



WHAT IF? WHAT NEXT?

SPECULATIONS ON HISTORY'S FUTURES

SESSION 2A

ROUTES TO THE PAST

**Critical, Cultural or Commercial: Intersections
Between Architectural History and Heritage**

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THE FRAGMENTATION OF URBAN STRUCTURE IN RELATION TO MEMORY AND NOSTALGIA, TAJRISH, TEHRAN

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This paper will examine one case study relating to the nostalgic distance engendered by historic urban structures and landscapes fragmented by the processes of modernity. In the urban structure of Tehran, residential gardens, shrines, bazaars, mountains and river valleys form generative structures. In the Tajrish district of Tehran, there is a significant avenue named Valiasr Street, lined with historic plane trees, that connects the southern and northern districts of the city. In the past, residential gardens and buildings were designed as an integrated urban structure encompassing both sides of this street. Likewise, the presence of the imperial palace complex, further to the north at the foothills of the mountains, led to the construction of government and residential buildings by the social elite in the northern part of the city around Tajrish and Shemiran. This paper discusses, through a qualitative research methodology, how place perceptions of Tajrish, and memory and nostalgia, can reveal multiple identities of the place. In this paper, analysis of historic documents, aerial photos and semi-structured interviews are used to demonstrate the transformation of this urban structure in the past and current situations, in order to reveal the traces of changes that can indicate the locus of social memory.

Introduction

The study of the landscape of Tajrish through the lens of memory and nostalgia concerns not only cases where the heritage buildings or landscape features have disappeared in northern Tehran, but it is about both the current state of the landscape and what has happened in the past. Tehran is a city that is undergoing rapid changes which are having profound impacts upon the natural and designed environment. In the process of modernisation, some elements of the past are being reinterpreted, reincorporated and transformed into a new context.

In the past, there were many gardens and farms in the site, which is located to the foothills of the Tochal Mountain and the Darband river valley. However, the features of the site have entirely changed and have been transformed into a modern urban district with more an increasing number of towers and tall buildings and fewer gardens and old historic places. This change has resulted in the fragmentation of the historic urban landscape into separate patches, each of which is a place in the site possessed of multiple layers of history, culture and social background with memory which “gives meaning to the present, shapes our everyday movements and conversations, provides a frame-work for our communities and ultimately defines where we come from and who we are.”¹

Likewise, there are many nostalgia-producing social and individual memories associated with these places, which cause them to possess a unique identity for their inhabitants:

Places (buildings, gardens, landscapes) are far more palpable than appeals to time, because we (or some of us) have been there, can envisage them, and may even embrace the possibility of a return to a real place. Gardens, more perhaps than other items, are susceptible to nostalgia; they are Eden, Paradise, the perfect place, the *locus amoenus*, retreats from the busy, pushing world of mere circumstance.²

The transformation of the urban landscape through time has had massive impacts upon peoples' mentalities and their ability to form a sense of attachment to place. In this regard, Howard observes that the landscape is "the way in which people – all people – understand and engage with the material world around them".³ Thus, there is an interaction between our behaviour as humans, and spaces and places that can occur through, and be affected by, time. In other words, places can be demonstrated and affected by the experience of belonging, and the formation of memories that lead to attachment to place, and in turn define the landscape, although such experiences can be subjectively defined.⁴ A memorable place can remind us of our “collective and individual roots, providing a sense of continuity and understanding of our place in our natural and cultural environment”.⁵

The place quality of Tajrish is comprised of the area's multiple landscapes and architectural characteristics. There is a kind of integrity when places are juxtaposed and can be read as mnemonic and nostalgia-producing layers of landscape.⁶ Characteristics, as indicators, can be connected to memories and may register a slight or significant loss, or the appearance of something new. In other words, people can retain a memory of their experiences in specific spaces, and can develop a nostalgia for features that have been lost.⁷ Therefore, in this paper, the perception of ‘younger’ (nominally under the age of 30) and ‘older’ residents (nominally over the age of 30) about the same physical places is analysed by means of interviews which gauge their memories and nostalgia, in order to reveal the overlapping of multiple places formed out of such personal attachments.

Previous generations had retained many memories of, and associations with, such places; some of these social and individual memories had, however, faded over time, muted by the fragmenting and transformative effects of modernisation.⁸ In this process, some elements of the past were reinterpreted, reincorporated and transformed into new contexts. This has often occurred, with the sites acquiring completely different characters and functions, while some other elements remain, and connect the dwellers back to their past.⁹ This connectivity is, arguably, related to

people's visual and haptic perceptions and memories of urban landscapes, forming a specialised interface between personal and social memories.¹⁰

Different types of memories are ingrained and embodied in these territories and are evoked through a reflective nostalgia¹¹ that is related to particular times and spaces and, in turn, projected toward the future.¹² Thus, each place could be said to possess its specific meaning, not as the consequence of some "spirit" or "essence", but rather through the fluid interchange between topological memory and social memory, or as the ancient Greeks put it, *logos* and *topos*.¹³ Furthermore, *locus* can be identified as a relationship to a particular place. "The locus is related to the memory—the memory of the society".¹⁴

Cities provide a context for social activities and memory¹⁵, and there are diverse open and public places which form a setting for these activities and relevant individual and social memories. In these urban public places, there are different forms of social exchange, collective usage, and informal encounters¹⁶, demonstrating that these places are not separate from space and time, as the interrelation between time and space helps people to comprehend how everyday life in places has transformed over time and led to the changing of people's behaviour.¹⁷ In Tehran, old gardens, historic and religious buildings, and bazaars play a significant role in contributing to the open public places which foster social and individual activity, and which constitute a kind of repository for nostalgia and memory.

In summary, the impacts upon the site of Tajrish undergoing a process of transformation, and their effects upon people's place perception, is analysed in this paper through the lens of memory and nostalgia. Indeed, looking at a historical urban landscape through the study of people's nostalgia for, and memory of, particular places can reveal how place identification is created in specific areas of the site – through social behaviour (performance) in space, the physical conditions of the place, and its associations. Therefore, in this paper, the key task was to extract identification of place through interviews of residents of, and visitors to, Tajrish, which are intended to reveal their mnemonic associations. The derived vital terms lead to the conclusion, which shows how modernisation and destruction of heritage created fragmented place perception, and reveals how changes in the urban landscape have had an impact upon people's identification of a place.

Definition and Methodology

This research is based on a literature review, interviews and historical surveys (maps, historical photos, and aerial photos) related to the case study of Tajrish, a northern district in Tehran. As noted above, this investigation will be conducted through the lens of memory and nostalgia. Scholars in humanities disciplines such as psychology, geography, and cultural studies have focused on the definition of nostalgia as emotion and melancholy, or its relationship with memory during different periods.¹⁸ However, in this paper, the role of nostalgia and memory in landscape architectural studies and place perception is considered in the context of modern development. One of the main research questions is: how can memory and nostalgia make a connection between different age groups? If that is true, might there be a commonplace for all people?

Our case study of Tajrish is a northern district of Tehran, a capital city which has been affected by modernisation and rapid development. By 1966, Tehran's population had risen to 3 million, by 1976 to 4.5 million¹⁹ and by 2018 to about 11,000,000.²⁰ Tehran has specific layers of history that are written about or remembered by people. However, the processes of modernisation and urban development have changed the city. Over 50 years ago, Tehran had many private gardens²¹, in particular in Tajrish,²² most of which were traditionally owned by the wealthy classes.²³

Tajrish, which lies within the larger area of Shemiran has, in this research, formed the subject of detailed investigation through historical and social surveys. The analysis of historical sources and aerial photography has been used to chart the transformation of the site and to reveal how, and

why, Tajrish developed as a significant district. Qualitative research, in the form of semi-structured in-depth interviews²⁴ of selected local informants, has been undertaken to demonstrate to what degree younger and older generations' social and individual memories of multiple places can differ.

As noted above, people's memories can be connected to many natural and artificial elements and may register slight or significant loss, or the appearance of new features. Here, the interviews are used as a data source to identify the places²⁵ of memories (*lieux de mémoire*) related to Tajrish, and its larger context of Shemiran. In turn, such memories of, and nostalgia for, the historic urban landscape of Tajrish can provide information about the remnant, disappeared, reinvented or reinterpreted and imagined places and landscape features.

Participants were chosen from people in two different age groups in order to detect the place perception and particular landscape characteristic of the area from different generations' points of view. Four main questions were chosen, and each participant was asked to answer these questions through an in-depth interview over a period of about 40 minutes. The interview's questions were: 1) Why do you visit Tajrish/Shemiran? (Visitors) or Why do you live permanently in Tajrish/Shemiran? (Residents); 2) Which part of Tajrish/Shemiran is the most memorable/nostalgic for you? Why?; 3) Which associations about Tajrish/Shemiran come to your mind when you are talking about your memories?; and 4) Is there any particular time of a year that you especially like to visit Tajrish/Shemiran?

The in-depth interviews were conducted with a total of 28 participants. Through the questionnaire distributed through the snowball process, we interviewed exogenous individuals. The total number was adjusted to the number of responses required to generate trustworthy data.²⁶ The aim of this methodology was to distinguish how people's perceptions of the same landscape in a context of social transformation can be impacted through time. The survey demonstrated the different perceptions of landscape characteristics in the area, focusing upon respondent's generation, landscape characteristics and memorable places, objects and spaces (see Table 1).

Groups of participants	Landscape characteristics	Places or spaces
Old generation	Heritage	Shrines, Tajrish Bazaar,
Young generation	Nostalgic	Tajrish Sar-e Pol, Valiasr
	Recreation	Street, cemeteries,
	Spiritual connection	gardens, garden-alley,
	Thermal comfort	garden-house, mountain,
		river, trees

Table 1. Landscape characteristics, places and spaces in Tajrish. Produced by Author.

Transformation and Landscape Changes in the Tajrish Area

Transformation of the urban landscape structure in the North of Tehran is affected by both place formation and developments based on topographical and cultural aspects. The site is located on the foothills (Fig. 1) of the Alborz Mountains, causing it to have moderate weather in the hot summers; the mountains are also the source of the Darband River, which produces the topography of a river valley.

These natural aspects have had an impact on the morphology of the urban structure of the North of Tehran. Indeed, the location of gardens was determined by patterns of water sources and topology. In Tajrish, the palaces and the embassies are located inside gardens of a characteristically Persian type, and they were, furthermore, surrounded by houses and house-gardens of their employees and servants. After some decades of transformational developments, the private gardens of these elite villas were, in many cases, developed into buildings with various functions. Only a few of them remained as public gardens and urban open spaces, or as private gardens, such as the Kamranieh garden (Fig. 2) which now belongs to the Italian Embassy.



Figure 1. Tajrish square lies in the centre of the photo, and the Alborz mountains are in the background. Source: Manouchehr Sotoudeh, *Joghrafiya-e Tarikhi-e Shemiran* (Tehran: Moaseseh-e Motale' at va Tahghighat, 1993).

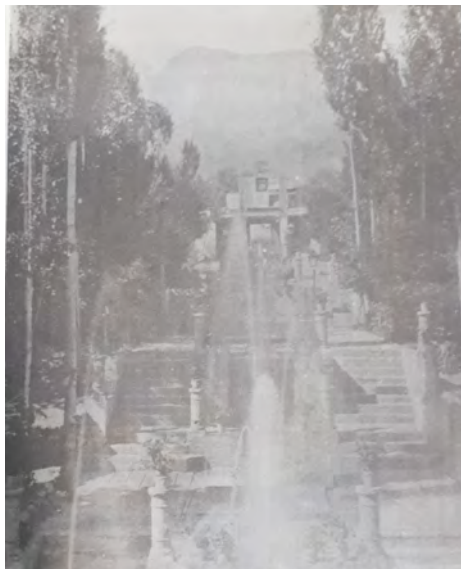


Figure 2. Kamranieh garden in the North of Shemiran. The owner of the garden was Kamran-Mirza sun of Naser-al-din Shah. Jafar Shahri *The Old Tehran* (Tehran, 2007)

In the past, there were two villages Tajrish and Dezashib which lay between Gel Bav-e Kan garden and the other one which was called Janat-e Golshan close to the Shemiran road and Roomi Bridge. A traditional account suggests that the presence of packs of wolves moving down from the mountains to these gardens supposedly led to the inhabitants of the two villages moving onto the lands around the Saleh shrine and choosing that place to settle, a location that has for over two millennia formed the area of present-day Tajrish. In 1974, the population of Tajrish was 26,401, and it possessed two Tekyes which are open space theatres for the performance of a passion play and spaces for religious, social, and political gathering, about 11 mosques, and 49 Qanats^{27 28}. Likewise, there were two regions in Tajrish, 'Bala' and 'Payeen' (*Up* and *Down* based on their location next to the river, translation from Persian).²⁹ All of the roads in this area were dirt tracks at first except for Valiasr³⁰ Street which was paved in the Pahlavi period. Also, there was a bridge in Tajrish square³¹, which was located on the river and linked the two sides of the region together.³²

Tajrish had been popular as a resort in the North of Tehran, one of a number of such resort areas for Tehran residents in Shemiran such as Tajrish, Pas Ghale, Darband, Tochal, and other localities.³³ People moved to these places from the city for leisure activities mostly from the first of the spring, and they returned to the city and resumed work at the beginning of autumn.³⁴ But other features of the area have made this resort area very popular. For example, the mountain, river valley, gardens, Valiasr Street, Saleh shrine, and public places such as Tajrish bazaar and Tajrish square have influenced the site's social life and place identification.

The foothills region of the Alborz mountain range has had an impact on the settlement pattern of the site and plays a vital role as a social playground and picturesque backdrop. The Darband river valley (Fig. 3), which is located on the site, and is fed by the Tochal Mountain, has an equally essential role in site transformation and both social and individual memories. Historical gardens are significant parts of the site- their general structure, based upon geometrical regularity, was shaped by the geography of the site. These gardens were constructed for the enjoyment of the distant and immediate scenery and the moderate weather in the summer season.³⁵



Figure 3. Darband River-valley. Source: Manouchehr Sotoudeh, *Joghrafiya-e Tarikhi-e Shemiran* (Tehran: Moaseseh-e Motale' at va Tahghighat, 1993).

There are still remnant historical house-gardens and plaza-gardens on the site; these have transformed into new ones that attempt in some way to form a retrospective cultural connection. Remnant historic gardens and lost gardens have shaped the mnemonic and nostalgia-producing aspects of the site. Likewise, the palaces, which were formerly surrounded by gardens, have subsequently had impacts on the identity of the area, in some cases through their spatial structure, a traditional form of a Persian garden that is called *Chahar Bagh* (quadripartite gardens). With the onset of modernisation, the architecture of these gardens was affected by modernity, and a new type of urban landscape had become shaped at that time. Marefat notes that 'Pavilions ... had begun to evolve into Western-style houses in the late 19th century'.³⁶

One of the most significant places in my study area is the Tajrish bazaar, which performed multiple functions, serving as both a central religious and social place. Iranian bazaars are a combination of economic, religious, cultural, and social aspects, and structure the adjacent residential quarters. Indeed, there were houses established on both sides of the valley that formed a link between the two Tekyes, 'Bala' and 'Payeen'. Traditionally, people who lived on the sides of the Bazaar's valley had used their houses as local shops. Over time the area became associated with goods, and gradually trade increased, and the valley itself became a bazaar that linked the two Tekyes, which served as settings for religious and national ceremonies. The other crucially nostalgic place is Valiasr Street. Valiasr Street had been first laid out in the 1920s to link the centre of old Tehran to the North Summer palace and was used effectively as a private street. However, from the 1940s, the road has been accessible for all people (Figs 4 and 5). Valiasr Street, named Pahlavi Street during the period of the Pahlavi dynasty, is an 18 km long armature

which connects the historical centre of Tehran in the south with the resort area of Shemiran in the north. Building Valiasr Street led to the provision of easier access from the south to the northern districts, compared to their former separation and relative inaccessibility in the past.



Figure 4. (Above) Valiasr Street (Pahlavi St), 1940s. Source: Manouchehr Sotoudeh, *Joghrafiya-e Tarikhi-e Shemiran* (Tehran: Moaseseh-e Motale' at va Tahghighat, 1993).

Figure 5. (Below) Valiasr Street (Pahlavi St), the 1960s. Source: Manouchehr Sotoudeh, *Joghrafiya-e Tarikhi-e Shemiran* (Tehran: Moaseseh-e Motale' at va Tahghighat, 1993).

Consequences of Rapid Urban Changes

To bring to light the causes, consequences and material manifestations of urban changes, through the last four decades, the evolution of the landscape of Tajrish has been reconstructed through the analysis of aerial and ground level historical photography and various types of maps.

The majority of buildings, houses, and gardens are situated around the Tajrish bazaar, Saleh shrine, and the entire length of the Darband River. The aerial plan shows that in the 1950s, more people were farming on the east and west sides of the river. In the Pahlavi period, the Shah and his relatives lived in Saadabad Palace. In the decade after the 1950s, most of the farms had been converted into buildings and gardens, with a higher density of buildings around the Bazaar and shrine, mainly situated south of the Saleh shrine around embassies in the south and around Ferdows garden to the south-west of Tajrish Square. In the 1960s, half of the Tajrish Bazaar's alley was roofed, and there were still open areas to the north, south, and east of the Bazaar, however by the 1970s, the open fields or farms and gardens were progressively replaced by residential and commercial buildings. At this time, the whole of the Tajrish Bazaar 'street' had become roofed. However, there were more buildings with smaller gardens and open spaces far

from the river valley, and a matrix of green areas and houses existed between Valiasr and Shariati Streets, around the Saadabad complex, and the embassies. Most of the houses were transformed into larger buildings and towers - in particular on the west side of Valiasr Street (Fig. 6) and the south of the Ferdows garden from the 1990s. Overall, more changes occurred around certain urban nodes over time, such as Tajrish Bazaar, Valiasr and Shariati Street (formerly known as Old Shemiran Road), the Saleh shrine, the Darband river, the Sadaabad complex, and the Ferdows garden.



Figure 6. Valiasr Street (Pahlavi St). Photographed by author, 2018.

Discussion of Interviews

As will be discussed below, changes to specific places and surrounding landscapes in some significant periods of Tajrish's development led to changes in people's perception, experiences and memory of the landscape. According to information obtained from my surveys and historical data, the transformation of Valiasr Street and Saadabad complex through time from private to public access impacted upon people's social activities and the functions of the Tajrish area in the context of the urban landscape. Likewise, all changes that have happened in the last ten years in Tajrish have constituted new experiences. Thus, for example, modern shopping centres have been constructed a short distance from Tajrish Bazaar, an old traditional market, and the recent construction of Tajrish train station has enabled quick and feasible access from the south of Tehran to the north, while the creation of the freeway system has also opened up the area to the rest of Tehran.

In the interviews, subjects from both age groups, based on their place perception, mentioned fondly remembered and familiar places of gardens (house-garden, alley-garden), Tajrish Bazaar, Saleh shrine, and Valiasr Street- sites that could be described as 'places of memories'. On the one hand, the main aspect revealed in relation to these familiar nostalgic places is, in a way, the amnesia of the younger group of subjects - that they have no connection to that past. Instead, they have a different set of associations with these sites. For example, the young people find spaces where they are not under surveillance and where they can meet each other, such as old house-gardens which were turned to cafes or cultural centres. While the younger generation remembers gardens like this, statements by the older generation reveal the fact that most of the house gardens had been private properties and they did not have access to them, thus they had more memories of garden alleys³⁷, the public lanes that abutted the house gardens. One of the old residents of Tajrish fondly remembers them:

Garden-alleys of Shemiran! Now there are no garden alleys at all! In the fall, on the way home from school, one of our hobbies was spending time in the alleys of Shemron Gardens to find walnuts among the leaves on the ground.

Although garden alleys have had their unique features, along with the protruding branches of fruit and walnut trees from the top of the thatched walls of the gardens, they have disappeared from young peoples' memory as most of the gardens have turned to tall buildings (Fig. 7).



Figure 7. Garden-alley. Photographed by author, 2018.

Around 30 years ago, after the Tajrish flood of 1983, a significant part of the river in the city was turned into an artificial channel. Thus, although young people care about the importance of the river and the mountain, they rarely mention them as a place perception as revealed in their memories. In contrast, the older people would recall their childhood spent in particular places around the river, for example, the picnics that families would have had on the riverbank, or in adjacent restaurants. It is the same physical landscape, but somehow there are different experiences and perceptions for different age groups—they construct separate, overlapping places. The following statements show how some of the older interviewees remember the river:

The Tajrish River, it was full of pleasant experiences there! This present-day channel was a river when we were young, and it was a beautiful place, with all the small cafes and chairs around. I think at the time it was something like Italy and Spain. People were moving around through midnight by the morning. It was very joyful.

The river was like a resort for people! Nowadays resorts have become cinemas and parks! Parks didn't make sense at all in the past! Recreation was all about the rivers!

We used to have a lot of fun! We cooked broth or soup on the edge of the river and picnic there. We enjoyed our time there a lot.

Some other features related to the places of memories have completely changed from its past. In this case, there was a tendency for the older generation to feel nostalgia, or spiritual yearning for what was lost. In such cases, the younger generation was in some cases not even aware of such loss, for example, in the case of the transformation and Islamist-driven makeover of the old Saleh shrine (Fig. 8) and the quasi-iconoclastic destruction of its historic plane tree (Fig. 9), both acts constituting the destruction of heritage. The former shrine had heritage value as an ancient monument, however, it has been modernised in the image of the Islamic republic, as seen in the garish signs, over-scaled minarets and colours. The tree, which was associated with continuity and was a synecdoche for the area, was felled, supposedly, according to official sources, because of a qanat (canal) subsidence and collapse, but perhaps because of the Islamic Republic's aversion to popular veneration of objects.



Figure 8. (L) Saleh shrine 1945. Source: Manouchehr Sotoudeh, *Joghrafiya-e Tarikhi-e Shemiran* (Tehran: Moaseseh-e Motale' at va Tahghighat, 1993)



Figure 9. (R) Popular plane Tree of Tajrish - Infront of the Saleh shrine 1946. Source: Manouchehr Sotoudeh, *Joghrafiya-e Tarikhi-e Shemiran* (Tehran: Moaseseh-e Motale' at va Tahghighat, 1993).

Indeed, the Saleh shrine has been changed to a massive, and vulgar new structure (Fig. 10), the appearance of which is far from its unique old character which older people remember when they are talking about their memories about the shrine and its famous tree. But the new generation has no perception of the same site with these historic elements, and some of them could merely talk about their image of the old days based on the stories they had heard from their parents or grandparents.



Figure 10. Saleh Shrine. Photographed by author, 2017.

The Saleh shrine had a plane tree. Changing the Saleh shrine has been very strange, and the current shrine is completely different compare to the past. That tree was called a thousand-year-old plane tree! But unfortunately, when the revolution took place, I don't know what they did that the plane tree dried up.

In the past, the shrine was in the middle, then there were trees around it, people would go there to pray and sit under the shade of that tree, and there was a stream of water next to it! But now it does not have that old atmosphere.

The Saleh shrine has changed! It was very rural, very pristine, and untouched. The area around the Saleh shrine was full of gardens and mud-straw houses, all of which were completely destroyed and changed.

The next place perception is related to Valiasr Street. Although functions and facilities around Valiasr Street had changed through the time, it is one of the significant places of memories that both generations still belong themselves to it. One of the older interviewees describes their experience of it:

Valiasr has always been a street that I think is interesting to most Iranians. Because I think it's the first street that connects the north of Tehran to the south, and each part of it has its own beauty. The street is even more interesting as a connector from Parkway to Tajrish because of the type of trees, restaurants, music stores, and roasted liver sellers. I still have a lot of fun from the parkway bridge to Tajrish. I mean I like there, and instead of taking a short trip, I always would prefer to spend time here for a day and take a walk. This reminds me of the old days and makes me remember how much we were really happy when we were kids.

And this is how some of the young interviewees talking about Valiasr Street:

For me, Valiasr Street means liveliness, shade, coolness! The parkway bridge to Tajrish is very wonderful!;

Sometimes when I'm a little upset and bored, I have to drive to that area. I do this at least once every two weeks. I love driving in Valiasr Street because of its trees, visual attraction, and its lively sidewalks all the way to Tajrish square. All of these are always very cool and lively. Honestly, even the traffic there doesn't bother me!

When older people talk about their memories related to nostalgic places or spaces, they do not verbalise any bad memories or aspects of the 'old days' and instead focus on the positive aspects. Any changes to these places in the present make them nostalgic for the past. Although the younger people perceive the same nostalgic places differently, based on new changes, they have an attachment to the place when there are specific elements that are still extant in the place, such as the trees of Valiasr street or Tajrish Bazaar in the centre of the area and its connection with the Saleh shrine and the landscape of the surrounding area such as the river and mountain:

I still love the traditional bazaar of Tajrish. I love the bustle and the thrill that it gives me. The Tajrish Bazaar really makes me feel good.

Tajrish Bazaar is what I always have liked, and my memories will be reconstructed by going there.

Conclusion

This paper took into consideration general and fundamental issues such as the spatial organisation of Tajrish, and people's responses to the changes in urban structure and landscape. Each urban structure has specific characteristics that affect its atmosphere. If all cultural memory is constructed around some concept of spatial imagery stored as memories, we can discover the past in the present.

From the perspective of nostalgia and memory, the landscape can mean completely different things to different generations, as indicated by the intergenerational interviews. The rapidly evolving landscape is impacted by disruption and modernisation. In spite of this, it has a differential impact on young and older users' experiences, depending on their associations of the memory of it. This highlights the importance of the 'sites of memory' (*lieux de mémoire*) that, in Tajrish, comprise specific landscape characteristics such as the river and gardens, and urban configurations such as the Valiasr Street, the Bazaar or resort areas; all of these urban spaces are vehicles for memory. The loss of gardens, historic local plane trees and heritage buildings, and the removal of some open spaces which were close to the river through urban developments

have changed the urban landscape features, and hence the perceived place value, of northern Tehran. This part of the city is historically known for its plane trees and gardens, and has, in turn, given rise to nostalgia among residents and visitors for what has been lost, a nostalgia expressed through personal and collective memories³⁸. Importantly, when urban transformation, whether through private speculation, or municipal “rationalisation”, has led to the loss of such places, as indicated by the interviewees’ statements, inhabitants might feel nostalgia for some familiar landscape or site that is lost, since the transformed urban landscape is devoid of personal or social memory³⁹. How then to modernise a city while nurturing its palimpsest of traces of different times? The main problems are first, the loss of important places such as open public space and, secondly, the current condition of the site as a fragmented landscape with separate places and ‘green patches’ that can lead residents to come to feel exiled from their city. It should be considered that integrity can be perceived when places are juxtaposed and read as mnemonic and nostalgia-producing layers of the landscape. Therefore, this conclusion needs to be developed by finding the answer to this question in a further study: is there a need for people to have the agency to shape their environment and to preserve what is valued?

Endnotes

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- ²¹ The first chateau in Tajrish was built by Mohammad-Shah and called Mohammadiye that every summer he had moved to this garden since the weather was better and cold. Then court officials imitated his decision and built their own chateaus around his garden and after a while a county was built by wealthy classes. Therefore, all administrative centres were transmitted in Tajrish every summer. Mohammad-Shah passed away on 1264 and after that Naseraldin-Shah developed those gardens (Le Du, 2000).
- ²² The root of Tajrish is Tigerasht which means a steep and sloping ground <http://adelashkboos.mihanblog.com/post/1202>.
- ²³ Manouchehr Sotoudeh, *Joghrafiya-e Tarikhi-e Shemiran (Historical Geography of Shemiran)* (Tehran: Moaseseh-e Motale'at va Tahghighat, 1993); Christophe Le Du, *Shemiran: The Vanished Garden of Tehran* (Tehran: Iran zamin, 2000).
- ²⁴ Robin Legard, Jill Keegan, and Kit Ward, "In-Depth Interviews," in *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*, ed. Jane Ritchie and Jane Lewis (SAGE Publications, 2003), 139–65, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198719571.001.0001>.
- ²⁵ Places, which form the locus/topos for common social and individual memories, and which have been recounted by inhabitants.
- ²⁶ Mark Mason, "Visual Perception Theory," *Fqs* 11, no. 3r (2010): 19, <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.17169/fqs-11.3.1428>.
- ²⁷ '(in the Middle East) a gently sloping underground channel or tunnel constructed to lead water from the interior of a hill to a village below.' <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/qanat>.
- ²⁸ Sotoudeh, *Joghrafiya-e Tarikhi-e Shemiran (Historical Geography of Shemiran)*, 201.
- ²⁹ All of the gardens and lands in the west of the river, and part of buildings in the west side of the river where located around the Tajrish bazaar, market of the Tajrish Bazaar, and buildings were located in west side of Saleh Shrine.
- ³⁰ It was called Pahlavi Street in Pahlavi period.
- ³¹ Building a bridge in Tajrish square at that time causes the place were known as Sar-e pol which means *the beginning of the bridge*.
- ³² Zahra Azad, "From Gogal To Tajrish," *Shargh*, March 17, 2013.
- ³³ Jafar Shahri, *The Old Tehran* (Tehran, 2007), 380.
- ³⁴ Shahri.
- ³⁵ Homa Irani Behbahani and Fakhri Khosravi, "Iranian Garden: A Place of Coexistence: City-Nature-Landscape, Case Study: Tehran Gardens in 19th Century," *ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES* 12, Summer 2006 12 (2006), 79–88.
- ³⁶ Mina Marefat, "Building to Power: Architecture of Tehran 1921 - 1941" (Harvard University, 1988).
- ³⁷ Here, a garden alley is defined as a path which leads to the garden or which passes by the garden.
- ³⁸ Sotoudeh, *Joghrafiya-e Tarikhi-e Shemiran (Historical Geography of Shemiran)*; Seyyed Mohsen Habibi, "We Have Erased the Urban Mental Images," *Building and Architecture Digital Journal*, 3 (2004), 115–17.
- ³⁹ Boym, "Nostalgia and Its Discontents".