not trying to create a sense of belonging to your own living environment will cause lack of pursuing the provision of needs and will lead to compromising the quality of existing urban spaces and its destruction in long term and built complexes will mainly tend towards norms and behaviors marginalization and slums with all the economic, social, cultural and political consequences. According to the above, realistic scenario could be developed on short-term and long-term status.

Realistic scenario in the short term

In the short term Maskan Mehr project faces numerous problems. Financial constraints in investment and positioning of project have caused the project to actually facing with lack of sufficient demand. This situation has caused numerous problems for government officials and the private sector involved in the construction

and eventually trying to attract population, they resorted to various methods. But what is particularly interesting here is the situation and living conditions for people that will live in the built units in the short term. Due to limitations, there is no possibility that in short term the projected population would be achieved and it should be expected that only a limited portion of units will be operational. Although the extent of the Maskan Mehr project has led to different conditions in each city and town, but overall the following points could be said about the realistic scenario in the short term:

Satisfaction of residential units

1. Considering the units being newly built, in the short term the relative satisfaction of the residents from the units is possible.
2. Given that the provision of some interior installations is the responsibility of residents, if the residents do not have the financial ability, living in these units will be combined with some problems.
3. The absence or lack of water will also effect on housing demands and after settlement it will be a reason for the dissatisfaction of units and neighborhood. This situation is also likely to have a negative impact on the health of individuals and neighborhoods.
4. Since houses and installations are newly built, they will have low maintenance costs and the possibility of tensions between residents of the complex, because of them is very small. However consumption expenditures can become a source of tension, for example, the elevator costs is not paid by the ground floor residents.

Satisfaction of the living environment

1. Due to the shortage of water resources as well as the positioning of residential complexes, these areas will face a shortage of green spaces and recreational spaces. Due to the geographical and environmental characteristics of the country, providing enough green space for the complexes is expensive and usually is not a priority.

2. Available spaces, due to their new locations and designs will have an acceptable level of appearance that will bring satisfaction. However in some cases, the small distance between the buildings and the lack of parking space for the units can lead to tensions. By fully exploiting of the units this issue will become visible.

Safety and security

1. Given that in the short term, the number of vacant units is high, the formation of informal social control is not possible and therefore more visible police presence is necessary for security.
2. Given that some cases are still in the preparation stage, the presence of strangers or workers could cause an insecure environment.
3. Failure to achieve the desired population and the low-traffic urban areas, especially at night, causes the creation of defenseless spaces and increasing the risk of insecurity.
4. The need for judicial and law enforcement services for various reasons such as tensions and conflicts among residents, low security, social damages caused by the lack of employment opportunities, lack of cultural and leisure spaces and suchlike spaces.

Access to Services

1. In the short term, there is no possibility of providing education and health services, including schools and hospitals there. Early settlers probably will have to go to the city or neighboring towns for access to these services.
2. Welfare and Business services would likely only meet the basic needs and only could be achieved by covering a big distance to the city. Given that in the early phases of the residence establishing commercial services is not affordable and economic, residents face many difficulties to access the services.

3. Lack of services will turn these complexes into lifeless and dead places that many residents prefer to spend their leisure time in the nearby metropolises and big cities.
4. Proper municipal services in street cleaning and garbage collection will face difficulties due to lack of specific urban management policies

Population stability

1. Early settlers will be of applicants that for any reason, seek the first opportunity for settling in the built housing units. So in the early phases of the settlement, applicants only want to settle fast.
2. Hope for the future and improvement along with the possible promises of local authorities will cause for many to believe in a better future.

Political stability

1. For many, joy of owning a house is a reason for optimism in the future and trusting in government officials.
2. The possibility of some protests and group visits to administrations and relevant institutions to complain about shortages are expected.

Realistic scenario in the long term

The long term here means the situation that different groups are living in the units and practically the capacity of complexes are largely filled. Workshops are gone and normal life is carried out. Therefore, in this section most predictions about the future of the project would be made for the two or three decades in the future.

Satisfaction of residential units

1. Given that these complexes will be primarily of interest to low-income groups, reinvestment and reconstruction will happen less and gradually

degeneration of buildings will begin faster than the similar ones in urban areas.

2. The passage of time and the depreciation of buildings will raise the maintenance costs and this will cause tension among residents of the complex.

Satisfaction of the living environment

1. Transforming from a workshop state into a normal one and the flowing of life will improve the urban landscape of built areas and at first will make more satisfaction about the environment.
2. With the increase in depreciation of buildings and lack of proper maintenance, physical deterioration of buildings, the complexes will become an unsightly area and gradually reduces the amount of satisfaction.

Safety and security

1. Residence of more people in the units and the flow of life in most of the time in public spaces will lead to reduction of defenseless spaces.
2. Population density and poverty is a major factor for the increase in crime and vandalism of youth and adolescents.
3. Low cost housing units in these areas, the lack of informal social control and constant population movements will be factors for the increase in crime and delinquency.

Access to Services

1. Education and health services gradually will form. However, probably not with such a good quality compared with these services in larger areas and practically will not stop the commutes to metropolitan areas.
2. Business and welfare services in these areas will differ in quality with similar services in larger cities.
3. Lack of urban services and installations at a standard level will contribute to the lack of attractiveness of these units for the middle-income groups.

4. Lack of services will be a factor for strengthening the mental attitude that Maskan Mehr is poverty housing. This, combined with the physical deterioration of the environment will lead to the reproduction of poverty and continuing inequality.

Population stability

1. Due to the low quality of life in these complexes compared to urban areas and large cities and disappointment about the improvement of the situation, people will prefer to return to the city as soon as possible.
2. Most of the residents will be renters, which due to the lower rents compared with to the city are living in there.
3. Increasing and larger proportion of renters than owners will accelerate the depreciation and physical deterioration process of units and neighborhoods.
4. Lower rents will make these areas attractive for rural migrants.

Political stability

1. By reduction in number of early applicants among the dwellers, expectations for fulfillment of early promises will decrease.
2. Concentration of low-income groups in these areas gives a possible potential for protest and riots for dwellers.
3. Demands for reaching land ownership can become a social crisis.

Considering all three scenarios, it is clear that as a result of insufficiency of housing units in terms of household's requirements, especially for households who have lived there for several years or have a child or children, that some of the daily actions will happen outside of the unit and make the quality improvement of the available premises very important and effective.

Social and cultural consequences

Based on reviewing of similar experiences (especially in the newly built cities) and the current state of Maskan Mehr projects, we can list the possible consequences of Maskan Mehr summarized as the following:

- Due to financial constraints of the government and viewing the current developments of the project in different areas, it seems that lots of the complexes face with numerous problems in terms of services and municipal utilities. This is also predicted based on the experience of new cities.
- Since the created areas cannot have independent sources of employment, they practically become dependent towns for the big cities. Experiences of the new cities also show that a lot of the inhabitants commute on a daily basis between the living place and major cities.
- Increasing migration to the big cities and metropolises is one of the possible outcomes of this project. Attention to the pattern of immigration to metropolises and characteristics of the new cities in terms of their attractiveness for living confirms this claim.
- It is expected that the residents of the created residential complexes will be of the low income groups of society, “social capital”¹²¹ as a main component is essential for the successful management of residential complexes and neighborhoods. Government and service agencies have a crucial role in the creation of such capital.
- Assembly of low income groups is always associated with the fear of crime and delinquency aggregation peculiar to lower classes. Experience of different countries, especially in the field of social housing reflects the lack of informal social control and collective performance of residents to control their living environment.
- Failure to fulfill the promises of government officials about Maskan Mehr will be followed by despair and disillusionment among applicants. Most applicants have spent all their lives investments in this project and their failure will bring a feeling of distrust towards the government and the system.

¹²¹ Social capital: “The central premise of social capital is that social networks have value. Social capital refers to the collective value of all “social networks” [who people know] and the inclinations that arise from these networks to do things for each other [“norms of reciprocity”].” Source: <http://www.bettertogether.org/socialcapital.htm> (Last retrieved at 7/26/2015).

- Not providing essential services of living for the residents of these units is inconsistent with the principles of social justice. Considering Maskan Mehr project only from the limited perspective of housing provision and ignoring the needs of collective life will deprive the residents of a dignified life.
- Land ownership is essential for many people to have a sense of security. Not transferring the ownership of land, in the long term will become one of the concerns for the residents and can later turn into a crisis for the government.

3.5.2. Suggested solutions

Economics and Management

- Special funding for urban infrastructure and the supply and construction of public facilities and social services.
- Identification of poor and low-income groups without a house for the cession of units without a registered applicant.
- Amending regulations of residential unit's cession suited to low-income groups without a house and facilitating the transfer conditions.
- Studying and designing a management and operation system for units, commensurate with the economic and social characteristics of the users and physical and geographical conditions of settlements.
- Stopping the construction and operation of new units and avoiding the development of the plan.

Social

- Determining the ownership of the land as an “equity sharing”¹²² project.
- Accelerating the regulation of legal documents and the transition of legal responsibilities of housing units to users, to increase accountability, sense of belonging and the repayment of bank loans.
- Creation of judicial dispute resolution councils to expedite handling conflicts among cooperatives, users, builders and other agents.

¹²² Equity sharing: “allows a person to purchase a share in their home even if they cannot afford a mortgage on the whole of the current value. It is generally used in affordable housing, providing a "third way" of land tenure between home ownership and renting.”https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Equity_sharing (Last retrieved at 7/26/2015).

- Creating and organizing a mechanism for classification of life and environmental quality in the project's cases and planning for improvement of cases with lower quality than the appropriate level.

Spatial planning

- Allocating a proportion of buildings of each complex for public and social service centers. In this case the executable proposal is to change the units to social and public service centers.
- Changing the use of ground floors to parking and storage space for other units.
- Accelerating the complementary studies to identify and assess the needs of infrastructure and services as well as public transport network for each one of the residential centers of Maskan Mehr.
- Studying and designing a management and operation system for units, commensurate with the economic and social characteristics of the users and physical and geographical conditions of settlements.

3.6. Conclusion

Maskan Mehr is part of the chain of measures that originally was formed in the 40s in order to respond to the housing needs of middle class and lower class. Measures that seek to find a community-oriented response to the housing problem and "social housing" is its slogan on their agenda. All officials that adopted these measures believed or wished to find an appropriate answer for the housing demand caused by population growth and urbanization. Demands that are mainly from the middle and lower classes of society and with changes in household formation, its intensity and form have changed. Also this series of measures wanted to achieve an urban housing and each time, depending on the age, gave a different and changed definition about the quantitative and qualitative aspects of urban housing and hence the formation of this type of housing was mainly in the margins of big and medium-sized cities of the country. However, the major difference of Maskan Mehr with other measures is breaking this trend, and has brought the production and supply of housing to smaller

cities and sometimes this was done regardless of an effective demand for "social housing" in a city.

Maskan Mehr with the aim of "Social Justice"¹²³ had the objective to provide housing for all households, in this regard in practice; the state tried to remove the land price from housing process and therefore had no problem in using the marginal lands around the city and sometimes as a result of lack of sufficient lands they had no problem to use even farther lands from cities. An issue that is effective in reducing the demand for this housing and has its own consequences; which will emerge eventually.

¹²³ The main slogan of 9th and 10th administration

CHAPTER 4

URBAN IDENTITY IN MASKAN MEHR

4.1. Definitions and conceptions

4.1.1. Word meanings and origins of identity

In this study, understanding the lexical meaning of identity commences with searching in Persian resources. Among the researchers who have worked on identity, Danesh Pour's attitudes and ideas of research are closer to the present study and are more reliable. Thus, this course begins with direct quotations of this researcher.¹²⁴

The first step of recognizing each concept especially an intricate concept like identity probably requires conducting a research on meaning terminologically or in other words philology. In order to do so, definitions and terminological meanings of identity in both Arabic and Persian dictionaries are expressed.

The word "hoviyat" (هویت) in Persian and Arabic is equivalent to the word "identity" in English. Nickolson, regarding the meaning and stem of "hoviyat", believes that "hoviyat" has an Arabic origin and has been taken from the denominated infinitive of third person singular pronoun of "he".¹²⁵ While some believe that the word "hoviyat" is not an Arabic word, some of the translators were inevitable to use it and have derived it from a "conjunction" which in Arabic indicates a matter-identified relation.¹²⁶

In Dehkhoda's dictionary, in order to express the origin and stem of "identity", the word "he" was mentioned and he is defined as the invisible "self" that no one is

¹²⁴ Daneshpour, S. (2000). Recognition of the concept of identity in public spaces, case of Tehran, Enqlab street. Doctoral thesis, Tehran: Tehran University, 17-25.

¹²⁵ Nickolson, R. (1995). Sufism and the relation of man and god. (Mohammadreza Shafi-e Kadkani, Trans.) Tehran: Sokhan, 7.

¹²⁶ Seliba, Jamil. (1987). Culture philosophy. (Manuchehr Sane-e Dareh Bidi, trans.) Tehran: Hekmat, 677.

capable of seeing.¹²⁷ “hoviyat” refers to the absentee and in referring to the Almighty it indicates the origin of his essence, the credit of his names and attributes, and noticing the Almighty’s invisible essence. Sometimes, “hoviyat” is referred to an external essence and sometimes it refers to the manifestation of the identity by its individual cognition which includes an “existential fact”.¹²⁸ In defining “hoviyat”, another word i.e. “individuation” was also mentioned which is assumed as the Persian equivalent of “identity”.

Individuation: is defined as separation and distinction, self-determination, individuality, character and greatness, and any features that make a difference between the person’s own self and the other individuals and the others have nothing in common with.¹²⁹

There are three other general and one special (philosophical) definition for “hoviyat” in Moein dictionary as follows:

1. Transcendental essence of the Almighty
2. Existence, entity
3. Whatever makes identification of a person possible (e.g. ID card/ certificate)
4. In philosophy, identity is defined as the partial truth which means that whenever the essence is considered as individuation, it is “identity”. Occasionally, “identity” refers to an external existence and the aim is to detect it. “Identity” can be the essence and extrinsic.¹³⁰

4.1.2. The conception of existence in Latin

In Latin languages, the word “identity” is chosen for the term "existence". This word has been used in English since the 16th century and the other forms of it in other European languages have been derived from “identities” in Late Latin. “Identities” is made of two parts: “Iden” that means “the same” and “Entities” that means “existence”. The term “identity” has had five following meanings since its appearance:

¹²⁷ Dehkhoda, Aliakbar. (1993). Dehkhoda Dictionary. Tehran: Tehran University, 847.

¹²⁸ Ibid, 866.

¹²⁹ Ibid, 90.

¹³⁰ Moein, M. (2002). Persian Dictionary. Tehran: Serayesh, 5228.

1. "The quality or state of being "identical", absolute sameness or uniqueness.
2. Individuality, character (since 1638 AD); individual being (since 1682 AD).
3. (In algebra) it is an equation or expression that remains constant for all values of its variables.
4. Getting recognized regarding emotions and interests, (since 1868 AD, this meaning has a limited usage).
5. Whatever that helps you recognize its holder like an ID card (since 1900 AD)."¹³¹

In English contemporary literature, there are many other definitions of "Identity". In Merriam-Webster dictionary four basic meanings have been mentioned for identity:¹³²

1. A) Sameness of essential or generic character in different instances
B) Sameness in all that constitutes the objective reality of a thing: oneness
2. A) The distinguishing character or personality of an individual: individuality
B) The relation established by psychological identification
3. The condition of being the same with something described or asserted
(establish the *identity* of stolen goods)
4. An equation that is satisfied for all values of the symbols

In Oxford dictionary there are two types of definitions for "identity":¹³³

1. a) quality or conditions (situation) of being the same (identical) in substances, combinations, nature, features or especial qualities, b) absolute and fundamental sameness, c) being the same, uniqueness
2. a) sameness of an individual or stuff in all times or in all conditions, b) a condition or a fact that the individual acts as his own self-being not anyone else, c) individuality, characteristics, personal and individual existence, being the same, d) the conditions of being recognized by emotions and interests, e) in logic: it is the rule or principle of unity, a principle that is introduced in "identity theorem" and says A is equal to A.

¹³¹ Rahimzade, A. (2004). Concept of identity. Daily economist newspaper, 347, 11.

¹³² <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/identity> (Last retrieved at 8/6/2015).

¹³³ Simpson, J., & Weiner, E. (1989). The Oxford English Dictionary. New York: Oxford University Press, 620.

In fact, identity is a set of characteristics and features that result in recognizing a person from others or something from other things and the aim of determining an identity is to find the differences between people and stuff from their own kinds.

Considering identity, we mean the specific part of something's objectivity that is called identification. This matter contains two apparently contradictory but, in fact, complementary sections:

- Creation and evocation of memories in a person
- Individuation and independence of a person

4.1.3. Recognition, the major condition of having an identity

Since identity, regarding the presented definitions, obtains its credibility from recognition, the most important condition of having an identity is the ability to get recognized. Therefore, the first step in recognizing an identity is the possibility of recognizing a phenomenon based on the similarities it has with its own fellow phenomena and its differences with other non-fellow phenomena in one's mind. Indeed, the term "recognition" does not only mean objective identification, but it contains the experience of perceiving it. If it is not possible to recognize a phenomenon, the identification process will not continue. Without recognition factors, the phenomenon will lose its adaptability with the intended subjective image and will be unable to fulfill the most preliminary expectations. Sustainability of meeting the expectations, which is expected from all phenomena and their fellow ones, depends on accountability to the definitions of recognition possibility and achieving the practical approaches to be on track of authenticating and proving identity.

Just because a phenomenon is distinguished from other different phenomena, it can't be identifiable. In order for the identification process to be accomplished, it also needs to be distinguished from other fellow phenomena. Thus, the need for identification arises alongside the recognition ability and identity receives the concept of individuality. If the core similarities are important at the stage of recognition, the independence of the phenomenon will become important at the stage of identification. Based on these differences, the phenomenon is expected to meet

some desires that just it has to take its responsibility and there is no reason for other phenomena to meet those expectations.¹³⁴

Meeting the expectations, as the factor of identifying the phenomenon and accomplishing the authentication and identity proof, must not be in contrast with the expectations; since, as long as these expectations are not fulfilled, the process of identification cannot start fundamentally.

Broadly speaking, if recognizing and meeting the expectations is the general condition for a phenomenon to have an identity, individuation and accountability to the expectations will be the particular condition of authentication and identity proof. These two along each other and through making a balanced connection are capable of giving an identity to a phenomenon and focusing on one more than the other will lead to disturbance and imbalance in authenticating the identity due to the phenomena similarities or disturbance among them.¹³⁵

4.1.4. Consequences of identity authentication

Being identical with an object is the primary consequence of identity authentication. When a person feels the same with an object, he will assume it as a part of “himself [me]” or consider it as “we”. This relationship occurs whenever the object has a continuous and repetitive presence in and gets mixed with the person’s daily life. This not only will result in a more guaranteed and safer connection between the person and the mentioned phenomenon, but also the person will need less energy to perceive it and will feel self-confidence, safety and relief dealing with it. Norberg-Schulz considers a broader range for identity and corresponds it with “affection”. Memories are the aggravating factors that make an individual feel belonged to a place as the second consequence of authentication.¹³⁶ If we reach a time that we cannot produce any memories and have destroyed all the collective memories we had, the future generations will have no memories and a generation without memories is a generation without originality.

¹³⁴ Pakzad, Jahanshah. (1996). Identity and being identical with space. Saffe year 6. Vol 21-22, 67.

¹³⁵ Ibid, 168.

¹³⁶ Ibid, 66.

4.2. Identity and city

4.2.1. Urban Identity

Urban identity is easy to perceive. At first people assume that they understand the meaning of both urban and identity while professionally speaking it is really difficult to perceive them. It is not far-fetched to believe that ordinary people understand the meaning of urban identity easily; especially through environmental psychological perspectives and insights into urban design, perceiving the traits of a city is whatever that is formed in a citizen's or an observer's mind while seeing it. Therefore, whatever he understands from the city is right. The specialists, urban planners, and other executive authorities perceive it precisely by considering the standards. To do so, at first some matters need to be clarified to the specialists. A city is defined and described by many various features that can be classified into different groups. These components are sort of in connection with the city and affect each other conversely. In order to learn about the city and its problems and finally introduce appropriate solutions to reinforce the city, it is required to try to know the components in association with city identity and classify them.

In Iran, in the process of transformation, the identity of urban form changed from a relatively cohesive one on the basis of mosque, market place and governmental palace into a dispersed, multi-section metropolis.¹³⁷ The future urban researches must be conducted paying much more attention to the spatial- social structure formation and the effective organizations in it and naturally, the architecture and urban construction centers must show prudent and sensitive reactions to these changes.

Although the role and combination of two factors of social structures (i.e. market and government) are closely considered, they are not clear in such urban issues like the urban identity.¹³⁸ It seems that clarifying the concepts related to the public and private sectors are of more importance.

Kevin A. Lynch in his book, *A Theory of Good City Form* introduces seven criteria for evaluating a good city form including vitality, sense, fit, access, control, efficiency, and justice. He believes that this is the easiest way to define the general

¹³⁷ Kian Tajbakhsh, Yahya. (2001). A new perspective on urban issues in Iran. *Journal of Architecture and Urbanism*, Year 9, Vol 62-63, 39.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

meaning of the word “identity”. Indeed, district means the borders through which a person can distinguish it from other districts or recognize it. The district has to have its own distinct, unique and exclusive traits. All designers most often seek for and discuss about this quality. Identity has a clear, almost practical and predictable function.¹³⁹

Significance and meaningfulness can be enhanced by improving human being’s capability in perceiving a place clearly and making a connection between its components. In order to achieve this goal the identity standards and structure work closely and collaboratively. The structure demonstrates the combination of the components of a place or space with each other and shows how to understand the relations between function, form, and outlook frameworks. In a designing process based on structural approaches, the features and mechanisms are determined for various places by using identity criteria and measurements which distinguish the places from each other. The clarity of the differences between forms, functions, sceneries and imaginations promotes the significance of efficiency, capability and agreeableness of the places.¹⁴⁰ All these are some of the components required for elevating and promoting the quality of an environment that is the main purpose of urban designing.

4.2.2. Spatial perception and urban identity

People must be able to perceive their cities, learn about the basic pattern of the city, public and institutional functions and get informed of the available opportunities. In a genuine city, the sources of all things and places are crystal clear. This means that an urban environment must reveal its important concepts. The city should not be dominated by the powerful groups and its important places should not be hidden from the eyes of the public. The city must demonstrate the moral principles of the society by some symbols and train its citizens to be aware of these matters.

Ability to live, identity, authenticity, and urban opportunities are some of the positive qualities of urban environments which should serve the people, citizens and small social units. Directly by some organizations and symbolically through its public

¹³⁹ Behzadfar, Mostafa. (2008). Identity of the city. Tehran. Nashre Shahr. 37.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid, 38.

spaces, the structure of the city must encourage and motivate its citizens toward public life. The public environment of the city in contrast with its district spaces has to be open to all of the community members. The public space of the city is a place for many different groups of the community to interact and socialize. It is a place where different kinds of people meet and talk.¹⁴¹ No one should be excluded from this place unless his presence threatens the balance of life.

4.2.3. The role of public participation in establishing the urban identity

Regardless of legal ownership, people must individually and collectively feel belonged to a part of the urban environment and consider themselves responsible for that part. Urban environment has to be such a place to encourage people to express their demands and act actively regarding their needs. In a city, the conditions of tempting people to participate in city issues have to be reinforced, like a seminar in which everyone has a stake in public debates. Instead of being known just for the groups of people who have more possessions, the urban environment has to be designed for all people that use it and are influenced by it.¹⁴² This notion will reduce citizens' alienation and residents' anonymity to the city and enhance the sense of identity and originality of people in the physical environment of the city.

4.3. The crisis of urban identity

4.3.1. Identity crisis

A phenomenon probably has its own identity, but this doesn't mean it has the identity we expect. According this we can declare that lack of identity, which removes any possibility of recognition, is a concept that may never absolutely appear in the real world. Nowadays, any event that is a result of incorrect selection of authentication device or the inability of this device in evaluating new phenomenon is entitled as lack of identity that indeed is one of the reflections of identity crisis.¹⁴³

¹⁴¹ Memarian, G., & Ardeshiri, M. (2010). Urban Identity of Shiraz. Shiraz: Navid, 57.

¹⁴² Ibid, 59.

¹⁴³ Gasemi, M. (2001). Identity of residential fabric. Journal of Urban Management, year 2, Vol 8, 65.

Of course, in discussing about the identity crisis, there is always this risk that we fall to grief instead of considering a thorough imagination of the phenomenon and merely our past vision of the phenomenon turns to be an evaluation criterion and the basis of authentication device. Paying attention to this matter should be regardless of this fact that perhaps anything that had an identity in the past and was able to meet individual and collective expectations, is not able to fulfill today's individual demands. We should remember that identity covers the present time due to its connection with people's expectations and even has to be able to extent in future rather than being retroactive.

The first consequence of identity crisis is that the person finds himself, rootless and wherever he fails to appoint himself to a particular identity, he feels a loss in his life and calls himself anonymous. By expanding the individual's imagination and raising the level of his expectations, it would be difficult to compare the person's subjectivity and the surrounding objectivity. Naturally, this person gets disillusioned and surprised easily and faces an identity crisis. Thus, in today's world that in addition to the direct experiences, different types of media bombard people with information, the sense of lack of identity and anonymity has been inclusive and discussions about identity has become popular.¹⁴⁴

4.3.2. Modernity and identity of Urmia

Modernism movement is in connection with human factors including political, cultural and human training factors and has a significant effect on the identity of Urmia. Modernism movement has been transferred to Iran through physical tools rather than culture and a true example is the ways and roads that were imposed to all cities in Reza Shah's period. One of the identification features of Urmia is that it holds the physical symbols of modernity such as the constructed buildings, the way of clothing, new etiquettes, and the roads that are designed for cars that mostly have a direct shape.

Westernization is a false and acquired identity that Iranian society appealed to it in the nineteenth century and it started from Tehran. The fact that modernity in the

¹⁴⁴ Gasemi, M. (2001). Identity of residential fabric. *Journal of Urban Management*, year 2, Vol 8, 66.

broadest sense, independent from all our belongings and attachments, has become an inseparable part of our life aggravates this reality. This new aspect has turned to our new identity. Modernity does not get along well with the older layers of existence, but its presence is inevitable and absolute. Even when we rebel against it and talk about its harmful effects, we use the epistemological tools it had provided for us. Indeed, consciously or unconsciously we have accepted modernity. In other words, we have traveled through the process of “unconscious westernization” that has changed our lifestyles and perspectives.¹⁴⁵ A huge part of Iranian population (that has been remarkably grown in number after the revolution) has acquired a modern identity that has replaced their ethnic, religious and characteristics.

4.3.3. Recommended approaches to prevent identity crisis

In order to avoid increasing turmoil in a city it is required to make a connection between the individual and the scattered actions and create a united and integrated structure in the whole city. It is necessary to develop a delicate but permanent and inseparable connection between the historical elements and pivot points and current important functions in city and avoid any kind of accidental establishment of city elements spatially and physically by applying a determined structure for the city.

In order to increase citizens’ attachment to the city and their general awareness of the urban environment (which has been weakened due to the lack of attention to the old structures in the city and has influenced the social behaviors and ease of performance), it is required to take some measures through regulating and organizing the physical environment. Organizing the skeleton of the city provides a chance for all urban functions and human communications in a network to merge into each other and get closer.

Another necessity for organizing the city on the basis of revival is due to this fact that if the metropolises expand toward the suburban areas, where the city structures will be dispersed, the older districts will lose their credit and all urban activities will be scattered across the whole region; and as a result, gradually there will be no urban nodes. There will be no big difference in population and function density from one

¹⁴⁵ Memarian, G., & Ardeshiri, M. (2010). *Urban Identity of Shiraz*. Shiraz: Navid, 25.

part of the city to another and no district will be recognized as the downtown. Even if the development of urban units take place along with small urban centers, a system composed of many urban centers with the same level of importance will be created and consequently the readability and the central area of the city will be reduced.

Some urban spaces and functions create readability and differentiation of the city, demonstrate the national identity and stimulate the sense of honor and pride in citizens. By investigating the structure and original identity of the cities and perceiving the laws of development and their evolution, we can have a remarkable effect on improving and reviving the city state. This is due to the fact that the components and elements created in the history of city evolution have plenty of potential capacities for revitalization and can have an efficient role in city identity and reinforcing its symbolic network. In order to keep this valuable set of elements, some identifying tools and modern approaches need to be determined to maintain whatever remains permanently and efficiently. Organizing the basic skeleton is an advantage for city and its historical context, since inactivity of older collections in city and organizing the major identity of the city specially in connection with the older contexts will be significant and successful just in the case that they are conducted relying on an invisible connection between citizens and these contexts and their affection to cultural and visual values of their city.

Finally, it can be concluded that the need to design the organization of the basic skeleton of the city is efficient for reviving the old structures particularly the older skeleton of the city and improving the disorders observed in contemporary city contexts.¹⁴⁶ Moreover, it can be a guideline for the future city expansions.

4.4. The components of identity

4.4.1. The identity components of the city

Current Iranian cities do not suffer a lack of identity. On the contrary it is impossible to place its identity traits in a defined pattern. An Iranian city today is neither built based on traditional city patterns nor the western patterns. Indeed, many people who complain about the lack of identity in Iran mean that these streets neither benefit the

¹⁴⁶ Memarian, G., & Ardeshiri, M. (2010). Urban Identity of Shiraz. Shiraz: Navid, 23.

modern functions and forms nor the traditional ones. The main reflective concept of lack of identity is that the form and function of such passages and roads are not compatible with the changing needs of people and in order to adjust them with these increasing demands they need to be changed. Briefly, any city and/or any subsystem elements of the city contain some traits that identify them. Identity characters are some features that if they get applied properly can provide constructive organization of the city and/or its subsystem elements.

4.4.2. Recognizing the identity components of the city

In order to figure out the identity of a city it is required to know its character-building components. Character components of a city same as the characteristics of human being have two aspects: objective or physical, and subjective or spiritual, that are distinguishable by three natural, artificial and human environments. The variables of each of these components, if they have outstanding and special characters, play the role of identity indicator and presenter. To investigate the identity of each city the special and outstanding characters of the variables in natural, artificial and human components must be recognized. Mountains, plains, rivers, hills and such other variables are considered as natural components. Variables like, city blocks, buildings, neighborhoods, streets, paths, squares and such places are categorized as the artificial components. Language, religion, literacy, local beliefs, customs and other variables like these are the human components. Applying different types of research such as documentary (library) approach makes it possible to observe, interview, discover and analyze the data. The important matter here is the selection of the variables that describe the urban identity of a city, i.e. in order to learn about the variables of a component it is just required to explain those variables that clarify the urban identity. For instance, to explain the features of a city located in a desert, the variables that clarify the features of a desert like climate and topography are introduced and described.¹⁴⁷

Next step is the valuation of identity indicators, variables and presenters. Valuating the indicators is done in the process of clarifying the purpose of research, the functional purpose of organizing a city, development planning and community

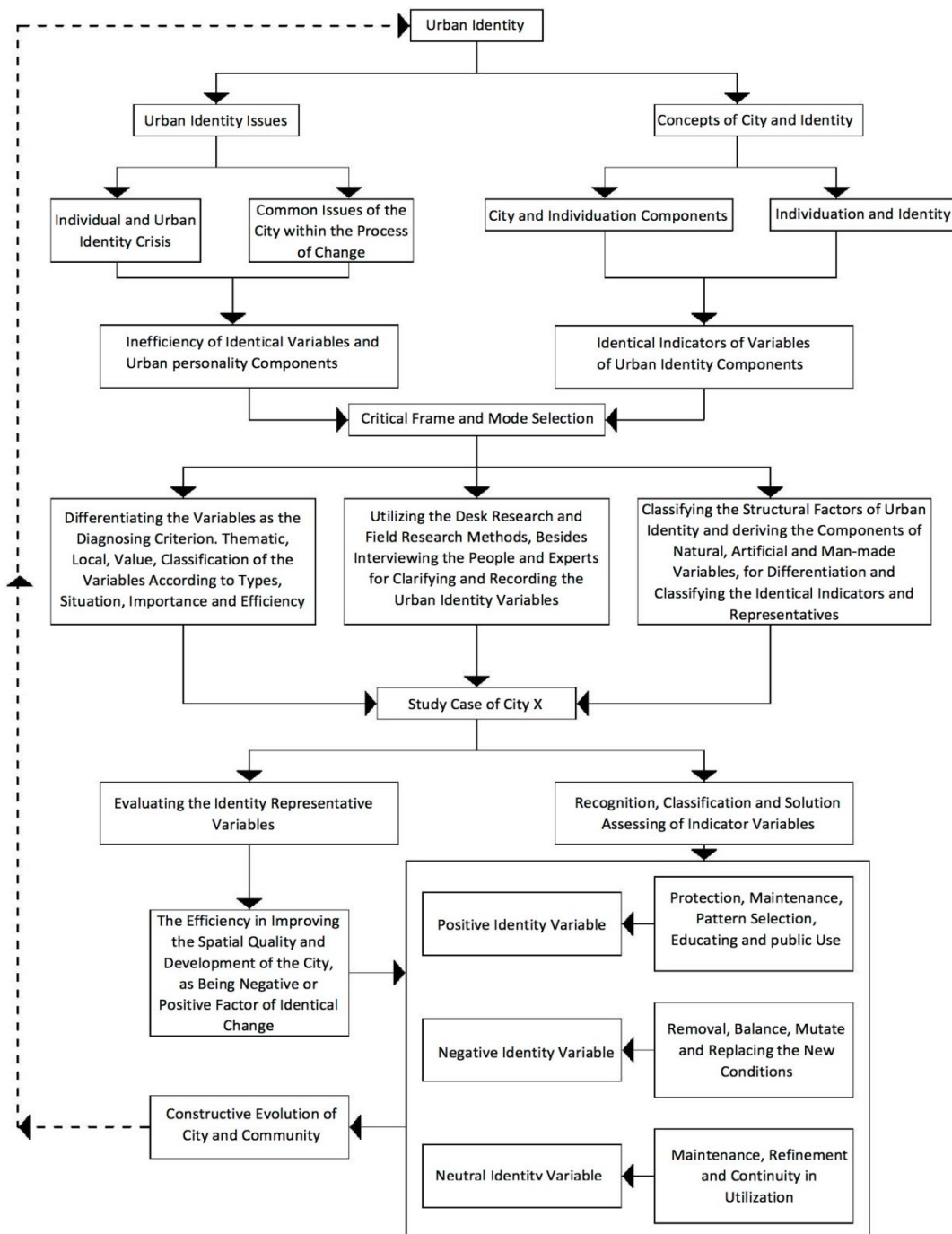
¹⁴⁷ Behzadfar, Mostafa. (2008). Identity of the city. Tehran. Nashre Shahr. 53-54.

evolution. Also in order to achieve the mentioned goals some decisions are made for dealing with these indicators.¹⁴⁸ For example, if a value and finally a purpose are considered as practical ones in the process of national and local planning for reviving the traditions, the identity elements indicating the traditions will be maintained, protected, rehabilitated, and flourished.

If it is intended to build a city with a modern identity, those elements and factors will be primarily organized that play an important role in achieving modernization goal. In some cases the goal may be stated in a different form. For example, the goal may be to attract tourists through enhancing the budget by local planning to benefit the environmental assets of a special city. In such a case, those collections or groups that can attract people due to their high value are investigated. Perhaps, such a variable element represents the national identity of a country that is located in a special city. Therefore, that city has a national identity and organizing it optimally based on the identity characters has turned to a valuable national desire. Each of identity elements may have an important effect on promoting environmental quality that is the subject of setting various technical goals in planning and designing the city. For instance, providing the sense of belonging, vitality, safety, and visual pleasure and other senses like these are considered as the components of promoting environmental quality which is one of the goals and operational subjects of city designing. Any of the mentioned cases can be explained and analyzed by more precise examples. The diagram below demonstrates the operational structure of the research about urban identity.

¹⁴⁸ Behzadfar, Mostafa. (2008). Identity of the city. Tehran. Nashre Shahr. 54.

Table 2: Structure of Research Implementation in Urban Identity
 Source: Behzadfar, Mostafa. (2008). Identity of the city. Tehran. Nashre Shahr. 55.



Identity elements can be classified into three groups of positive, negative, and neutral regarding their qualitative value. An identity element is positive if it has special capabilities and a positive connotation and is efficient in giving life and meaning to the city. For example, it acts as a potential in tourists' attraction, maintenance of city profits, capability of spatial organization, and endogenous development in city in order to develop and protect the benefits and values of the city. We categorize the elements of identity as the negative ones and a region is assumed to suffer negative elements whenever not only there are no signs of characters or conditions required for developing and maintaining the valuable benefits of the society and nature, but also they can cause the destruction of environment. For example, if a city is socially known for its high range of addiction, this feature is a kind of human identity component that is considered as negative. The neighborhoods where there are no signs of real modernity, but they are known as modern districts or what people in other cities of country entitle them as "Tehran-made", not only there are far away from the original traditional identity principles of city construction, but also have nothing of modernity.¹⁴⁹

For explaining the neutral identity elements it would be just sufficient to give some examples. Although the appellation, latitude and longitude are taken into account in categorizing the characteristics of identity components, they are of neutral value in the component valuation process.

Identity elements are separated from each other based on their connection with human, natural and artificial components. Climate and natural characteristics are considered as natural components. The special form and location of cities and their structures are the natural components of a city and are considered as its identity elements. All the elements that are made by human beings such as towers and mosques are assumed as artificial and man-made components. Accent, race and such matters are considered as human components.

4.5. Maskan Mehr and its urban identity

Fabric and spatial structure of cities forms one of the most important aspects of urban identity, because the formation of urban fabric is based on the ideas, beliefs,

¹⁴⁹ Behzadfar, Mostafa. (2008). Identity of the city. Tehran. Nashre Shahr. 56-57.

activities and culture of the society. Therefore studying Maskan Mehr on this basis can lead to more understanding on other social, economic and cultural aspects of it. It is clear that physical fabric provides the possibility of recognition of urban identity in a visual manner and because of that it is of more importance than other aspects of identity.

According to the literature review of this chapter, of the most important things in urban identity the formation of the City (history of residence and origin of the city), archaeological sites and ancient locations, accessibility features, functional features and components of urban fabric and architecture and building science could be mentioned that could be review and studied based on three main criteria (1. difference and similarity 2. maintaining continuity while transformation 3. maintaining unity despite pluralism)

Maskan Mehr in Golman-Khane as a part of the discrete development of the city is located 12 km from the city of Urmia. This is the first and major problem in the field of urban identity in Maskan Mehr. As a result of isolation from the context of the city, what is defined as urban identity for the citizens does not exist in this environment and it needs to be rebuilt and redefined.



Figure 31: Road Network of Golman-Khane District
Source: Arseh Consulting Engeenirs

4.5.1. Culture

Undoubtedly, culture is the most important and richest source for identity, in this regard; people find their identity by relying on multiple cultural components and elements. In other words culture makes differences and contrasts and also integrates

the space.¹⁵⁰ Culturally, in Maskan Mehr, not only there is not a default social and cultural identity but also because of the social diversity of residents, there will be different cultures. In this case, the common point for people is religion. Mosques in Urmia, with a predominantly Muslim population, are the cultural hubs of the city.



Figure 32: Mosque and Sport and cultural Complex in Golman-Khane
As a cultural part of Islamic society and Sport and cultural Complex as the Intersection of Peoples with Different Cultures (Taken by the Author, 2015)



Figure 33: Educational Center in Golman-Khane
Educational Centers are one of the main components in defining society's culture
(Taken by the Author, 2015)

¹⁵⁰ Behzadfar, Mostafa. (2008). Identity of the city. Tehran. Nashre Shahr. 22.

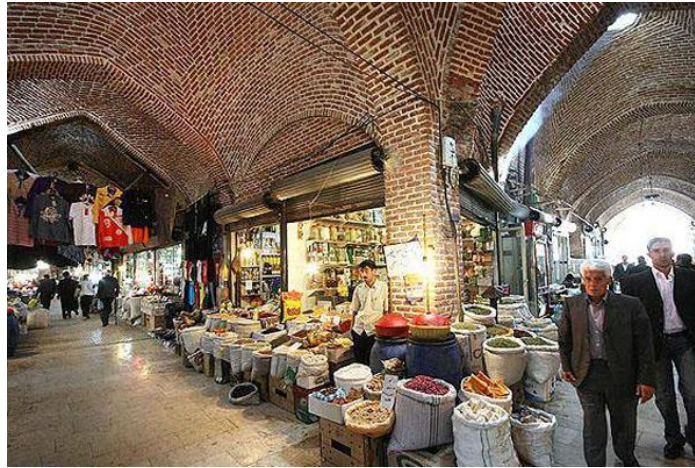


Figure 34: Urmia's Bazaar

Old Bazaar of Urmia is a good Representative of the cultural behaviors of Locals
Source: <http://dezfulblog.mihanblog.com/post/category/20> (Last retrieved at 20/8/2015)



Figure 35: Grand Mosque of Urmia

Grand Mosque of Urmia as a Cultural Element

Source: <http://www.viewphotos.org/iran/images-of-Orumiyeh-59.html>
(Last retrieved at 20/8/ 2015)

4.5.2. Cohesion of public spaces

Connecting spaces in the city includes the main streets and squares that tie and connect several elements together (urban nodes), these spaces often have dynamic characteristics. Squares and urban public spaces along the axes of the neighborhood help the space to be more dynamic and connected. This is an important factor in strengthening urban spaces and somehow we can say that the continuity of urban spaces has a considerable impact on the urban identity and its perception. Based on field observations, in Maskan Mehr there are no spaces with such quality that would provide such continuity for public spaces.

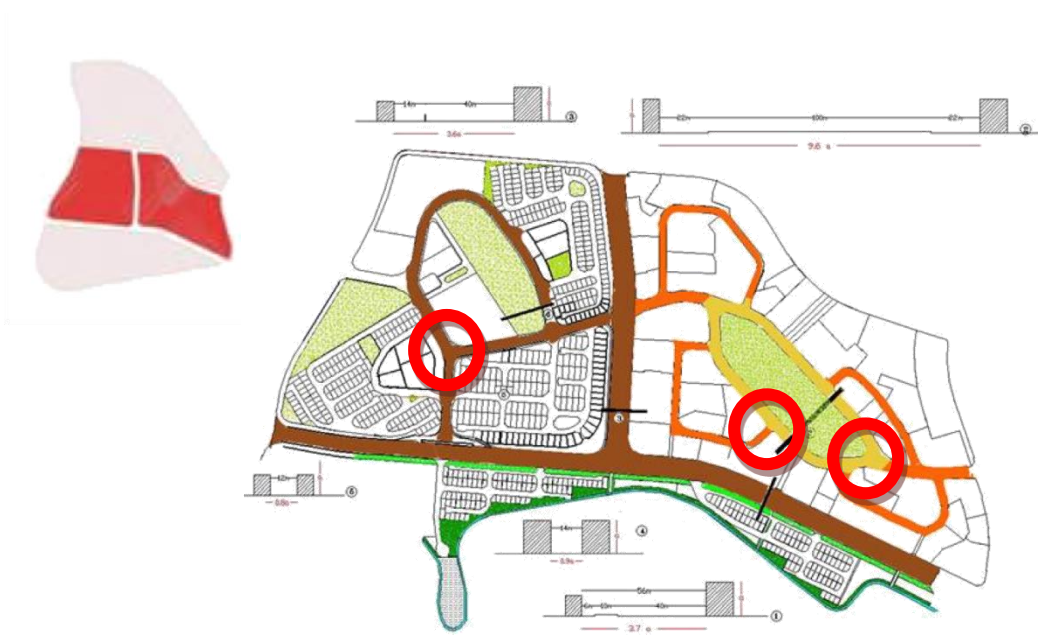


Figure 36: Road Network Map of 4 story Maskan Mehr in Golman-Khane
 The red circles indicate the possible spaces for nodes
 (Source: Consulting, Engineers of Arseha)



Figure 37: A crossroad in Maskan Mehr in Golman-Khane
 By using human components of identity, this crossroad can perform as a nod
 (Taken by the Author 2015)



Figure 38: Maskan Mehr in Golman-Khane
 The Pedestrian is designed just as a path without injecting any Social Interactions
 (Taken by the Author, 2015)



Figure 39: Khayyam Street in Urmia
 Khayyam Street in Urmia serving as a nod with a commercial purpose, which increases the social interactions
 Source: <http://urmudailyphoto.blogspot.com.tr/2013/02/urmia-khayyam-street-south.html> (Last retrieved at 20/8/2015)

4.5.3. Readability and landmarks in the fabric

In recent decades, cities encounter the problem of readability; this problem is also tangible in Maskan Mehr. Places that are important in terms of the physical and cultural systems and have a public aspect, are effective in promoting urban identity. Among these places are mosques and shopping centers, which are distinguishable from other buildings and have the highest connections and relations with public functions.

Since the project is not completed, so there are not many natural and artificial elements in the environment and the readability is low. These elements should be outstanding in order to increase the readability of the environment. Also the separation of pedestrian and vehicles paths and combining it with natural elements including green space can be effective in this regard



Figure 40: Shopping Center in Golman-khane
A shopping center which can increase the readability of neighborhood
(Taken by the Author 2015)



Figure 41: Shahr-chayi River in Urmia
This river promotes the urban readability for the citizens
Source: <https://www.facebook.com/oroumieh?fref=ts> (Last retrieved at 6/12/2014)

4.5.4. Skyline and façade

Similar and repetitive facades of buildings in an area can help to more emphasize on landmarks and buildings with special traits. However here in Maskan Mehr, in the absence of landmarks and buildings with special traits, buildings with similar and duplicated facades reduces the capability of space perception and give the space a tedious feeling.

As seen in the figures, the skyline is generally balanced and consistent with no significant change in the height of buildings, this may be satisfactory at first glance, but after a while it will become boring and monotonous.



Figure 42: Skyline in Maskan Mehr in Golman-Khane

The balance between consistency and readability is a challenge, which is not addressed in Golman-khane Maskan Mehr Project. Though the flat skyline increases the consistency of the design, however it reduces the readability of the fabric significantly
(Taken by the Author, 2015)

4.5.5. Local activities

Activities can be important factors in shaping the identity as well as strengthening and vitality of the city spaces. Of such activities to commercial and recreation

activities (including cafes, restaurants, shopping malls, etc.) could be mentioned, which have various effects on the functioning of the neighborhood at different hours of the day. Increasing the number of cafés, restaurants and shopping malls within the Maskan Mehr area could strengthen the sense of belonging in the citizens of the neighborhood.



Figure 43: Small Bazaar Rolling in Maskane Mehr in Golman-khane
Small Bazaar Rolling as the part of urban identity
(Taken by the Author, 2015)

4.5.6. The dominant materials

The use of multiple materials in urban spaces is one of the factors that cause variation in space. As a result of being newly constructed, in Golman-Khane, materials are generally composed of concrete, stone and composite.



Figure 44: Different Construction Materials in Golman-khane Maskane Mehr Project
(Taken by the Author, 2015)

4.5.7 Natural and Artificial Elements: Figure 46 is shows the proper use of subway entrance as an artificial element while Figure 45 shows the ignorance of this principle in Golman-Khane District Maskan Mehr Project. Figure 47 is an example of natural elements in Urmia.



Figure 45: A Bus Station in Golman-khane District
(Taken by the Author, 2015)



Figure 46: A Subway Entrance Paris
Source:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abbesses_%28Paris_M%C3%A9tro%29 (Last
retrieved at 20/8/2015)

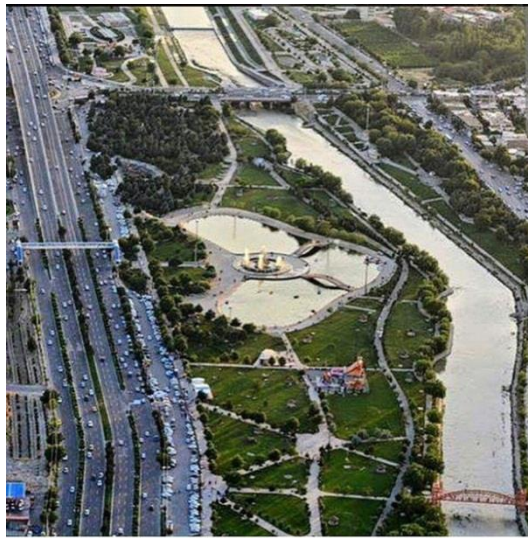


Figure 47: Shahar-Chai River in Urmia Acting as a Natural Element
Source: Instagram/Urmia7 (Last retrieved at 20/8/2015)

4.5.8. Symbols

Symbols are elements that are used in identifying cities. Which for their particularity are rare and could not be found in Maskan Mehr.



Figure 48: Artificial Element of Tehran, Azadi Tower
Source: <http://www.sums.ac.ir/~shkoshesh/iran/Azadi2.JPG>
(Last retrieved at 28/8/2015)



Figure 49: Artificial Element of Tehran, Milad Tower
Source: http://www.sky-towers.ru/towers/4350/normal/Borje_Milad_4350_41.jpg
(Last retrieved at 28/8/2015)

4.6. Conclusion

Identity is an interpretation that humans give to their relationship with the history in the passage of time; a history on which it is in relation with different components of modern man's life. Human identity is a multi-dimensional interpretation that covers many areas of his subjective and objective life; an interpretation that can be achieved by the interaction of these components. Inner desire of humans to discover their identity, results in the issue of identity gaining value in the areas of man-made and artificial environments. The city as the main symbol of human civilization is effected by human's inner desire. Derived from the modernist movement, styles that emerged in the twentieth century as a result of confronting with this inner desire, ignoring the human environment and civil life weren't stable.

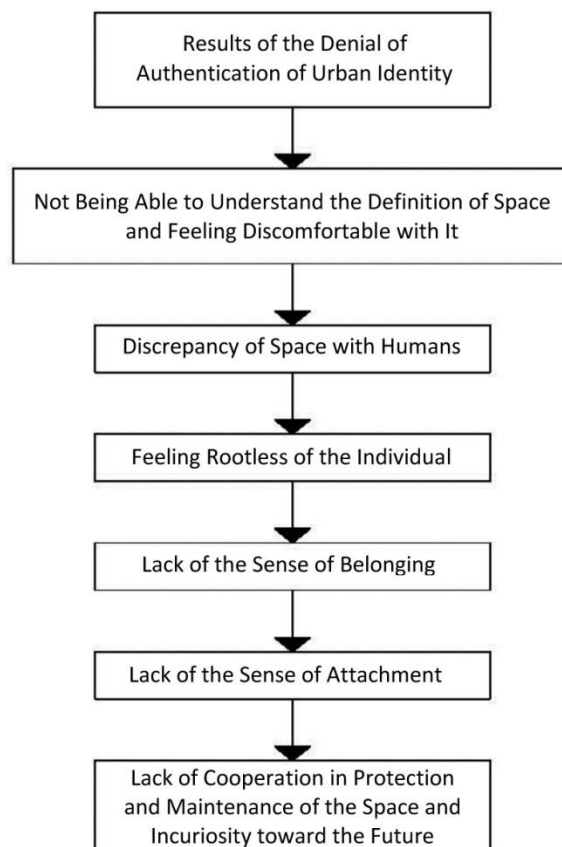
It should be noted that identity is a distinction; distinction between man and man, city by city and culture to culture; the existence of the city is tied to its identity and globalization, despite its glamorous appearance, creates crisis. In fact, part of the urban identity is linked with the historical fabric of the city and when we eradicate memorable places with historical connections to the past, following the cessation of the historical continuation, we have destroyed urban identity.

The new look to the urban and man-made environments causes the boundaries of the social sciences to extend; and "identity" as one of the most important factors in perception of the city has an important role in recognition of the city by citizens. Connection to the past in the form of using familiar forms is the simplest solution for the beginning. Furthermore, given the positive aspects of this approach, it should be considered that merely using a historical form cannot reflect different aspects of urban identity, but rather formal aspects are a part of the solution to the continuity of urban identity.

Since Maskan Mehr in Golman-Khane district is not even in the city, it faces a major problem in this regard. The identity components of the city (artificial, natural and human components) in this project are missing. Acquiring a united perspective and attitude about the urban identity is the result of collecting all the identity components. So it would be possible to recognize the identity gaps by accomplishing our current attitude through relying on the theoretical foundations.

Table 3: Results of the Denial of Authentication of Urban Identity

Source: Tagizade, M., & Togyani, S. (2011). The need for identity crisis management in urban areas. *Hoviyate Shahr*, year 5, 9, 80.



In public view, what gives a place identity –or takes it away– is the sense of belonging or not belonging to a sustainable and collective identity. In this perspective, a place with identity is a place where its identity is in accordance with the collective identity; like a historical building in a historical context. And a place without identity is a place where its identity is at odds with the collective identity; like a modern building in a historical context.¹⁵¹ High similarity of buildings in Maskan Mehr to each other is a serious threat to urban identity; while one of the most important common aspects of ancient cities is their uniqueness. In this field a critic Like "Mumford", considers the urban renewal in the modern era in terms of spatial, physical and social, impersonal and incomplete and considers the issue of urban identity as the main issue of urban planning. He says that the cities had a visual unity, with forms that gradually became more complex and created the binding social life. But in Maskan Mehr, the social diversity has been replaced by dry and stipulated order, an everyday life. Urmia has its own personalities and entities, however in Maskan Mehr, those personalities and entities are gone and all buildings have become similar uniform masses (Figure 49).¹⁵²

Since the concept of identity has a connection to the past and the human perception of the city is made by the fabric and basically physical environment, therefore the city fabric also needs to include the past. If there is no symbol or sign of the past in the environment and the fabric of the city, identity of the city will also fade. With this point of view, urban identity without the acceptance of society is not reachable, and what is effective in the field of public acceptance is the fabric that is perceived in the first glance. Hence according to the role of the residents of the city and their will in creating the urban space and the impact of this will in the formation of the city, urban identity is dependent on the urban fabric and context.¹⁵³

¹⁵¹ Hojat, Isa. (2005). Man-maker identity, identity-maker human. Honarhaye Ziba Magazine. Number 24. 57.

¹⁵² Daneshpour, S. (2004). An introduction to the concept and function of the identity of the man-made environment. [BAGH-I-NAZAR](#). Number 1. 63.

¹⁵³ Atashinbar, Mohammad. (2009). THE CONTINUITY OF IDENTITY IN URBAN LANDSCAPE. [BAGH-I-NAZAR](#). FALL 2009-WINTER 2010 , Volume 6 , Number 12. 51.



Figure 50: Repetitive and Boring Design of Maskan Mehr Project in Golman-Khane
(Taken by the Author, 2015)

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

In this study, the housing problem is perceived as result of the formation of the modern world and its consequences; therefore it has tried to investigate the policies of states and governments in the last century in developed countries and Iran in facing with the problem of housing and ways to deal with this common problem among communities and along an overview of the theoretical principles in providing housing for low-income groups, it is reviewing the most important achievements and approaches in the Iranian context on how to implement this policies.

This was done using a framework called “Social Policy” which means a set of measures with the purpose of affecting the well-being of society by shaping the distribution and access to goods and resources of that society. By this definition it is clear that housing is the most important asset for a significant part of the society and as a determining factor in the welfare services of households, it forms a central part of social policy.

With this approach the third chapter shows how the state enters the housing market and examines its regulatory policies and indicates how the majority of government efforts are usually to overcome or reduce the imbalance in the housing market through involvement in some parts of market or reforming the weakness of the policies. Nevertheless issues such as rapid population growth and rural - urban migration in developing countries such as Iran requires that the housing issue, to be considered as part of urban issues and therefore to be considered in a complex interaction with issues such as social and environmental issues.

In Iran, the main reason for the intervention of state in this field is for the failure of market in issues such as sufficient number in housing production that is mainly influenced by factors such as enclosed market, affection from the location, the

presence of external factors and uncertainty and volatility of market, as well as the enormous financial power of the state. Meanwhile the need for public and social services (education, health, law enforcement centers and administrative service centers) and the distribution of these centers in accordance with the distribution and structure of population is another reason for the intervention of government in housing market. Interference in this market in the advanced economies of world has been done through methods such as subsidies, receiving and redistributing taxes, direct supply of housing, legal regulatory measures to influence prices and the amount of construction and of course, each action has led to different results.

Although housing policies are designed to enhance the welfare of the people of a country, but in practice these policies generally don't have a direct impact on the welfare of low-income groups in the society. Therefore, to improve the welfare of these groups, other policies have been designed to address issues such as the importance of the health issue, the possibility of individuals becoming a criminal by living in a bad environment and moral and social justice, which need to be consistent with housing policies. Also what was once the criterion to distinguish these groups was based on the classic criteria that if the cost of housing is more than 30% of the household's income, the provision of housing for the family will be difficult, which has been a subject of disputes in recent years and instead, the inability to purchase housing has been highlighted. The origins of this inability are deliberated to be in the structure of income distribution and assets of the society and to solve this problem along the physical developments of housing, it requires policies that would increase the financial ability of households to purchase and acquisition of affordable housing.

A review of housing policies in developed countries indicates that although the direct involvement of state institutions in the provision of housing at the beginning was in forms such as social housing, but gradually, the emergence of social problems in this type of housing in unsuccessful cases as well as the unwillingness of residents to improve the living environment of successful cases, shifted the tendency of governments from the provision of housing policies to other policies including giving prepared land as well as empowerment policies.

In Iran, the ninth administration of the Islamic Republic, without considering past global or countries experiences implemented Maskan Mehr project as a large scale of

social housing. This project has faced numerous problems in several issues such as preparation and management problems, a lack of infrastructure and public services and problems related to living conditions of residents. But despite these problems, as a result of the vast scale of the project, there is no possibility to withdraw from it and Maskan Mehr with all its problems is the main available solution for the housing problem in Iran.

A city is where the urban and human interactions take place and the people of the city have a sense of citizenship and belonging. In other words, what makes the city is not just huge buildings and parks but also people with all their unique characteristics and tastes and in fact it is the urban identity that causes the dynamics of the city. Thus, in the fourth chapter, urban identity was reviewed Maskan Mehr.

Maskan Mehr in Urmia is implemented as the discrete development plan of city and in a sense it can be said that in terms of identification, the residents of these settlements know the urban identity of Urmia as their own. But because of the separation of Maskan Mehr from the city, urban identity in there is different from the urban identity of Urmia. Based on the conducted analysis this settlement will turn into a place without identity and soulless town, with lacking in the diversity of functions and as a result of being close to Urmia and lack of economic infrastructure, it will become a dormitory town with no dynamics.

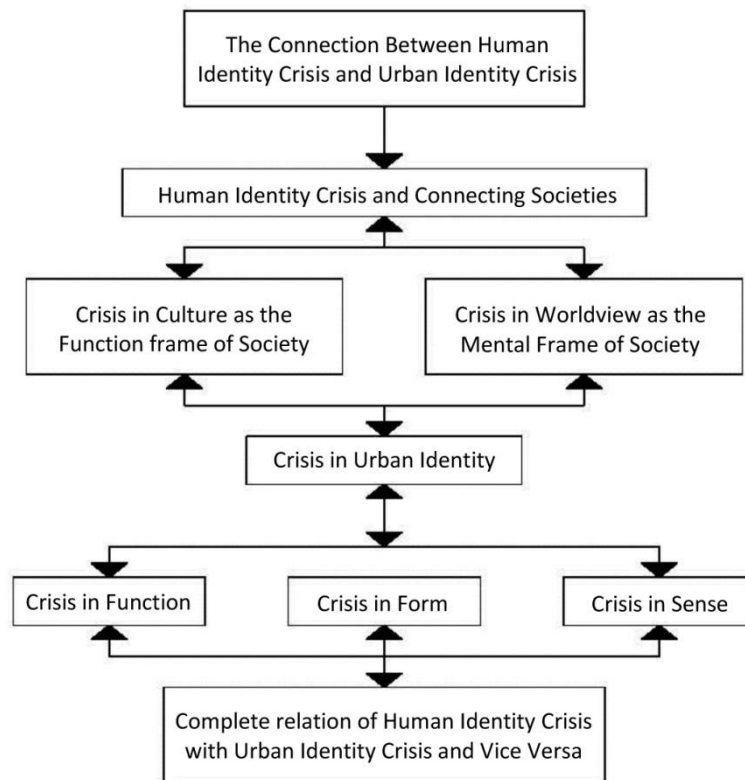
What is now happening in architecture of Iran and especially in Maskan Mehr is that quantity has dominated over quality in architecture and the inability of the country to solve the complex urban problems and providing the spiritual and material needs of citizens has brought architecture and urban planning to a critical stage. Architecture has become a mass of replication and thus is boring and dull.

Absence of necessary spaces in the neighborhood, lack of attention to the city landscape and the geometrical combination of filled and empty spaces are creating crisis in urban identity of Maskan Mehr. The effects of the identity crisis in Maskan Mehr can be named as the following:

- Becoming a dormitory settlements;
- Low levels of social cohesion;
- Lack or loss of a sense of belonging to the urban environment;

- Limitations of communal spaces and reduction of social and cultural interactions.

Table 4: The Connection Between Human Identity Crisis and Urban Identity Crisis
 Source: Tagizade, M., & Togyani, S. (2011). The need for identity crisis management in urban areas. *Hoviyate Shahr*, year 5, 9, 78.



Urban identity is an extensive issue. In Maskan Mehr, lack of identity, inconsistency and replication that today is dominant in urban spaces and is increasingly expanding, not only has created an undesirable landscape and an unfamiliar environment for the residents, but also has affected all aspects of social life in the urban environment. Because the physical form of cities is the core of the social world that is effective in all aspects of society, from economics to aesthetics.¹⁵⁴ This is the common point of social housing and urban identity, social housing is not just housing but it also tries to contemplate about the issues of its community and residents and in this regard urban identity is an important issue. The residents require an urban identity from their surroundings to define their own identity. Urban identity is a part of the infrastructure

¹⁵⁴ Gholami, Mohammadjavad. (2010). Pathology of Mehr housing project. *Abadi Journal*, 69, 53.

of one's individual identity and is a result of his general knowledge about the physical world surrounding him.

People over time define and form an independent image and perception of urban identity in their minds. If the external conditions that they are in contact with it are not identical with the subjective impression of urban identity that they expected, they will try different ways to create compliance and reach equilibrium between their mind and the surrounding world. This is true in both perception and behavior.

In the third chapter three scenarios for the future of Maskan Mehr in Urmia was predicted. In examining these scenarios in relation to urban identity and to achieve equilibrium and balance, three common solutions were identified. The first solution is environmental compliant or in other words changing the environment and bringing it to the quality of urban identity in the persons mind. The second solution is self-adaptation or in other words changing the self, this requires lowering the expectations level and accepting the new urban identity. This is a difficult task, but it is executable. In the third scenario, there is a reaction from the person that leads to tension or leaving the environment. If the person is not able to change the environment as he desires, nor being able to change his perception of the urban identity, this incompatibility will pass the threshold of individual's tolerance and will result in a reaction.

In the condition where a reaction occurs, either the individual leaves the place or if there is no possibility or for various reasons no tendency of leaving, tensions will reach a critical level and will cause serious psychological problems for the person. Immigration is an example of a reaction by leaving the environment. The result of the second reaction that is tension with the environment is different types of depression and aggression.

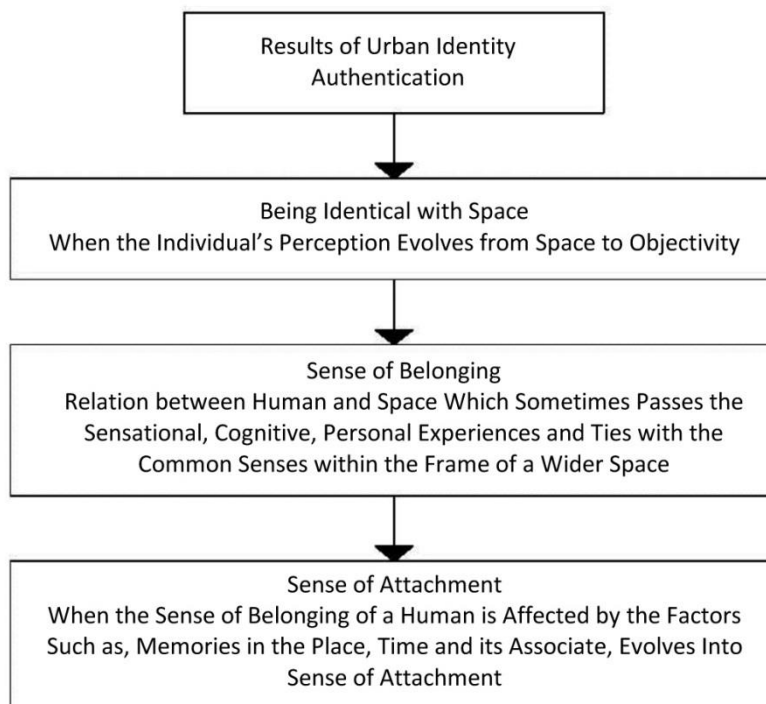
The experienced spaces in the city are parts of urban identity. Urban identity is a part of the infrastructure of one's individual identity and is a result of his general knowledge about the physical world surrounding him. This knowledge includes memories, ideas, values, preferences, concepts and ideals of human behavior and experience in consistence with the varied and complex physical environment that create the experimental space of a person involving his perception and behavior. The identity related to a city is a result of profound connection between individual and

city environment. Urban identity has a positive effect on citizens' capabilities and self-reliance and distinguishes them from the citizens of other cities.¹⁵⁵

For this reason, for the success of Maskan Mehr, the formation of urban identity is required. If this identity is authenticated, it will result in a sense of belonging for residents and their acceptability; which could be interpreted as an implied success for Maskan Mehr Project.s

Table 5: Results of Urban Identity Authentication

Source: Tagizade, M., & Togyani, S. (2011). The need for identity crisis management in urban areas. *Hoviyate Shahr*, year 5, 9, 79.



¹⁵⁵ Pakzad, Jahanshah. (1996). Identity and being identical with space. *Saffe* year 6. Vol 21-22, 74.

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