1. **General information about Tehran** (Demography, m2, population social composition, current local government, economic data, culture etc.)

Up until the 19th century, Tehran was a small walled trade town, lying outside the ancient city of Ray, and compared to major cities such as Isfahan and Tabriz had no major significance. In 1797, it was named the new capital, and within just a century the population of Tehran grew from 15,000 to 250,000. By the end of the 20th century, it had become a large metropolis with nearly 12 million inhabitants. Between 1966 and 1996, and especially since 1986, the development of the Tehran metropolis has been characterized by rapid growth of its suburban areas, which in 2009 contained 30% of its 12 million inhabitants (Atlas of Tehran metropolis, 2005; Tehran municipality official website, 2020).

The population of Tehran metropolis is more than the sum of the three other major cities of Iran, namely Isfahan, Mashhad and Tabriz. The population of none of these three cities, despite their recent rapid growth, surpasses three million. This imbalance between Tehran and other large cities of Iran is a result of intensive political, administrative and economic centralization. Hence, Tehran has the highest concentration of population in Iran and the Middle East, equal to Cairo and Istanbul.

Tehran is of course not the same as Iran. But without this modern metropolis, which is the focal point of Iran’s transportation network and the centre in which more than 40% of the nation’s economic activities takes place, it would not be possible to fully comprehend the ever changing nature of Iran. Tehran is a small version of Iran. Those who inhabit this city have moved from all around the country with different beliefs, cultures, languages and lifestyles in search of a better life and future.

Despite policies for decentralization of the country in recent decades, Tehran is still one of the most densely-populated regions in Iran. The growth of suburbs is much faster than the city, especially due to rapid migration and the high increase of land prices in inner city areas. Today territorial divisions between rural and urban areas are more blurred than before. There are seven villages just outside of the official municipal boundaries of Tehran with the population of several thousand inhabitants, or small towns such as Varamin and Eslamshahr, which are overpopulated by several hundred thousand people. As a result, some areas outside of the official municipal boundaries may be considered as having the most populous concentrations within the province.
Formal Economy:

After the 1979 revolution and during the war between Iran and Iraq, industrial development and construction works in the city slowed considerably and resulted in lower immigration. Tehran is an important industrial and commercial centre. As of 1988, more
than half of the manufactured goods of the Islamic Republic of Iran were produced in Tehran. Industrial plants manufacture such items as textiles, cements, sugar, china and pottery, electrical equipment and pharmaceuticals. There is also an automobile assembly industry. Government administration is an important source of employment. According to the 1986 census, 45.6% of wage and salary earners were in the public sector.

The Government of Tehran has been pursuing a programme of decentralization. To facilitate decentralization from Tehran, the plan envisages equipping a selected number of large cities to serve as regional centres that would increasingly perform the functions of the capital city. It is hoped that this plan will absorb the surplus population of Tehran. The main idea is to narrow the gap between rural and urban areas in terms of their access to social and commercial services.

2. Urban History

In a matter of only a century, Iran repeatedly remade its political imageries and realities: from Shia’s Qajar dynasty to the Constitutional Revolution in 1906; from a military monarchy under Reza Shah Pahlavi (1925–1941) to the rise of the nationalist movement in the early 1940s and the nationalisation of the oil industry in 1951; and from the 1979 popular revolution that overthrew Pahlavi’s autocratic monarchy (1925–1979) to the Islamic Republic that established the only theocratic state in the modern political system. These major political events had a significant impact on the urban development and governance of Tehran.

The original city of Tehran which was founded in the 16th century (the Safavid era) had an area of 4.2 km². In 1870 decades after it became the capital of Iran, a new wall (fortification) was constructed around Tehran, increasing its area to 18 km². In 1930, the city walls of Tehran were demolished and the city grew nearly three-fold, reaching an area of around 46 km², and spreading northward because of its better climate. As a result of the rapid growth of the city towards the north and industrial developments in the south, in the 1960s, the Shemiran summer resort in the north and Ray (the ancient city in the south of Tehran) were merged with the city of Tehran. In the early 1970s, the population of Tehran doubled and reach 4.5 million inhabitants and Tehran’s area increased to 250 km². In the years following the 1979 Islamic Revolution and then during the Iraq and Iran war (1980-1988), the urban growth was mainly towards the south and south west because of the high rate of immigrants from other cities and the increasing land and housing prices in the north.
of the city. Hence the outward growth of the city in the form of satellite towns and residential development have created a sprawling and fragmented urban fabric.
3. **Stages of urbanization / Politics of urbanization**

The city of Tehran went through a major transformation in 1930 when the population density had doubled to 105 persons per hectare and almost a third of the population lived outside of the city walls. In addition to the demographic pressure, the arrival of motor vehicles, and the desire of the newly established Pahlavi regime to modernize the city and urban infrastructure led to substantial changes in the capital that radically re-planned and re-built (Madanipour, 1998; Lockhart, 1939). New boulevards were built on the ruins of the city walls and moats as part of a transport network of 218 km of new roads. Retailers were encouraged to move to new streets and abandon the old streets of the bazaar, and new buildings and governmental institutions sprang up all over the city. The new street network was imposed on the winding streets of old neighborhoods, with the aims of unifying the space of the city, overcoming the traditional factional social structure, easing the movement of goods, services and military forces, strengthening the market economy and supporting the centralization of power.

The mayor of Tehran General Karim Buzarjomehri (1886-1951) who prior to becoming a mayor of Tehran in 1930 was a high-ranked military general in the 1920s, played a key role in the transformation of the city under the direction of the Reza Shah and the Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Transport. The map of Tehran in the late 1940s shows urban transformations and rapid territorial expansion in different stages. The Street Layout Plan, the urban renewal of central Tehran, and the construction of the government enclave symbolize the nation-building and state-building programmes of Reza Shah. The close proximity of the state administration to the Bazaar created a powerful political and economic centre for Tehran. Despite the secularisation programme of the Pahlavi state and the anticlerical acts of the Shah, the rich merchants and powerful clergies operating around the Bazaar were able to save the Bazaar and its surrounding neighbourhoods from demolition as part of the street widening plan.

In the mid-1940s, Tehran comprised an area of around 46 square kilometres, which was 2.5 times larger than during the Qajar period. The population grew from 210,000 to 540,000 in only two decades (1925-1945). Streets and avenues covered 1.8 square kilometres, or 9 percent of the whole area of the city. Prior to the Second World War, however, there was no significant rural migration to urban areas. It was only after the Second World War, with the increase of industry in Tehran, that was an increase in rural to-urban migration, drawing peasants to the city. Therefore, during the end of the First Pahlavi period, the urban middle class formed the majority of Tehran’s population.
Mokhber-al Dowleh crossing in late 1930s

Photo by: Mahmoud Pakzad, postcard-1930s – Iranian Institute for Contemporary Historical Studies

Map of Tehran in 1948

By 1940s, 70 percent of Tehran’s working population was comprised of government employees, including administrative officials and teachers (Bahrambeygui, 1977). This concentration of the middle class would dramatically affect the further development of the city to the north, through increased demand for new homes that would reflect their modern lifestyle.

The centralisation of political power under Reza Shah Pahlavi (1925-1941) and later under his son, Mohammad Reza Shah (1941-1979), was accompanied by state developmentalism and a state-led ‘scale-making project’. As a result of rapid industrialization and modernization of the country during the 1950s and 1960s, Tehran as the capital city underwent unprecedented urban growth and a construction boom. The piecemeal approach towards urban development allowed different agencies and stakeholders to engage in the production of urban space without any coordinating mechanism. For example, landowners were free to divide and register their land, and determine the size and form of streets in and around the city (Madanipour, 1998).

**Tehran urban expansion in 1950s and 1960s**

![Map of Tehran Urban growth 1950 and 1960](source: Mashayekhi, 2019)
By the early 1960s the city was growing in every direction, despite both housing and infrastructure developments remaining completely unregulated. Tehran’s population jumped from 1.7 million in 1956 to 2.7 million in the mid-1960s (Ibid). As the map shows, within a decade the structure of the city had rapidly expanded outwards. The lack of regulation led to severe congestion in the city centre and the migration of the wealthier classes to the northern suburbs. This meant that the quality of urban spaces and the provision of social infrastructure in poorer areas were grossly neglected. As a result, Tehran was becoming a divided city both socially and spatially: the rich and the middle class in the north, versus the poor and working class in the south.

The rise in global oil prices in the early 1970s and the resultant increase in oil revenues positioned Iran among the top twenty economies in the world, and brought confidence for the state to initiate large-scale urban projects. With wealth concentrated in Tehran, the city’s industry and services experienced phenomenal growth. Tehran’s population jumped from 2.7 million in 1966 to 4.5 million in 1976 (Madanipour, 2006). Land speculation and rapid rural-urban migration became the main impediments to both the Comprehensive Plan and the application of a logical growth pattern. Rather than invest in factories or industrial development, wealthy Tehranis sought a way to reproduce their wealth in a faster and more reliable way: land and housing speculation. Moreover the Tehran Comprehensive Plan proposed rigid service boundaries for the city, and as a result, the price of real estate in inner city Tehran increased by an average of 250% from 1966 to 1971 (Art &Architecture, 1973). With the majority of inner-city land in the hands of the state and small group of landowners, a new spatial contrast began to appear, in addition to the contrast between the north (rich) and the south (poor). The rising price of land in the inner city began to distinguish it more strongly from the more peripheral future growth areas of the Comprehensive Plan, which further began to complicate the plan’s implementation. This real estate speculation influenced both public and private investments in urban projects. Alongside providing infrastructural facilities and building the new inter- and intra-city highway system, the state began to invest extensively in different projects for the inner and outer city. The construction of luxury high-rise condominiums, hotels, a modern city centre, cultural venues in the inner-city areas, and large factories, military sites, sports facilities, parks, and low- and middle-income housing complexes in the periphery combined to become an unprecedented project of urban development and modernization.
On the eve of the revolution, Tehran—with a population of five million—was one of the fastest growing cities in the world (Saunders, 2010). In 1979 alone there were nearly two million migrants to the city, a majority of which moved to older neighborhoods in central Tehran, in run down houses, or to slums and squats on the periphery. The revolution was followed by a long war (1980-1988) with Iraq, which halted economic development. Investment in urban development dwindled, while rural areas and provisional towns were favored by the revolutionary government, both to curb rural-urban migration and to strike a balance with large cities. Yet the war and the promise of free or low-cost facilities by Khomeini and the new government attracted more migrants to the capital city. By 1986 the population of Tehran reached 6 million, but the rate of population growth in the city had started to slow down from the 1950s, while the metropolitan region was growing faster throughout the 1980s (Khatam, 1993).
The Tehran Municipality had very limited resources and autonomy during the first decade after the revolution. After the Iran-Iraq war, the municipality was virtually bankrupt and had to adopt the “Municipal Fiscal Self-Sufficiency Act” while urgently finding new financial resources to plan and develop the demanding projects for the city that were meant to compete with other capitals in the region. Karbaschi, Tehran’s mayor (1989-1998), decided instead to claim the right to Tehran’s skyline, replacing the horizontal development policy with one that favoured vertical development. The municipality collected fees and taxes from developers and investors in exchange for exemption from high-rise construction and zoning laws. This alliance between the municipality and large developers brought unprecedented financial and political autonomy for both the municipality and the mayor, which has influenced the trajectories of Tehran’s urban development ever since.

This led to an explosion of high-rise construction in different parts of the city, especially in the north, where profit rates were higher and where most of Tehran’s middle class desired to live. Moreover, the municipality bent zoning laws (based on the 1968 master plan) to allow commercial land use in previously forbidden areas – such as large gardens and open green areas in north of Tehran - and issued construction permits for the subdivision of large plots and the construction of high-rise buildings. With its distinct political and economic power, the Tehran Municipality invested heavily in urban infrastructure and mega-urban development projects across the city, including the construction of street networks, highways, large parks, and massive residential, commercial, and cultural complexes—around 250 kilometres of inter- and intra-city expressways and highways were built by the municipality to connect different parts of the city.
4. **Actors of urbanization and their interactions**
Tehran’s urban planning and practices are particularly a top-down process and controlled

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Government Ministries and Organisations</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Bureau of Housing and Construction Plans</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Department of Urban Development and Revitalisation Organisation</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>National Land and Housing Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plan Organisation of Iran</td>
<td>Management and Planning Organisation of Tehran</td>
<td>Preparation and supervision of Regional plans for Tehran - and approval of the eligibility of consulting planning companies for designing comprehensive and detail plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran Department of Environment</td>
<td>Tehran Office</td>
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by a centralized state. The table shows the main government bodies involve in the urban planning process.

5. **Urbanization problems: Urban Sprawl, informal settlements, pollution etc.**

Since the Islamic Revolution, Tehran has changed in scale thanks to its real suburbs (Hourcade 1997) and also its self-built peripheral districts (Habibi-Saidi 2010). The real “suburb”, according to Bernard Hourcade, is made up of villages inhabited by these “city-dwellers”, and towns which have known a development of a speed hitherto unknown in the history of Iran, such as Golshahr and Gohardasht, around the town of Karaj or towns like Varamin and Qarchak, in the middle of a rich agricultural plain. new popular urban spaces whose collective identity is often strong, and which are beginning to hold their place in the face of the seven million Teheranians. By developing in a geographical and social context of a new type, unknown in Iran, that of peri-urban areas, between city and countryside - the suburbs of Tehran form a social space and an original urban landscape from which emerges a society of a new type, deliberately opening up to the outside world. This is one of the most dynamic and surprising geographical, social, cultural, but also political facts of present-day Iran. (Hourcade 1991).

As for the southern suburbs of the city, they were mainly built by their inhabitants. Following a massive rural exodus of half a century, several satellite towns sprung up spontaneously (Habibi-Saidi Sharouz 2010). From the Iranian revolution in 1979, these informal practices experienced a greater extent. Migrants from the disaster areas of the country and Tehran residents in need of housing have taken advantage of the political crisis and the lack of control by the Municipality to settle massively around the city.

Without planning and a master plan, these cities are imagined by their inhabitants, who mostly come from rural areas. According to Mohsen Habibi and Mina Saidi-Sharouz, they have drawn on their semi-urban, semi-rural knowledge to build not only their homes but also facilities and public spaces.
In the 2000s, in order to control spontaneous urbanization, the State planned housing areas around Tehran. Four new towns were built around Tehran in the 2000s: Hashtgerd, Andisheh, Parand and Pardis. The State did not wait for industrial pollution and automobile saturation, these metropolitan ills, to aggravate urban congestion to work on rebalancing the anarchic urban development of the metropolis. Indeed, from the 1970s, the State drew up major urban planning plans to organize the construction of new housing itself and push polluting factories outside. (Céline Oriol 2020).

These four cities, Hashtgerd, Andisheh, Parand and Pardis aimed to accommodate a total of 830,000 inhabitants [Ziari, Gharakhlou, 2009]. These cities took a long time to attract the inhabitants of Tehran because of a lack of local facilities and efficient means of transport.

In 2007, the new “Mehr” program once again illustrates a very strong state desire to massively and quickly build new housing for the most vulnerable populations. In Pardis, this program gives rise to the northeast of the new town, in the heart of the mountains, the
completion of the 11th phase of the operation which had not been considered at the time of the initial design of the town. The “Mehr” program has enabled the construction of the densest phase of the city, 100% social housing, around 36,000 housing units.

**Urban sprawl**

If the selling point of housing in satellite cities was access to clean air, however, the urban sprawl of Tehran could not solve the pollution problems largely linked to car traffic. The creation of the public transport network has not been correlated or dimensioned with urban development. The vast network of urban highways remains the preferred means of transport for the population. From the center of the agglomeration to the districts of the city of Tehran, the satellite cities or the new towns, daily travel seems endless. They are mainly done by personal car, taxi or shared taxi.

Today, the Tehran agglomeration suffers from pollution problems. Iranian authorities have imposed severe restrictions on the movement of vehicles, in addition to banning the entry of heavy vehicles into urban centers. But these measures are not enough and the rate of air pollution is increasing every year. Recently, new constructions are carried out in the west of the capital, the least polluted areas because the wind generally blows from west to the east and sweeps the pollution to the east. The new area invested is the 22nd district of Tehran, where nature is destroyed to build housing, shopping malls and landscaped leisure areas.

**The district 22 of Tehran in full expansion**:

District 22 in the west of Greater Tehran, is the largest district in Tehran. It was to remain a green area dedicated to recreation and nature. However, it is becoming one of the new neighborhoods in development that attracts the attention of real estate investors, leading to a large number of customers and buyers looking for accommodation. District 22 has various residential, commercial and office buildings and towers located in different parts of this area. In Region 22, constructions are residential, commercial and office towers,
which are generally the most in demand and are under construction or have been built and delivered to owners and operators. Few public projects have been built in this area, these projects and residential towers have been implemented by the private sector and they are different in the form of construction and implementation as well as contract details. Army Cooperative Foundation and Army Cooperative Foundation (BATAJA) are among the largest and strongest housing cooperatives in the 22 regions. In this article, we have tried to introduce you to the projects of the Army Cooperative Foundation.

The selling point of these accommodations is the proximity to nature and access to fresh air, while being close to central Tehran. However, this announcement is not entirely convincing because traffic between this area and the center of Tehran remains very difficult, due to permanent traffic jams.

In Iran as in many other countries, the domestic economic policy has slipped since the end of 1980s towards more flexibility, subcontracting and public service commissioning, and more generally towards a reduction of welfare state expenditure and benefits. Although this process has taken on a particular form, it can be seen as a neo-liberalization of the state – a phenomenon referred to by Harris (2013) as the “subcontractor state”. This context also explains the main trend in urban policies and large-scale redevelopment or construction projects which, as in other sectors, are delivered through partnerships between the public and the private sectors (Khatam, 2015). As such, Tehran's urban policies in the post-war period are characterized by a particular variation of the global neoliberalization process: a combination of State reforms (de-centralization, autonomy of urban policies, public spending cuts, blurred boundaries between the public and private sectors) with a rise of interest and revenue in sub-contracting and local development projects, along with the growing role played by consumption and security in the management of space.
As mentioned before, the strategies of private (promoters and investors) and public (departments of state, municipalities and planners) stakeholders are so closely interlinked, in particular in terms of taxation and tax exemptions leading to a continuum between para-public and para-private sectors, which came as a result of pseudo-privatization policies. This is a particularly eloquent illustration of the financialization of real estate, or of the urbanization of capital. The Law of Municipal Fiscal Autonomy (khodkafei-e šahrdari-ha, 1987) led to a large-scale transfer of powers to mayors, particularly in Tehran, and the rise in power of parastatal and private actors in the production of the urban. The law eliminates all government subsidies to city councils within four years, leaving them on the sidelines of centrally collected oil and tax revenues. To finance their budgets, city councils must therefore outsource many of the services they used to manage and find unconventional sources of revenue, starting with the sale of rights to exceed the density thresholds imposed by urban planning documents. The granting of derogatory rights to builders to exceed the density limits established by the Master Plan therefore gradually replaced the fiscal solution. In early 1991, an incentive from Iran’s Supreme Council of Urban Development and Architecture allowed cities with more than 200,000 inhabitants to increase building density by 25% was ratified (Khatam, 2015).

The rise of high-rise buildings in the northern part of the city, a strong urban expansion parallel to a vast movement of suburbanization of the working classes, and the extreme intensification of suburban density are some of the major consequences of these policies. In this sense, an increasing number of banking institutions and private insurance funds began to invest in a broader field of activity within the country’s borders and at the urban scale this was translated into the proliferation, and even the “hyperinflation” of shopping centres (Vallières 2018). In 2017, the Iranian capital had between 200 and 360 shopping malls according to estimates, of which barely a dozen were viable (Vallières 2018). In fact, the proliferation of malls and shopping centers in Tehran, and the non-viability of the great majority of them turn them into essentially financial assets in a market that has been dominated by speculation for the past few decades.

These dynamics also coincided with rise of this new urban elite and urban entrepreneurialism that mobilize new spheres of influence, such as the cultural sector, in the urban development plans of
Tehran. Urban entrepreneurs maintain close ties with city authorities and often propose financing micro urban development projects though without an overall vision for urban development at neighborhood or city level. The production of these new spaces at local level depends on urban entrepreneurs’ ability to understand and appropriate global trends. It thus involves renovating industrial buildings in central Tehran for artistic or cultural purposes, and keeping up with the latest developments in major world metropolises. In the last ten years, some central districts of Tehran have been turned into artistic and cultural spaces. The success of such projects must be understood against a background of neoliberal urban governance in Tehran, and the growing role of urban entrepreneurs at urban level. A powerful rhetoric of urban development through culture and art circulates both in the entourage of Tehran’s municipality and at the Ministry of Urban Affairs. For instance, the Urban Development and Revitalization Organization (UDRO) Office has organized several meetings between 2016-2018 to discuss the Western experience of urban transformation through cultural investment, with a particular focus on East London. This trend coincides with Tehran’s regional ambitions as a capital city. Although Tehran, like the country itself, struggles to position itself on the global map of cosmopolitan metropolises and in this respect lags far behind regional cities such as Dubai and Istanbul, nonetheless many of the globalizing practices undertaken by this city embody similar nationalistic ambitions for global recognition and power assertion, which attempt to establish new horizons or break with pre-established ones. Finally, since the 1990s, Iranian society has also experienced globalization through consumption practices. In a country where travel to foreign, especially Western countries is difficult or even impossible for the many, access to globalized culture becomes especially important, both as a local strategy for social distinction and a symbol of worldliness (Kazemi 2016).

7. Environment and social uncertainties

The place of women in the city: Traditionally, the separation of men and women in Iran is the starting point for the organization of spaces, from the most global to the smallest. If the traditional city was formed around symbolic places such as the mosque, the citadel (arg) and the bazaar, its urban fabrics which constitute its flesh are strongly gendered and have the function
of avoiding or allowing - under certain conditions - the meeting of masculine and feminine. Space has always been unevenly distributed between women and men, women only enjoyed part of the private space and men the whole city. Because the traditional house was divided into two parts: the birûni or the part reserved for men and the andarûni part reserved for the family including the women. (Saidi-Sharouz 2012).

For half a century, this system has been shaken by the irruption of women in the public space of cities. It is a social and cultural fact with profound consequences on the different urban spaces. However, this freedom of movement acquired thanks to the intense spatial practices of women remains fragile. Resistance mechanisms are regularly put in place to control what some consider to be an “overflow”. Codes of behavior imposed on women, the obligation to wear Islamic clothing -hejab-, the creation of non-mixed spaces outside, the prohibition to frequent certain places, etc. are measures put in place on a daily basis to maintain human control of public spaces. (saidis-sharouz, 2010). Today, women having acquired the right to stay outside, they challenge certain single-sex spaces such as sports stadiums and control by the morality police. They claim the freedom to appear in the public space, as they wish and without being subject to imposed conditions and restrictions.

**Ecological claims:** In today’s Iran, we witness solidarity environmental biases and other less visible markers of a period of eco-political activism. An activism in which we seek despite all the responsibility to build a better space together. The participation of urban youth in the issues of this eco-resistance demonstrates that this movement is increasingly taking shape for a new defense of life, freedom and diversity (Salimikouchi 2022). We are looking for a society more favorable to a participative and deliberative democracy. Collective actions for garbage collection, demand for better pedestrian sidewalks, improved conditions for walking or cycling, care of urban trees, etc., are part of the revendications of civil society to fight for the preservation of the environment.

8. Inhabitants’ place in the city : Participations, mobilizations, resistance
Since the 2000s, under the mandate of reformers, urban governance has undergone significant changes. The public authorities as well as the professionals of urban development question their visions on the place of the inhabitants and transform their practices, by focusing in particular, in line with the new international urban policies (Habitat, World Bank, UNESCO, etc.) on the local actors considered as the stakeholders of projects at local level. This new approach aims to reduce the undesirable effects of urban projects (Khatam2016).

This change seems to be part of the debates which have arisen in particular around the development of the new Master Plan and which have influenced urban projects. However, the methods of setting up this participation raise many questions: Who are the legitimate actors to participate in the projects? In a context where the State remains very centralized, how do neighborhood actors position themselves and manage to influence the urban management of their neighborhood? Where are the breaking points between state institutions and civil society?

The municipal councils were created in 1997, under the presidency of Khatami, a reformer. Then, in 1999, neighborhood councils were elected within each neighborhood. The existence of about 400 neighborhood councils was not provided for as it is in the constitution, according to Sahar Saeednia. It was under the title of “assistance councils” (shorayari) or even “associations of trustworthy people in the neighborhood (mo’tamedan) that these new institutions were legalized. (Saednia, 2014). Although elected by universal suffrage, these neighborhood councils have a strictly advisory role. They are defined in the texts as places of debate and apolitical actions.

Over the past ten years, neighborhood councils have seen their role diminish. But this participatory experience has created civic know-how and strengthened the spirit of participation in urban and environmental projects.

Today, residents of Tehran and major cities across the country are vigilant when it comes to general urban or neighborhood issues.
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