

Transition stages from a traditional city to an industrial city (Social and cultural environment of Tehran)

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Abstract

Some of Iran's cities, specially Tehran that is the capital city of Iran have faced sudden changes of industrialization due to political, economic and ecological considerations. There is no doubt that it is not possible to conduct a thorough investigation of the cultural structures of these cities by theoretical models and they shall be evaluated in comparative and combinational terms. Because of the consideration mentioned above, different ethnicities and groups from different cultural backgrounds have been attracted to these cities and subcultures are highly influential in socialization, acculturation, solidarity, and integration of the individuals in the society. Although, one of the problems of the industrial cities all over the world, including Tehran is migration (from towns and villages), inflexible solutions and approaches to the migration problem are not logical. In addition, recourse to the weakness of the villages and attractions of the capital can not solve the problem (as shown by the author's experience). Therefore, it seems that creating occupational opportunities in villages and towns is one of the practical and useful ways for the survival of small towns and reduction of the migration to big cities, including Tehran.

Key words: *Traditional city, industrial city, transition stages, social and cultural environment*

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Introduction

A city is a place, which satisfies the citizens needs in the best possible way through social arrangements, balance of the macro organization in the society and labor division which leads the society towards its present goals. From the very beginning of history, cities have existed all over the world, and this causes the city to be seen as an old phenomenon. On the other hand, because of its changing elements and function in every period, a city can be seen as a new phenomenon (Adibi, 1977).

This feature has made the city an important and basic element in the modernization definitions and theories extremely useful in social researchers (Ahmadi, 1955). In fact, modernization means the promotion and increasing complexity of social exchanges and relationships, which forces the societies to move towards urbanization (Arak, 1989) because modernization, in a sense, is the result of relational use of resources and an increase in urban interactions, production, and efficiency.

The most important point in modernization is that these changes and developments shall be made based on actual needs of the societies. This means that they must be imported or borrowed. In other words, the societies must undergo modernization in

the natural course of their evolution and growth. Otherwise, the lack of coordination and heterogeneity may cause serious problems and disturbances in the social and urban elements (Aron, 1973). Many of the social and cultural dilemmas of the third world cities is a consequence of these abrupt changes not in line with the actual needs of the society and are not the result of their natural growth. These include problems such as textural and physical abnormalities of the cities, the weakening of kinship and cultural relationships of the societies, crimes, uncontrolled migration, etc.

In these kinds of societies, the tendency towards customs and traditions is more than the tendency towards change and development, because the patterns of modern city life and its complicated relationships are not responsive and, in line with individual needs (Aron, 1983). Tehran was one of the villages of Ray city in Safavid era. At the time of Mongol conquests and destruction of Ray city, a large group of people migrated to Tehran village and brought about the development and flourishing of this place. In the Safavid period, Shah Tahmasb Safavid selected this city as capital and was responsible for causing special attention on this region.

It was during his reign that 114 towers were constructed (in keeping with the 114 verses of the Quran, holy book of the Muslims) and under each tower one verse from the Holy Book was inscribed. The four famous gateways to Tehran namely, Shemiran, Qazvin, Doolab and Hazrat Abdol Azim were constructed during this period (Bayat, 1990). Even in Qajar period in 1166 AH during the reign of Mohammad Khan Qajar, Tehran was proclaimed the official capital of Iran and many monuments have been constructed at that time (Aryanpour, 1977). During the reign of Nasereddin Shah the plan of the city was designed by Mirza Yusof Mostowfi-ol-Mamalek. Thereafter during the Pahlavi era, it was re-newed and further developed and with the continuation of progress after the revolution, the city of Tehran at present is the capital and considered to be the largest city of Iran and also ranks as one of the largest cities of the world (Iran Statistics Center, 1976).

Study Methodology

The methodological approach to this study deriving from the urban history consists primarily of intensive case study research (Asadi, 1995). Its focus lies in describing, the characteristics of the particular urban place and how such individual places serve as microcosms of broader historical transformations. There is an alternative approach to the problems of the city and industrialization that, despite emerging from the tradition of urban history, (Iran Statistics Center, 1977) is of importance on particular urban communities (Table 1).

concepts are critical to be mentioned: Action, actor, and situation. Action is a kind of relationship among different components of a consists of three basic components: Objects, goals, and norms. Objects are divided into 3 main categories: Social objects, Cultural objects and physical objects. The cultural objects are those objects, which show social reaction, which has systems of tendency and motivation (Dehgan, 1993). these objects, which only convey some meanings (such as regulation, grammar, sign, idea, symbol, etc). The physical objects are those materialistic, firm objects, which can be manipulated and dominated. It can be goal in one situation, and goals, are the ultimate objects in action situation. The Actor faces normative limitations for obtaining his goals in every action situation (Furichild, 1944).

Actor system orientation or attitude of the actor to the objects is a function that will determine the situation of action (Tanhaei, 1995). The orientation or attitude means every thing that the actor sees, evaluates, wants or does not want. The orientation consists of two main rational and emotional dimensions. The rational dimension guides the rational and functional existence of the objects (of attitude). The actor evaluates the efficiency (useful /harmful), beauty (beautiful/ugly), moral (good/ bad), and wisdom (right / wrong) of the objects and has a sense of duty and obligation, instrumental or expressional, direct or indirect, towards them (McGee, 1984).

Table 1: Schematic comparison of urban history and history of urbanization

	Urban history	History of urbanization
Unit of analysis	Individual city	Systems of cities
Methods	Intensive single case study	Extensive system case study
Control model	From individual city to history generalization	From historical generalization to city systems

Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework of this study is in fact a conceptual map of the Tehran urban society in which the totality of the society, its different elements, dimensions, and levels are conceptualized in the various levels. In the first level of abstraction which is not so remote from reality, three theoretical

In the second level of abstraction, four types of action system and their interrelationship are discussed: the positive system, dispositional system of personality, social system, and cultural system. From analytical point of view, a human being can be seen as a potential component of the positive system in the cultural system which is a collection of

meaning abstracted from the action situation. These meanings imply beliefs, values, symbols, and orders among which a logical conformity exists (McGee, 1984). Personality is defined as a system of orientations. The personality system is shaped through the contact and interaction of the human biological system with social and cultural systems through the process of socialization. In other words, the personality system is made of gradual and continuous combination of organic needs and social expectations (social system) and meaning (cultural systems) (Hamoun study group, 1990). The human organism acquires an orientation system through contact with positive, social, and cultural environments in the process of learning and internalization, which is loaded with emotional, normative and rational orientations (McGee, 1984).

The social system is defined as an interactive network of individual and collective actors. The social system consists of four concepts (awards). The existence and continuation of social interaction is accompanied with and dependent on three other elements. The social interaction brings about the mutual social expectations from the point of view of both sides. The continuation of social interaction results in social relationship and the social relationship leads to social obligation (Mehrgan, 2002). Social expectation and social obligation both necessitate the sanctions for the realization of expectations and continuation of relationships (Tanhaei, 1993). The combination of these three elements, that is to say, expectation, obligation, and sanction, makes the social role, which has a strategic importance for the social system (Ministry of Interiors, 1976). It is understood that the division between these four subtypes of action system is only for analytical purposes. In real world, these elements are not isolated and form a unified social totality. For analytical purposes, depending on which action subsystems are chosen as the basis for analysis, the other three systems shall be considered as its environment. If the social system is the reference for analysis, the positive or organic system will provide the social system with the motivational, emotional, rational and value attitudes, and the cultural system will give meaning to and legitimizes the social system (Mohseni, 1993). All these three subsystems work as external environments: Institutionalization, the process of meaning incorporation (values, beliefs, and symbols) in the social system, and their translation into interactive fields of the social system. If the personality system

is the point of reference for analysis, the cultural system will provide the personality system with value, insight and is identified as the external environment and internalization as the process of integrating meaning (value, beliefs, and symbols) into the personality system (Soleimani, 1995).

In the general theory of action, 4 types of requirements are necessary to maintain the system (including the above 4 systems). If the urban social environments for these 4 requirements can satisfy the functional requirements, the system will be directed towards integration, dynamism, and balance (Tavassoli, 1990). In traditional cities, these 4 subsystems of the social life work towards adaptation and homogeneity. In other words, the homogeneity between these social interactions, mutual expectations, and mutual obligations and sanctions (rewards) will exactly facilitate these social exchanges (but in traditional ways) (Navabakhsh, 2001). The same inter-cultural relationships will regulate the homogeneity of these four requirements in modern cities. But in transitional cities which are somewhere between these subsystems and socialization, acculturation, and internalization will emerge as imperfect and inefficient. This lead to the economic, social, cultural and psychological diseases (Navabakhsh, 2002).

Discussion and Conclusion

Regarding the above perspective and parson's theories, it can be said that since the input to the subsystem of industry in the totality of the social system has not been able to develop full coordination and harmony with the other subsystems, the qualitative and quantitative harmony with the other subsystems, the qualitative and quantitative homogeneity has not emerged. Thus, interaction and coordination with the overall structure has disappeared and the city system has encountered different dilemmas. However, in other countries, industrialization in different dimensions is a result of the natural growth and mutual coordination among the elements and subsystems of a total social system, and the use of social facilities. Living in social institutions and inter- cultural contacts has resulted in the evolutionary growth of all elements of the subsystems (Rouholmini, 1986). Therefore, a kind of conformity and adaptation between the components of the society and the subsystems is created. Thus, this theory says that whenever the emergence of a technological- industrial process is

not the outcome of the normal evolution of its components, and is borrowed and imported, the conflict between the social elements and the lack of appropriate group evaluations of the new technologies, will produce different kinds of cultural lags, conflicts, and social heterogeneities due to the unpreparedness of the other subsystems. Therefore, the system of Tehran Urban society in the process of growth has not been properly prepared for the widespread input of industry, and this has disturbed the balance of the overall system (Rouholamini, 1989). Recent studies has shown that the system of Tehran city has rarely followed any specific regulation or program, and even in those rare cases that there is a program, the guidelines and mechanisms have not been thoroughly implemented. Therefore, the urban / regional planning based on the population, cultural, sociological, and ecological measures is necessary (Sahaeizadeh, 1989).

Tehran, like every other megapolice, is a migratory city, emerging from the gathering of peoples from different communities. Thus, the primary institutions and the relationships flowing from them, such as the family patterns and kinship relationships are not practical and effective, because the individuals are total strangers. Therefore, there must be extensive socio – cultural planning for social coordination, socialization, acculturation, entertainment, etc., of this massive wave of migration, to create, expand and develop the necessary organizational relations, institutions, and secondary institutions. The physical design of Tehran, for different reasons including sudden inflation, lack of appropriate planning, implementing short range, and adhoc plans, is suffering from basic deficiencies and cannot provide the needs of its citizens. Thus, a comprehensive program for modifying the physical design of the city must be created immediately, and the isolated inhabited areas shall be incorporated into a total environmental, and social program. Certainly, integrated short term, medium term, and long term social and psychological programs can create the social dynamism necessary for socialization, acculturation, and integration. Using knowledgeable, export managers is another suggestion. Since the industrial and administrative systems are based on complex labor division structures, they should be managed with qualified managers. Otherwise the social system will encounter problems and obstacles which cannot achieve the growth and development necessary for its citizens. Since an industrial society will encounter bottleneck sexual structure, diverse

ethnic groups, labor forces, etc., its management coordination and planning in different dimensions is a very complex and demanding task and requires professional sophistication and care.

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