

Appropriation of Space – Perpetuation of Patriarchy: A Feminist Critique on Public Space Design in Iran

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This research uses a feminist lens to examine Iranian urban public parks designed for use by women only. The purpose of this paper is to reveal translations of patriarchal cultural values from an architectural micro scale to an urban macro scale and question the (over) contextualization of these parks' design. Although this is a multifaceted topic that also merits ethnographic analysis, this particular paper primarily examines the physicality of the space. I draw on Henri Lefebvre's theory of production of space, Stephen Graham's urban militarization, and Jürgen Habermas's and Nancy Fraser's views of public spheres to theorize women-only parks' existence as a hegemonic production of space. I argue that despite the Iranian government's claim that the purpose of these women-only parks is to provide women a safe and free public space, this type of urban public space actually appropriates the design logic of courtyard houses, materializes patriarchal culture, and perpetuates patriarchal values in an urban configuration. In other words, women-only parks in Iranian cities are an embodiment of patriarchal culture in which gender segregation is used as a strategy to fulfill Islamic values and disguise patriarchal dispositions into a false sense of spatial and gender justice.

This qualitative and interdisciplinary research uses a mixed method approach (alternating between formal and discursive analyses as needed) and multiple sources of data. Data collected on-site from women-only parks in Tehran (including photos and videos) serves as the primary source for this analysis. I also use reports from online news agencies and social media, as well as previously published interviews conducted by sociology scholars.

INTRODUCTION

After the 1979 Islamic Revolution, the political structure of Iran shifted from a monarchy to the Islamic Republic. Beside passing laws discriminating against women, the new government required women to follow a strict Islamic dress code and cover their hair in public spaces. Since early 2000s, several urban public parks, have been designed for women only, allowing them to be in certain public spaces without veiling. In this paper, I use a feminist lens to examine these parks; I analyze traditional Iranian courtyard houses and compare them with

women-only parks as a new typology of urban public space. I argue women-only parks' design is a contextualization of Iranian courtyard buildings affecting women's right to the city. My comparison demonstrates how patriarchal culture is translated from an architectural micro scale to an urban macro scale. Courtyard houses enable me to clearly demonstrate the dichotomy of public/private zones and analyze the transition of this dichotomy from an architectural scale to an urban scale through sociopolitical forces.¹ I draw on Henri Lefebvre's theory of production of space, Stephen Graham's urban militarization, and Jürgen Habermas's and Nancy Fraser's views of public spheres to theorize women-only parks' existence as a hegemonic production of space. This is multilayered research, engaging sociological and ethnographic analysis. However, this particular paper focuses only on formal structures, shaped mainly by cultural and political forces, though some ethnographic examinations, done by other sociologists,² are mentioned throughout this paper.

According to Lefebvre, space is neither given by nature nor defined by spatial or geometrical rules; rather, space is (re) produced through human action, which is highly influenced by the socio-political structure of the context in which people live.³ The direct impacts of the social and political structure on construction and production of a space are inevitable if we accept this presupposition. Just as any ideological system produces spaces that are bound to and serve its value structure, Islamic systems also seek ways to produce spaces serving Islamic values. During this process, new urban typologies such as women-only parks emerge that reinforce gender segregation and control social gender relationships. In this paper, I argue public urban spaces that are produced under the Islamic Republic's policies affect Iranian women's rights to the city.

In an Islamic context, women are traditionally responsible for domesticity in private space; it is not a place for male strangers. However, spaces outside the home magnify the chance of meeting strangers; for this reason, women's mobility in public zones is highly regulated.⁴ Spaces are not inherently 'public' or 'private' *per se*. What makes a place public in an Islamic context is not only the spatial characteristics of the place but also who one interacts with in such spaces.⁵ Thus, "public" refers to interactions between strangers, men and women. Habermas, however, defines public sphere as a domain of debate and discussion that puts the state in touch with the needs of society through public opinion.⁶ I argue women-only parks, despite being presented as "public" by government officials, do not

function as public space based on either Habermas's view or Islamic principles. Their design paralyzes the function of these parks as public space and transforms them to a large urban semi-private space. Such parks may provide ideal public spaces for certain women; however, this urban typology does not fulfill many Iranian women's desire for inclusive urban public space. Based on sociologist Sara Karimi's interviews conducted at one women-only park in Tehran, such parks seem to provide women a sense of freedom and safety,⁷ but the segregation policy does not work for all women's groups; only a small number of women are satisfied with such gendered parks.⁸ This form of dominant public space ignores a large group of people and marginalizes them due to their difference with the state's norm.⁹

IRANIAN WOMEN IN PUBLIC SPACE OVER TIME

Although Iranian women tried to remain active in the public domain throughout history, they were traditionally responsible for domestic issues. Western values and modernization were introduced in the Pahlavi era (1925-1979), so public spaces became gender-neutral. Along with very radical policies for cultural modernization, the last five years of the first Pahlavi king, Reza Shah, coincided with forcing women to unveil in public as a sign of modernization, which was controversial for religious and conservative people. However, public spaces were open to all during the second Pahlavi era, regardless of gender and without any dress-code.

Prior to the Islamic Republic, public spaces were not legally gendered.¹⁰ However, very religious groups, and traditionalists did not accept this situation. Thus, mixed-gender areas were mostly in "rich, modern and westernized" neighborhoods,¹¹ such spaces were in areas where the residents welcomed that policy. These religious dictates, not legal coercion, were the reason for women's exclusion from the public spaces.

The Revolution's approach to social relations between men and women and strict Islamic dress-codes provided an opportunity for traditional women to enter the public sphere.¹² However, the Islamic Republic's policies simultaneously marginalized another group of women,¹³ and isolated some of them from a limited public sphere. Gender segregation has been one of the main policies of the Islamic Republic. From its inception, most public places have been subjected to this policy.¹⁴ During the process of segregation, the state constantly practices exclusion; in many public spaces, part of the society is separated from the rest based solely on their gender.

IRANIAN COURTYARD HOUSES

Except for in the northern coastal area, the courtyard building style is the most salient typology of traditional architecture in Iran.¹⁵ Courtyard buildings, especially houses, in arid/semi-arid¹⁶ and cold areas are completely introverted; however, in hot and humid areas courtyard buildings are semi-introverted.¹⁷ The courtyard, including a central pool and vegetation, was a place where the residents could enjoy the beautiful natural view of their small garden. Open vaulted rooms facilitated ventilation,¹⁸ the central pool was one of the elements for cooling and

freshening the hot and dry air.¹⁹ Half of the courtyard was more in shadow, providing a pleasant area for summer time, and the other half was more appropriate for taking sunlight in winter time.²⁰

Although climate, structure, and technology of construction were significant elements in the architectural formation of courtyard buildings,²¹ they were not the only factors. This typology could be easily adapted and respond to cultural and traditional needs of the residents of these spaces. In almost all traditional Iranian courtyard houses, the dualistic absolute perception of gender, and the social control over gender, based on Islamic and traditional teachings, resulted in separation of the public zone (*birooni*) from the private zone (*andarooni*). The designer skillfully arranged the spaces, separated each zone, and followed a delicate spatial hierarchy to direct a visitor from the entrance to different parts of the house. In this spatial arrangement, only certain people are allowed access to the private zone.

Courtyard houses demarcated public and private zones through central courtyard(s) and controlled the physical and visual accessibility through spatial hierarchy and constantly shifting angles from entrance to the courtyard(s). Houses had at least one courtyard. Those who were wealthier could afford more courtyards, one for more private, one for semi-private/semi-public zones, and one for service. The courtyard, in houses with only one courtyard, was considered a private zone. *Birooni* was the quarter close to the entrance and traditionally the male zone in which visitors, outsiders, and male guests were entertained by the lord of the house.²² Similarly, *andarooni* was designated for family members, especially women. The rooms faced inward, and the courtyards had high walls with no openings to the streets. The high walls blocked direct visual and physical access to the *andarooni*, providing more privacy for the family members, which was compatible with religious traditions.²³

Moadel House in Shiraz is an example of a prototypical Iranian courtyard house with a rectangular central courtyard and rooms facing inward. The entrance can be designed in a small space and be defined by one or two turning angles to redirect the visitor from the entrance to the courtyard(s), like in Moadel House. This pattern can be expanded to more elaborate spatial relationships, with longer and larger entrance spaces, like in the Boroujerdi-ha house in Kashan.

The Boroujerdi-ha house, which has one courtyard, is one of the most famous traditional houses in Iran. Well-elaborated façades and architectural elements, proportionate spaces, wind-catchers²⁴ to harness natural resources and to use its maximum potential are characteristics of this house in an arid area. The use of turns and angles in the entrance space helped the designer provide a smooth transition from public to private zone. The designer skillfully embedded four turns and used spatial joints to inspire a feeling of rest for visitors to give them small spaces for sitting and waiting. If they had permission to enter the house, they could continue to go inside. This spatial

hierarchy displays the necessity of keeping the family members, especially women, out of the strangers' visual reach.²⁵

Courtyard houses are the clearest example of how architecture reflected the environmental and cultural conditions of its community. The versatility of spaces in traditional Iranian houses, the best way of using resources and the potential of the land, and the ways they functioned well in pre-modern time deserve appreciation and are usually highlighted in Iranian architectural literature. However, courtyard house architecture can be critically examined from a gender perspective, to investigate how such architectural design reinforced and controlled gender relations and perpetuated patriarchal hierarchy. Although forms, materials, design methods, and lifestyles are in constant change over time, and Iranian architecture has also undergone transformations, there are some concepts that are rooted in tradition and religious beliefs which might mis-represent people's contemporary lives. In the next section, I analyze *Narges*, a women-only park in Tehran, and then, compare it with the Boroujerdi-ha courtyard house.²⁶

CREATION OF WOMEN-ONLY PARKS

After the Islamic Revolution, obligatory hijab as a sign of the Islamization of Iranian society limited many women's mobility and public sport activities for years. Accordingly, this policy resulted in poor health conditions for women due to lack of sun light, and their subsequent demand for improved recreational facilities.²⁷ Thus, the Islamic government of Iran decided to construct urban parks only for women in which women could come without the necessity of following the Islamic dress code.

Shahla Habibi, Iran's presidential adviser of women's affairs, presented the idea of the women-only parks in the early 1990s.²⁸ According to a *zan-e-rooz* magazine report, women's outdoor exercise was not common in the early time of the Islamic Republic, and their presence in parks for daily exercise provoked the sensitivity and curiosity of governmental forces. Despite constant warnings of the government against exercising in public and interruption by the morality police, a few women kept going to the parks to silently do their morning exercise.²⁹ So, the women-only parks were initially created for improving women's health due to not getting enough sunlight because of covered skin. The first women-only park of Tehran was inaugurated in May, 2008³⁰, at the time of president Ahmadinejad and mayor Ghalibaf. Thereafter, more of these parks were built in Tehran and other major cities of Iran.

Hamshahri-Online news agency has indicated the views of the major Islamic judiciary³¹, which demonstrated the consistency of a new plan that coincides with Islamic values. For example, Ayatollah Makarem-e-Shirazi says, "The development of the women-only spaces in Tehran is appropriate; it is very important to develop ladies' parks and makes the governmental system credible."³² Since controlled gender relationships is recommended in Islamic tradition, any strategy that can materialize this mindset visually represents the Islamic characteristics of a certain society.³³ Gender segregation is an embodiment of gender regulation compatible with Islamic

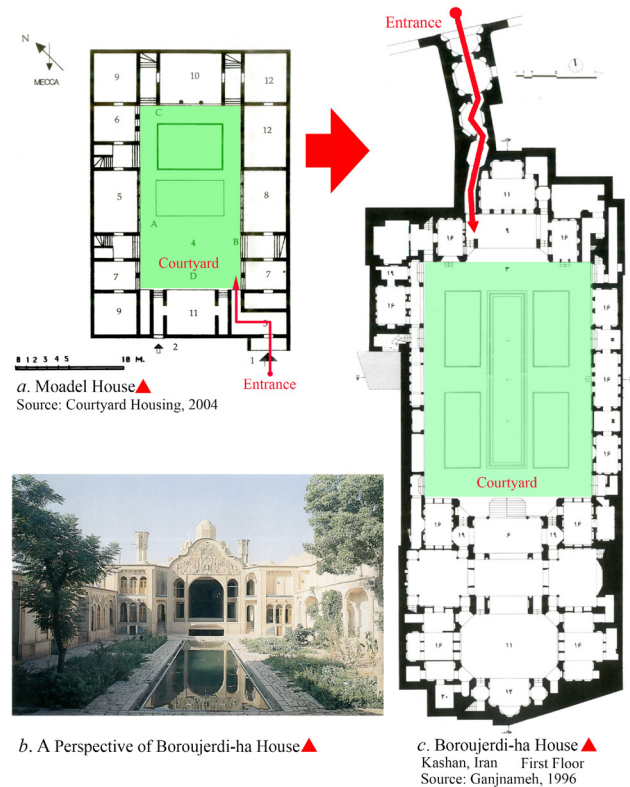


Figure 1: Spatial hierarchy in courtyard houses. Source: Ganjnameh, 1996 and Courtyard Housing, 2004; analysis by author.

teachings, hiding its agenda behind the familiar term "providing women's safety and security." Gender segregation was not a new state strategy, because this policy was already applied in many social and educational domains after the Islamic Revolution, but the government's use of gender segregation in public parks resulted in the invention of a new urban typology.

WOMEN-ONLY PARKS: EXAMPLE AND ANALYSIS

There are five women-only parks in different regions of Tehran. For this paper, I chose one such park, *Narges*, a park designed for women from the beginning with specific architectural elements in the entrance area and boundaries. I provide formal analyses for this park and compare it with the Boroujerdi-ha house as an Iranian courtyard house typology. The following comparative analysis reveals formal and cultural commonalities that are the embodiment of patriarchal shared values and facilitate (re)production of patriarchal spaces.

Narges

Narges Women-only Park was inaugurated in January 2013 in Tehran, region 18. This five thousand square meter park includes sports amenities, restaurants, and service centers.³⁴

This park was created to provide a safe space for women to spend free-time and use sport and entertainment facilities.³⁵ According to Teheran Municipality-region 18's website, constructing women-only parks is a tool to improve women's rights in the city and increase cultural-environmental efficacy. These spaces are designed to boost the level of vitality and physical and mental health of women citizens.³⁶

The park is accessible by urban bus, the metro system, and personal car. There is a parking lot by the main entrance to the north-east of the site, but the bus stop is by the opposite side. So, those who come to the park by bus must walk almost 900 meters to reach the main entrance.³⁷ The closest access to metro stations³⁸ are no less than 2.20 kilometers, which makes access to the park impossible without using additional public transportation such as bus or taxi. The park is open from 8:00 AM to 7:00 PM and is only for women; the park is closed on Fridays and holidays, but during Ramadhan, the park is open until mid-night.

At the entrance, after passing the green gate and a green curtain behind it, women enter the security building by the entrance. After body checking and X-ray checking of bags, purses, and other belongings, women submit their cell phones and can enter the park. After using the park, women exit from the same green gate and get their cell phone or any other banned devices from the windows by the gate.³⁹ Cameras, boys over 5 years old, and sun-bathing are all banned in the park.⁴⁰

The proximities around the park include green spaces, plus residential, administrative, and commercial buildings. Some local parks, as well as an educational traffic park, are green space areas around *Narges* park that make it a green zone in the region. The administrative site is the region 18 municipality office. The residential area around the park is a combination of new and old construction, usually in five or six stories. The commercial building is under construction; on the side facing the park, views from the building are partially obstructed. The park's boundary is demarcated by a series of 2.50-meter high barriers around the entire park. The barrier includes three layers of a short stone wall with a metal screen installed on it, galvanized metal sheet behind them, and a line of high trees. Additionally, there have been high tent-like structures installed in front of these barriers in spots likely to have visual access due to being too close to the park or being higher than the barriers around the park. Almost all parts of the park are protected by these barriers; nevertheless, security warns some women if they approach spots with any probability of being seen from outside.

The design, location, and rules of the women-only parks, as well as the concept embodied through such parks indicate a form of urban militarization. Militarization, as urbanist Graham borrows from Michael Geyer, is the "contradictory and tense social process in which civil society organizes itself for the production of violence."⁴¹ Militarization is a complex and multidimensional process, which involves "social construction of a conceptual division between the inside and the outside of a nation or other geographic area."⁴² Although women-only parks obtain their legitimacy from religious beliefs, they create a sense of inside

versus outside. In this paradigm, "the nation" is replaced with women, "the private," or a large *andarooni*, and strangers (men) outside of the parks' boundaries are outsiders. These parks, as a type of militarized urban space, also reinforce a sense of alienation among citizens. For example, one of the interviewees in sociologist Reza Arjmand's research confirms this fact when she said she felt as if she was about to enter a military zone, not a park, due to security checking visitors carefully at the entrance.⁴³

According to Graham, militarization is also engaged with a wide range of propaganda that romanticizes the achievement of God-given purposes.⁴⁴ Signs and symbols around the park, functioning as propaganda, also contribute in urban militarization and gendering space. There is a sculpture by the main entrance showing a woman in full hijab (*chador*) to both introduce an ideal Muslim woman, through her *chador* and covering her body and hair, and delineate women's urban zone. Another urban symbol around the park, in the outside area, is a Quranic verse from Surah "Kowthar"⁴⁵ that many Shi'i interpreters accredit this Surah with the Prophet's daughter, Fatemeh.⁴⁶ The name of Fatemeh in a sculpture form by the commercial building also demarcates the area. The Prophet's daughter is a role model for Muslim women believers and is a manifestation of an ideal chaste Muslim woman, wife, and mother. Such propaganda works as a military apparatus as well as a disciplinary mechanism of power regulating individuals' behaviors. The wide usage of propaganda about hijab and signs that embody Islamic values are beyond merely religious tokens. Instead, they are the materialization of the state's doctrine, indication of the dominant power, and regulation of people's behavior.

Women-only parks are constructed based on Islamic normative values that, technically, do not allow an inclusive public sphere regarding gender. Nevertheless, women-only parks have their own proponents and opponents. According to comprehensive interviews and sociological research that Arjmad conducted, proponents of these parks believe building these spaces for women indicate a sign of respect for women. Women usually enjoy their time to be in such parks, use these parks regularly, and wish to have more of these spaces throughout the city.⁴⁷ On the other hand, there are women who strongly critique such parks. These opponents of such parks disagree with any gender segregated place and believe building such places is part of the gender segregation policies of the state to restrict women's presence in public.⁴⁸

Women-only parks are operating more as private urban spaces, serving as *andaroonis*, because they are the only spaces that Muslim women believers can attend unveiled. Also, women-only parks do not have conditions to be public from non-Islamic perspectives either. Jürgen Habermas defines "the public" as an arena, usually associated with public authority, and accessible to all to freely discuss and identify social problems. He emphasizes the quality of being open to all "in contrast to closed or exclusive affairs."⁴⁹ If we assume that women-only parks are public spaces, such places exclude men. If such spaces are not public, they isolate women from the main public zone.

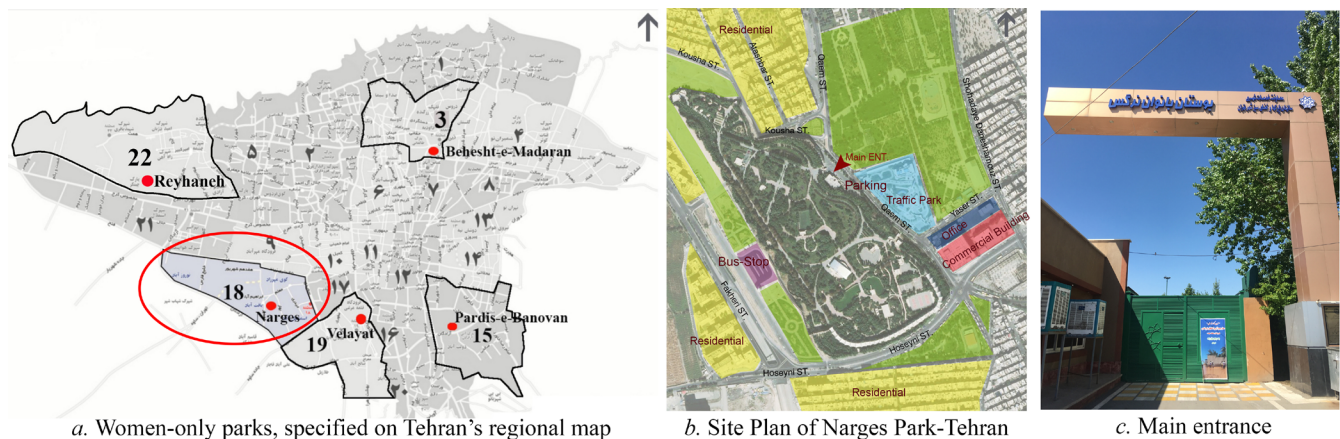


Figure 2: Narges Women-only Park, site plan and the entrance. Source: Google Map, photo by A. Mahini; analysis by author.

In addition, no media can reflect how these parks are actually used to provide audiences a clear image of such places.⁵⁰ Bringing pets, the distribution of any advertisements, and all trade market activities are also forbidden inside these parks. Such rules and regulations diminish “publicness” of an urban zone and make it not only relatively private, but also mysterious.

Since Habermas’s view on publicness comes from a primarily male and bourgeois class perspective, Nancy Fraser adds a useful intervention, the “multiplicity of publics,” rather than a single public. Fraser also describes “subaltern counterpublics” that subordinated social groups invent and circulate to make their voices heard.⁵¹ Although the women-only parks project was a response to women’s need for a healthier life, it cannot be considered as a counterpublic because in counterpublics, marginalized groups themselves initiate the building of their public space; they are independent groups who do not delegate a third party (like the state) to project their voices or make that space *for* them.

Women-only parks as a space provided *by* the state *for* women imply the concept of guardianship. Creation of these parks as a type of urban space exclusively for women and the expansion of this strategy to other cities repeats a hierarchical process that situates the state in the position of a man who provides his dependents what they need. The hegemonic production of spaces under patriarchy, defined by the Islamic Republic, presents spaces of exclusion, alienation, and guardianship. In such parks, gender segregation is used as a strategy to fulfill Islamic values and disguise patriarchal dispositions into a false sense of spatial and gender justice.

Conclusion: City’s Courtyards

Comparing women-only parks with courtyard houses discloses commonalities in spatial arrangements and social concepts. From an architectural perspective, both parks and courtyard houses strictly keep entrance a liminal space between two separate zones. In both places, the entrance is considered a

strategic gate between city and home, mundane and divine, public and private, and male and female. It looks like a filter suspending people there to evaluate who can pass the gate and who cannot. Courtyards in traditional Iranian houses are sometimes compared with Paradise in Islamic philosophy, a place associated with peace, privacy, beauty, and familiarity that not everyone can have a chance to enter. This process is embodied in women-only parks’ entrances through strategies such as entrance design, hanging a curtain behind the door before entering the park, and security checks by the entrance. Although the form of entrances of courtyard houses, with their twists and turns in a long corridor, changed in women-only parks, the concepts of inside/outside separation, male/female segregation, and female body protection remained the same or are even reinforced. Besides, the formal security checking adds a sense of militarization to the spatial arrangements of the parks’ entrances.

Providing child-care centers, the toy-house, and other spaces for children’s activities still connect women to their main duties as mothers. This home-like place enables women to enjoy a peaceful and tranquil area, use sun-light, and do sport activities, while still watching their children.⁵² Such urban design also underpins the concept of traditional woman and heteronormative family as the ideal lifestyle.

Solid high walls with no opening is another way to keep the courtyards protected from strangers; this is represented by layers of barriers at least 2.50 meters high around women-only parks. These walls as view-blockers are architectural elements to make the internal space an *andarooni*. Physical limitations delineate the internal and external boundaries but do not suffice to territorialize an *andarooni* space. The space becomes *andarooni* when it is isolated from both visual and physical access, because visual accessibility urges audiences to physically experience the space that stops the space from functioning as *andarooni*. Thus, *andarooni*, is a semi-private space territorialized by unequal power relations that is legitimized through patriarchal culture.

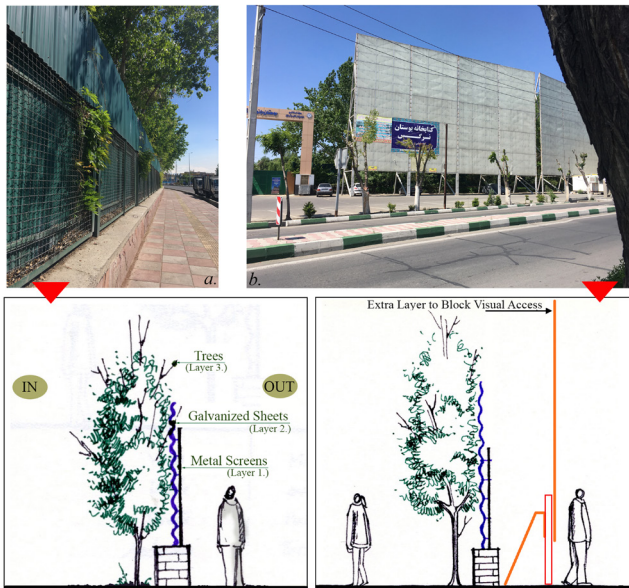


Figure 3: Narges Park, photo by A. Mahini; analysis by author.

Such *andaroonis* are urban spots that share private spaces with women and promote homosocial communications. The city has public spaces with different urban functionalities working as *birooni* areas and open to all. However, from a gender perspective, what makes such spaces *birooni* is the necessity of women veiling and following Islamic dress codes, because women do not have to veil in their private zone when they are among their immediate male family members or other women. These women-only parks are functioning more as urban courtyards and serve as *andaroonis* to keep women's bodies away from the physical and visual invasion of strangers. Such parks work like *andaroonis* of the city that might be considered as urban, but not public. Within this paradigm, the city looks like a classical Iranian house with *andaroonis* and *biroonis*. The *birooni* zones are the public spaces which everyone can use under Islamic ethical codes, and *andarooni* zones are places that are created for women to communicate with each other, be comfortable there without hijab, and according to the municipality website, feel as if they are *at home*.

ENDNOTES

1. Although there are other building types in which people culturally practice gender segregation, like mosques (which need to be critiqued), such spaces cannot represent the public/private dichotomy as can courtyard houses.
2. Reza Arjmand, Nazanin Shahrokni, and Sara Karimi are only a few scholars who conducted their research based on interviews with users of women-only parks and/or mixed gender parks. I embedded a few findings of some of these scholars in my paper; however, the focus of this particular paper is on formal architectural analysis rather than humanistic architectural analysis. My dissertation "Governmental Islamic Patriarchy and the Gendered City: The Re-making of Iranian Public Spaces under the 21st Century Islamic Republic" from which this paper derives, includes extensive humanistic analysis based both on these scholars' interviews as well as my own field research.
3. Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, ed. Eleonore Kofman and Elizabeth Lebas (New York: Blackwell Publishing, 1974).



a. A Woman in Chador
b. A Quranic Verse
c. Fatemeh, the Prophet's daughter

Figure 4: Islamic urban signs and symbols around Narges Park, photo by A. Mahini.

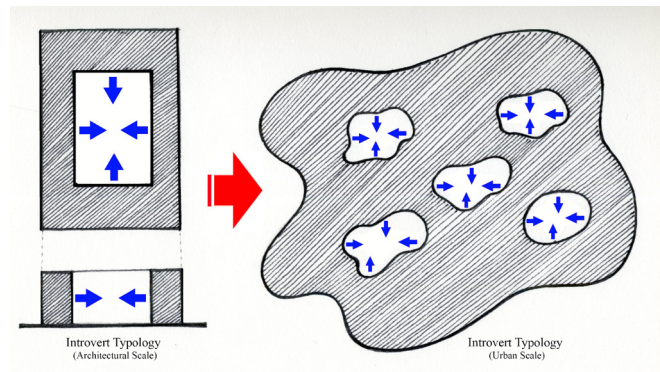


Figure 5: Transmitting introvert typology from an architectural scale to an urban scale; graphic by author.

4. Shampa Mazumdar and Sanjoy Mazumdar, "Rethinking Public and Private Space: Religion and Women in Muslim Society," *Journal of Architectural and Planning* 18, no. 4 (2001): 305.
5. Ibid, 304.
6. Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, translated by Thomas Burger (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989), 31.
7. As Karimi states, even from those satisfied groups, there are some women who use women-only parks because they have no other choice; this group would prefer to have safety and freedom in the entire city.
8. Sara Karimi, Sara, "Investigation on women-only Parks in the city of Tehran: Arasbaran Park," *Memar-net*, (2012): 7. <http://www.memar-net.com/fa/node/181>.
9. This confirms Nancy Fraser's view about exclusion of marginalized groups from the dominant public sphere and the inability of one group or public sphere to include the entire society. See Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy," *Social Text* 25/26, (1990): 60-67.

10. Masserat Amir-Ebrahimi, "Conquering enclosed public spaces," *Elsevier Xx*, no. xx (2006): 2.
11. Ibid.
12. Masserat Amir-Ebrahimi, "Conquering enclosed public spaces," *Elsevier Xx*, no. xx (2006); Parvin Paidar, *Women and the Political Process in Twentieth-Century Iran*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995)
13. Masserat Amir-Ebrahimi, "Conquering enclosed public spaces," *Elsevier Xx*, no. xx (2006): 1.
14. Public places such as buses, the entrances of some governmental or religious centers, educational centers and schools up to high school, religious ceremonies and prayers in mosques, beaches, etc. are examples of places were subjected to gender segregation policy.
15. Vahid Ghabadian, *Climatic Analysis of the Traditional Iranian Buildings* (Tehran: Tehran University Publication, 1994), 169.
16. Most of Iran comprises arid and semi-arid districts.
17. Vahid Ghabadian, *Climatic Analysis of the Traditional Iranian Buildings* (Tehran: Tehran University Publication, 1994), 169.
18. Gholamhossein Memarian and Frank Edward Brown, "Climate, Culture, and Religion: Aspects of the Traditional Courtyard House in Iran," *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research* 20, no. 3 (2003): 186.
19. Seyed Reza Hosseini, Ali Nik Etteghad, Ezequiel Uson Guardiola, and Antonio Armesto Aira, "Iranian Courtyard Housing: The Role of Social and Cultural Pattern to Reach the Spatial Formation in the Light of an Accentuated Privacy," *ACE: Architecture, City, and Environment* 10, no. 29 (2015): 14.
20. Seyed Reza Hosseini, Ali Nik Etteghad, Ezequiel Uson Guardiola, and Antonio Armesto Aira, "Iranian Courtyard Housing: The Role of Social and Cultural Pattern to Reach the Spatial Formation in the Light of an Accentuated Privacy," *ACE: Architecture, City, and Environment* 10, no. 29 (2015): 17-8; Gholamhossein Memarian and Frank Edward Brown, "Climate, Culture, and Religion: Aspects of the Traditional Courtyard House in Iran," *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research* 20, no. 3 (2003): 186.
21. Gholamhossein Memarian and Frank Edward Brown, "Climate, Culture, and Religion: Aspects of the Traditional Courtyard House in Iran," *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research* 20, no. 3 (2003): 185.
22. Gholamhossein Memarian and Frank Edward Brown, "The Shared Characteristics of Iranian and Arab Courtyard Houses," in *Courtyard Housing: Past, Present & Future*, ed. Brian Edwards, Magda Sibley, Mohamad Hakmi and Peter Land (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2006), 26.
23. Gholamhossein Memarian and Frank Edward Brown, "Climate, Culture, and Religion: Aspects of the Traditional Courtyard House in Iran," *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research* 20, no. 3 (2003): 188.
24. baad-gears in Persian.
25. The repetition of this pattern and its integration with other urban functions created the fabric of the city in which this courtyard typology was part of the city identity, compatible with urban texture.
26. Boroojerdi-ha courtyard house and Narges women-only park are only one example of many existing precedents in each category. I analyzed these two examples due to the word limitation.
27. Reza Arjmand, *Public Urban Space, Gender and Segregation: Women-only Urban Parks in Iran* (London: Routledge, 2017), 27-8; Nazanin Shahrokni, "The Mothers' Paradise: Women-Only Parks and Dynamics of State Power in the Islamic Republic of Iran," *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 10, no. 3 (2014).
28. Ibid.
29. Nazanin Shahrokni, "The Mothers' Paradise: Women-Only Parks and Dynamics of State Power in the Islamic Republic of Iran," *Journal of Middle East Women's Studies* 10, no. 3 (2014): 94.
30. Reza Arjmand, *Public Urban Space, Gender and Segregation: Women-only Urban Parks in Iran* (London: Routledge, 2017), 31-2.
31. Like clerics and other religious figures
32. "Tehran Is Not Masculine Anymore," Hamshahri-Online, 2012, <http://hamshahrionline.ir/details/175309>.
33. Gender segregation may not be recommended only in Islam; however, in an Islamic context, controlled gender relationship has been recommended.
34. These spaces include volleyball, tennis, and soccer fields, an enclosed swimming pool complex, child-care center, flower and plant clinic, body-building facilities, a library, skate and bicycle paths, walking trails, a buffet and restaurant, hand-crafts stores, a mosque, and security sections.
35. "Narges Boostan," Tehran Municipality-Region 18, 2019, <http://region18.tehran.ir/Default.aspx?tabid=458>.
36. Ibid.
37. The on-site information and observations were collected by an architecture colleague in Tehran.
38. Nemat-Abad and Azadegan stations are the closest stations to the park.
39. The process of checking at the entrance of these parks might be different from park to park or city to city. For example, according to Arjmand, the checking process in Isfahan is stricter than Rasht, but women cannot remove their hijab in women-only parks in Rasht. However, despite the degree of strictness, all women-only parks have a checking process at their entrances. The checking process in Narges, in the way explained in the paper, is as of July 2019, observed by a research team in Iran. This process may remain the same or change in the future.
40. This is what is written at the door of the entrance: Bringing cameras, cellphones equipped with cameras, sharp and cutting device (e.g. knife, blade), fire-works and cooking devices (e.g. gas tank, picnic), travelling tents, glass drinks, bicycles (except kid's bicycle), pets, boys over 5 years old, and self-defense devices (e.g. cold weapon, sprays) to the park are all banned. Also smoking, trading (foods, clothes), and sun bathing are not allowed in the park.
41. Stephen Graham, "The New Military Urbanism," in *Cities Under Siege* (New York: Verso, 2010), 60.
42. Ibid.
43. Reza Arjmand, *Public Urban Space, Gender and Segregation: Women-only Urban Parks in Iran* (London: Routledge, 2017), 108-9.
44. Stephen Graham, "The New Military Urbanism," in *Cities Under Siege* (New York: Verso, 2010), 60.
45. Kowthar means abundance; so, the other name of this Surah is Abundance.
46. According to different Quranic interpretations, Kowthar is the name of a river in the Paradise and means abundance. Many Shi'i interpreters believe that Kowthar refers to Fatima. The Surah starts with "Lo! We have given you Abundance (Kowthar)" (108:1) (Pickthall 2006, 684); and the last verse of Surah, says "Lo! It is your insulters (and not you) who is without posterity" (108: 3) (Pickthall 2006, 684). According to Pickthall, the disbelievers used to taunt the Prophet because his sons died young and, therefore, he had no one to uphold his religion after him" (Pickthall 2006, 683). Thus, many Shi'i interpreters consider Kowthar as Fatemeh because the Prophet's descendants and Imams came through his daughter.
47. Reza Arjmand, *Public Urban Space, Gender and Segregation: Women-only Urban Parks in Iran* (London: Routledge, 2017), 143-7.
48. Ibid, 149-154.
49. Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, translated by Thomas Burger (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989), 1.
50. There are some videos from different news agencies about women-only parks, but their reports are in a pre-coordinated condition in which women are all in hijab and the condition changed at the time of making report. See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lcD4cuVW_pE.
51. Nancy Fraser, "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy," *Social Text* 25/26 (1990): 67-70.
52. This analysis does not mean that there should not be children's area in these parks; instead, it challenges the assumption in which such areas are only associated with women's responsibilities not men's.