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Towards extroverted urbanism: Haussmannization and building a new urban identity in Tabriz (1925-1942)

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Abstract
Since the late Qajar to the Pahlavi dynasty, the history of Modernity in Iran has been intertwined with urban modernization and westernization of the country. With Reza Shah's ascent to power, a series of radical modernization practices were orchestrated to transform the traditional physical structure of cities and establish a modern image and a new urban identity. In this regard, alongside the utopian aspirations of the newly established autocratic state, the application of European urban renovation models like Haussmannian policies manifested themselves in the massive destruction of the traditional urban fabric of the cities. This research attempts to provide further insight into the socio-spatial transformation of Tabriz during the First Pahlavi period (1925-1945). The initial phase of the state-driven ideological intervention in the urban fabric started with the construction of modern boulevards and the widening of the old streets inspired by what Baron Haussmann did in Paris. The inevitable consequences of autocratic modernism included the massive destruction of the historic urban fabric, encompassing the residential neighborhoods, the courtyard houses, and the traditional royal gardens such as Bāgh-Shomal. All of these interventions were aimed at the transformation from an introverted to an extroverted form of urbanism. In the subsequent phase, new patterns of social life emerged, giving rise to modern public spaces like parks which served as alternative forms of life. By benefiting from the socio-political theories of space, this study scrutinizes the relationship between ideology and space, highlighting how space functions as a political apparatus that disseminates state ideology.

Keywords
Extroverted urbanism, First Pahlavi era, Haussmannization, Public space, Tabriz.

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1. Introduction

Since the early 19th century, cities worldwide have undergone transformative changes triggered by various events, including the Industrial Revolution and rural-to-urban migration. Initially starting in Western capitals, this modernization movement gradually disseminated over the world in the following decades. Economic geographer David Harvey, in his book, Paris, Capital of Modernity (2003), scrutinizes the twofold relationship between modernity and the city. By bringing Paris and Baron Haussmann's strategies in the renovation of the city as an example, he proposes the question concerning whether modernity was a complete break from the past or not. Considering Haussmann's intervention in the urban fabric of the city as a radical break, he believes this revolutionary act creates an order that makes it possible to see the world as a tabula rasa[1], "upon which the new can be inscribed without reference to the past" (Harvey, 2003, p. 1). He illustrates the idea of creative destruction and radical break by the chronological transformation of Paris by Haussmann's strategies and claims this moment of destruction is the decisive moment when "the new crystallized out of the old" (Harvey, 2003, p. 3). Therefore, to establish the desired tabula rasa, modernity has always been paralleled with creative destruction, which depends on the political factors implemented either in a democratic, revolutionary, traumatic, or authoritarian manner. Regardless of the way it is applied, creative destruction appears to be inevitable for the myth of modernity, like a phoenix that is reborn from its ashes.

By keeping this in mind, the French philosopher Henri Lefebvre, in his book The Urban Revolution (2003), criticizes modern urbanism by illustrating the direct relationship between space, power, and ideology. His main argument is that the production of space and contemporary urbanism should not be considered as a work of art but rather as the outcome and the projection of political struggles and the clash of ideologies, making the study of space a phenomenon that cannot be separated from the political and economic relations (Lefebvre, 2003). Power (in the form of an ideology) and space have a complex dialectical interaction that (re)produces and (re) forms the socio-spatial practices in the urban environment. Within his influential spatial triad, Lefebvre introduced the concepts of 'representations of space' (conceived space), 'representational space' (lived space), and spatial practice (perceived space). Through this framework, he sought to elucidate the dialectical nature of space and show how conceptualized spaces—proposed by urbanists, planners, and technocrats—directly affect and shape the lived experiences of people. This theoretical framework contributes to a better understanding of how state-driven modernization practices in Iran not only altered the physical urban fabric of cities but also influenced social interactions and lived experiences.

Extending all that has been said to the main concern of this study, it can be inferred that the same story was going on in Iran where with the rise of the Pahlavi dynasty in 1925, Iranian modernism and urbanism intermingled the dominant ideology of Reza Shah and his newly established state to legitimate and consolidate his authority. In Reza Shah's perspective, modernity was a unifying national ideal with a utopian significance that would restore Iran's once-glorious power. For this aim, with an emphasis on secularization and nationalization, architecture and the built environment functioned as ideological apparatuses that manifested the embodiment of the nation and the possibility of a better future (Marefat, 1988). Considering what Harvey argues regarding the history of Paris and Haussmann's ideas for establishing tabula rasa planning, Haussmannization became the archetypical utopian model for all Iranian cities through the large–scale urban modernization projects (Mehan, 2017). Since the old urban fabric could not serve as a metaphor for constructing new power relations or reflect Reza Shah's authority (Kiani, 2014), an approach was necessary to establish a modern Iran. Formerly introverted cities were thus (re)designed with wide boulevards, new cityscapes, and public spaces for recreation, social

interaction, and cultural activities[2].

Surveying these transformations, as the capital, Tehran is well documented regarding its structural transformation under modernization practices (See Bahrambeygui, 1977; Habibi & Hourcade, 2005; S. Katouzian, 1996; Madanipour, 1998, 2006; Marefat, 1988). When it comes to Tabriz, scholars (Balilan Asl, 2014; Fakhari et al., 2006; Jafarpour Nasser, 2018) have investigated the historical urban fabric of Tabriz before the Pahlavi era. Their surveys primarily focus on the historical city's boundaries, fortifications, historical neighborhoods, and gardens, drawing upon historical documents and maps such as Trezel-Fabvier's fortification map (1807), the Russian cartographers' suburb map (1827), the Qarachedaghi map (1880), and Asad-Allah Khan-e Maraghe-e's map (1910). In the realm of qualitative research, and beyond his broader insights into urban development in modern Iran as collected in Iranian Contemporary Architecture (2009), Amir Bani-Masoud (2011), has provided an in-depth analysis of the historical gardens of the Tabriz, particularly Bagh-Shomal and its transformation in the contemporary era, benefiting from historical maps and documents. Furthermore, recent quantitative studies by Bagheri et al. (2019) and Saghafi and Roshani (2016), have applied quantitative paradigm with space syntax techniques to analyze the morphological changes of the urban space of Tabriz before and after the Pahlavi era. These researches have focused on key parameters such as integration, control, connectivity, and intelligibility, offering practical implications for large-scale urban expansion. However, they do not provide comprehensive or accurate information on the quality, historical evolution, and socio-cultural transformations that happened in Tabriz during Reza Shah's period.

This qualitative research applies Tabriz as the case study and distinguishes itself from other recent studies by focusing on the Western-influenced, state-led urban modernization practices in Iran and Tabriz, along with their social, cultural, and political implications. In other words, recent studies have not investigated in detail the emergence of modern boulevards and public spaces— such as parks, a theater hall, and hotels— that resulted from the massive destruction of the city's historical urban fabric during the first period of the Pahlavi dynasty.

It should be noted that the primary motivation for selecting Tabriz as a case study lies in the fact that, as a historical city located in the northwest of Iran, it has long been known for its gardens and green spaces and has been referred to as Iran's Garden City (Bāgh-Shahr). This issue can be traced not only in the surviving old maps and historical documents but also in the travelogues of the European travelers who visited the city ever since from the 16th century onwards. Nonetheless, the urban settlement of the city has been subjected to both systematic destruction caused by natural disasters and unsystematic destruction by human actions (Ökten, 2014). As for human agency, with the arrival of Reza Shah, through the imposition of new spatial structures, Tabriz witnessed a significant loss of its traditional urban fabric, including royal gardens, and courtyard house gardens. The 'Street Widening Act', passed in the parliament in 1933, laid the legal ground for radical interventions in the traditional urban fabric of the cities like Tabriz, leading to extensive demolitions and subsequent urban renewal policies (Burrell, 1997, pp. 504–505), including the introduction of modern public spaces such as parks, cinemas, and hotels. In certain respects, the renovation process seems to assimilate Haussmann's Paris, with its wide boulevards, modern public parks, and commercial networks constructed over the demolished traditional urban fabric. In this regard, all modern public spaces not only played a crucial role in shaping a new urban identity but also manifested the power and ideology of Reza Shah in the domination and appropriation of space.

Hence, the term extroverted urbanism that this article tries to illuminate extends beyond the creative destruction of the historical urban fabric of the city. Actually, it encompasses the emergence of public space alongside wide boulevards, the development of new

cityscape, and the expansion of urban infrastructures that facilitated new lifestyles and social and cultural interactions. To clarify, the main problem addressed in this study is the process by which Reza Shah's utopian dreams, initially applied in Tehran, became the archetypal model for other cities such as Tabriz. Particularly, this research investigates how the implementation of Western-influenced urbanism policies led to the structural transformation of Tabriz. This included the removal of the historical urban fabric and a shift in attitudes toward social spaces, marking a transition from traditional forms of social interaction to the use of modern public spaces.

2. The dialectics between space and ideology

Parallel to his writings in the late 1960s, the main focus of Henri Lefebvre was the lack of epistemology regarding space and the planning processes. Highly inspired by Karl Marx's writings, in his masterpiece, La Production de l'espace [The Production of Space], Lefebvre's main concern started with the socio-spatial process of abstraction and alienation and expanding them to everyday life. From this line, with a humanist Marxist perspective, his spatial way of thinking contributed to the development of theories regarding urban reality and the political aspects of urban space.

Space for Lefebvre is not an empty or neutral container; instead, it is a product of social, political, and economic conditions of its time, and as soon as it is produced, it shapes all social relations and transforms spatial practices. This issue has opened up new discussions regarding the production of space and its relationship with power and ideology. Indeed, Lefebvre's criticism of ideology emanates from his analytical work regarding the process of the production of space, in which he argues that ideology cannot exist without consideration of the physical environment (Lefebvre, 1991). As he elaborates, "Space has been shaped and molded from historical and natural elements, but this has been a political process. Space is political and ideological. It is a product literally filled with ideologies" (Lefebvre & Enders, 1976, p. 31). In this regard, the built environment is politicized because it is produced as a part of conscious or subconscious political strategies (Lefebvre & Enders, 1976, pp. 33–34). This issue derives from the fact that space is a social product that one can manage, manipulate, and exploit; thus, an important consideration is who owns and controls space, for what purposes, and through which mechanisms these purposes are achieved.

To better explain this issue, Lefebvre underlines the dialectical process of objectivity and subjectivity of space and defines conceptual triads about the production of space; spatial practice (perceived space), the representational space (lived experience), and the representation of space (conceived space). According to Lefebvre, the representation of space comprises idealized visions conceptualized by planners, urbanists, and technocrats, who design new spaces based on their plans, architectural projects, and various discourses surrounding urban development. In other words, conceived spaces reflect the dominant values and power structures of society and embody a specific vision of how spaces should function and be perceived, which can influence public understanding and regulate spatial interaction (Lefebvre, 1991). Taking this into consideration, according to Merrifield (1993), conceived space is actually the representation of the ruling group, and for Lefebvre, the space of representation supplants the concept of ideology. It can therefore be related to the ruling power that uses space as the means of exerting power and maintaining hegemony (Lefebvre, 1991, pp. 281, 314). He further illustrates stating that "any representation is an ideological" (Lefebvre & Enders, 1976, p. 34) and "the ideology seizes upon space as an instrument" (Busquet & Lavue, 2012, p. 8). He outlines the concept of spatial Ideology as a set of meanings, which is produced by political strategies with the aim of imposing the representations of the ruling class. In other words, since the representations of space subsume ideology, the ruling power tries to occupy, dominate, appropriate, and (re)produce it accord-

ing to its desires.

In much the same vein, an important consideration is how the intersection of ideology and space represented itself in the city. As Harvey states, cities are the sites where new politics can be constructed and emerge (Harvey, 2007, p. 13), and urban fabric is the dynamic spatial structure, representing the physical feature of urbanism which has constantly been subjected to intervention, aiming to control and order. Lefebvre illustrates this issue and represents a different perspective regarding the city and contemporary urbanism. In the context of city and modern urbanism, Lefebvre's concept of 'representations of space' can be defined as the authority's urban plans and architectural designs, reflecting the government's vision of a modern city and a different way of life. For him, the city may have served as more than simply a stage for different social activities; it may have also served as a stage for political struggles, a propaganda tool for representing power and ideology. By criticizing modern urbanism, Lefebvre argued: "Urbanism is a mask and a tool: a mask for the state and political action, a tool of interests that are dissimulated within a strategy and a socio-logic"(Lefebvre, 2003, p. 180). In this respect, not only the physical built environment but also the social life within it can be gradually codified, regulated, and ordered by the ideology.

It is essential to note that political dominance serves as a prerequisite for autocratic control which contributes to the political instrumentalization of space, manifested through design and planning (Vale, 1992). Decisions to control the urban design under the autocratic states are mainly upon the decree of the dictator, which in most cases start with the massive demolishment of what remained from the past in the way that "projects are ruthlessly driven through existing built-up areas" (Lang, 2005, p. 25). Haussmann's plan for the renovation of Paris by the decree of Napoleon III, or Speer's and Piacentini's urban transformation projects for Hitler and Mussolini, respectively, can be set as examples of the relationship between urban design and autocratic ideology. Nonetheless, as an identifier of modern urban design projects, Haussmann's redesign of Paris has become an archetypical model for the later generation of political systems especially for the autocratic leaders. Considering his renovation project in Paris and the massive destruction of neighborhoods, Haussmann selected the l'artiste démolisseur ["demolition artist"] as a nickname for himself (Benjamin, 1983, p. 174). Haussmann's urbanism is a political act in which ideology and utopia as two important parcels intermingle. His desire to make a blank slate was based on two main principles, the first was establishing control over urban space against civil revolts by the new street system, making the route between barracks and working-class areas shorter, which Benjamin labels as "strategic embellishment"(Benjamin, 1983, p. 175). The second was improving the standards of life and the hygiene of the city by establishing wide boulevards, public parks, and water sewage systems. By keeping all these mentioned in mind, this issue can be analytically extended to what happened in Iran during Reza Shah's period when the autocratic control manifested itself through urban interventions like accelerating the urban modernization project and consciously weakening the traditional socio-spatial aspects of the Iranian society.

3. Haussmannization, the means of modernization in Iran

Considering the extensive scholarship on the history of modernity, what causes debate regarding the myth of modernity is the manner by which Western Modernity has been interpreted in the East, particularly in Iran. Among scholars who have investigated the differences in the interpretation of modernity, Berman (1988) claims that what is commonly referred to as modernity, particularly concerning the modern city in developed countries, is often grounded in intellectual resources derived from Western thought. However, in underdevelopment countries, the modern city is based on the will of the ruling classes and their desires to emulate the Western image of the city. In addition, he argues that modernity

in underdeveloped countries "takes on a fantastic character because it is forced to nourish itself not on social reality but on fantasies, mirages, dreams" (Berman, 1988, p. 236).

The classical modernization theories suggest that as modernity spreads over the world, various countries will eventually employ the institutions and cultures that emerged from modern Europe (Spohn, 2010). A similar narrative unfolded in Middle Eastern countries like Iran, a country that survived Western colonialism but faced the enduring influence of Western power and culture. According to Behnam (2004), In Iran, Western culture and civilization were assumed as the only valued ones, and prompt emulation was inevitable and seemed to be the only choice. It should be noted that the gates of Western civilization were opened to Iran through the new foreign policies of the Qajar era, particularly during the reign of Naser al-Din Shah. He traveled around Europe three times in 1873, 1878, and 1889 to witness what he described as "the wonders of European progress" (Marashi, 2008, p. 22). Subsequently, Iranians started traveling to European countries, especially France, for educational purposes and diplomatic missions. This engagement paved the way for long-lasting cultural, political, and economic ties between Iran and France.

With the arrival of the Pahlavi era in 1925, traditional Iranian society began to experience a new phase representing the concrete confrontation with Western modernity. Iran, under Reza Shah's rule, began to take on authoritarian aspects almost immediately, along with modernization, secularization, and westernization of the country. In order to emancipate from the Qajarids' tribal governmental system, the new government triggered several military, administrative, and social reforms not only with the purpose of establishing centralized power but also for consolidating it (Abrahamian, 2008). The political upheaval in the country in this era characterized a new Iranian society, causing a shift in architectural style, a reconceptualization of space, and a spatial transformation (Katouzian, 1996), which is described as the threshold for the emergence of Western-influenced urban modernization practices (Bani-Masoud, 2009; Kiani, 2014). In the early years of Reza Shah's reign, architects such as Mohsen Foroughi, André Godard, and many others, who had graduated from the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, were employed by the state for the new architectural projects (Emami, 2014). While these architects were actively involved in designing buildings, it is essential not to overlook the profound influence of the French history of renovating Paris and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts on shaping new ideas regarding urbanism and urban renovation projects in Iran (Emami, 2014). Subsequently, through the large-scale urban projects during the early years of the Pahlavi dynasty, cities in Iran became the scenes for the manifestation of socio-spatial transformations heavily influenced by Western modernity. Some commentators called these transformations ''pseudo-modernism" characterized by the uncritical rejection of all traditional Iranian values "for the imitation and emulation of all things European within the narrow confines of a small, but increasing, group in the urban community" (H. Katouzian, 1981, p. 105).

Considering the dominant strategy of modernization in Iran, architectural historian Talinn Grigor (2014) applies the term tabula rasa as a utopian blank slate for the process of demolishing Iranian cities and reconstructing them during modernization, which has also been held in common among other modernist movements around the world. Grigor sheds further light on this issue by mentioning that the "realization of a tabula rasa, a utopian blank slate upon which a new Iran could be conceived "over again", was endemic to the strategies of Pahlavi modernization" (Grigor, 2014, p. 97). Keshavarziyan explains similar themes and argues, "Shah's urban planners directed funds and attention to entirely empty stretches of the land where modernist schemes could be etched onto an arid tabula rasa" (Keshavarzian, 2009, p. 132). Reza Shah sought to establish a new order across Iranian society, and the realization of tabula rasa was impossible without the creative destruc-

tion of what was inherited from the past. His main ambitions were focused on the necessity of bringing about a significant transformation in public life and revolutionizing the socio-spatial aspects of traditional Iranian society. The main themes of the large-scale urban renovation projects comprised the establishment of new commercial and transportation networks, the creation of a National Bazaar, and the transformation of residential neighborhoods known as mahalle in the cities (Madanipour, 2006). Meanwhile, Tehran, as the capital and the largest city in Iran, became the laboratory where the results of all social and spatial interventions were being promoted throughout the country (Grigor, 2014; Rezvani-Naraghi, 2018). In other words, the same scenario took place in other cities where the concept of Haussmannization became the archetypical model for urban transformations.

In order to fulfill Shah's desires, municipalities were tasked with constructing sizable squares with Raza Shah's monuments at the intersection of the main boulevards, which either had to be named Shah or Pahlavi (Mazumdar, 2000). In this regard, the urban squares with modern function, acting as an element in traffic nodes, were established along the newly constructed boulevards. With the schematic map, Ehlers & Floor (1993) illustrate how the establishment of boulevards and squares cut through the congested traditional urban fabric of cities such as Tehran, Tabriz, Hamedan, and Urmia. The majority of the historical urban fabric of these cities was demolished and transformed into a style very similar to what Haussmann did in Paris (Figures 1, 2, 3). Mohammad Gholi Majd, a well-known Iranian historian, illustrates this process arguing that "the ruthlessness of its methods is bewildering to anyone not used to the ways of modern Iran" (Majd, 2012, p. 22). Hence, it can be argued that this act represented an unsystematic implementation of a series of urban reforms with no comprehensive plans. Instead, it followed general guidelines called 'nghshe-ye Khiyaban-haye Jadid' (the plan of new streets and avenues), under which the new street networks and boulevards cut through the traditional urban fabric of the city (see Figure 1, 2 and 3).

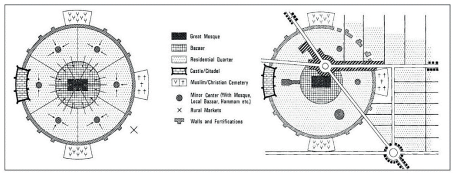

Figure 1. *Schematic representation comparing the urban fabric of Iranian traditional cities with the transformative impact reminiscent of Haussmannian policies (Ehlers & Floor, 1993) systematic reviews" by Page et al., 2021.*

Figure 2. *Aerial photo of Hamedan city, displaying the new boulevards and squares designed by German urban planner Karl Frisch (© Georg Gerster Air photography, Zumikon-Switzerland, 1967).*

It should be noted that the spatial and social dichotomies were simulta-

Figure 3. *Aerial photo of Urmia in the 1930s (the archive of West Azerbaijan Cultural Heritage Administration).*

neously involved in the discourse of modernity in Iran. Considering the role of ideology in spatial manipulation, it also can make social order dependent on spatial factors in a way that any intervention in space, such as the proposal for an "ideal city" would transform social relations, lifestyle, and social behavior (Busquet & Lavue, 2012). In other words, along with the spatial transformation of cities, social transformations seemed inevitable. The emergence of the modernity discourse in Iran led to the establishment of social and political ambitions for the creation of a new type of space and different patterns in social life (Rezvani-Naraghi, 2018). In this respect, the conventional and traditional forms of social life were portrayed as backward, obsolete, and conservative, which should give rise to their alternative forms. The top-down reform projects, including the establishment of a modern educational system, granting women the right to education, mandatory unveiling of the hijab, and unifying the clothes, were along with Reza Shah's desire to create an image similar to the West and introduce a new lifestyle to Iran's conservative society (Atabaki & Zürcher, 2004). The social reforms were along with the introduction of modern public spaces like public parks and cinemas which became the favored public spaces pursued by the newly emerged modern middle class and those who desired to live in a mixed-gender, nontraditional, and Westernized society. Following this, the consolidation of the discourse of modernity was rooted not only in the production of new public spaces but also in new forms of social life in cities such as Tabriz.

4. The urban fabric of Tabriz before the Pahlavi Era

Since long ago, due to political and economic incentives, Tabriz (historically known as Tav-Rizh) has held the prominent status as the largest and most historical city in the northwest province of Iran. Being the capital during the dynasties of Ilkhanates (1256-1335), Qara Qoyunlu (1378-1469), Aq Qoyunlu (1378-1503), the early Safavid era, and Valiahd Neshin (the city of the Crown Prince) during the Qajar dynasty (1789-1921) led Tabriz to gain geopolitically importance. Also, due to its geopolitical and geo-economic significance, and being the commercial center along the Silk Road, Tabriz became the hub for trade and production of carpet, gold, silk, and nuts, making the city "rich in goods and abounding in wealth" (Wing, 2014).

The urban structure of the city in the pre-Pahlavi era was traditional in its form and functions. Considering Tabriz as the most important commercial center along the Silk Road and the connector of East and West, most of its traditional urban fabric had been shaped around the traditional bazaar (market), known as the world's largest covered bazaar. According to Soltanzadeh (1997), the historical urban fabric of the city and its spatial organization was characterized by a historical bazaar, Masjid jame (congregational Mosque), and residential quarters with a particular emphasis on the spatial hierarchies between the bazaar and private living areas. In this layout, even houses designed to be introverted, centered around the courtyard gardens, with minimal openings to the outside and small entrance doors. In addition to their commercial and religious roles, the bazaar and the congregational mosque were also the centers where social interactions took place. A crucial point to remember is that the bazaar and its adjacent areas were male-dominated sites where men actively participated in a variety of religious performances, sports, and wrestling competitions (Soltanzadeh, 1997). Besides, hammams (baths), neighborhood mosques, and café houses in the city center provided a traditional platform for different kinds of social interactions.

Surveying the historical urban fabric of the city demonstrates that, due to its fertile lands, gardens in Tabriz were the central element in the physical organization of the city, traces of which can be observed in the historical documents and the travelogues of the Western travelers. Among foreign travelers, Jean-Baptiste Tavernier (1605 – 1689) visited the city in 1643 and document-

ed his observation about the gardens inside the city and in the surrounding countryside; he claimed that the private gardens extended across the city from its western to the eastern side and the gardens outside of the city walls served as a barrier or rampart for the city (As cited in Javadi, 1970, p. 236). Due to this issue, since long ago Tabriz has been known as Bāgh Shahr (garden city), and many neighborhoods in Tabriz were suffixed with the word bāgh (meaning garden) like bāghmishe (meadow garden), bāghshomal (north garden), kuchebāgh (garden alley), and tapali bāgh (garden hill).

Bearing this in mind, among the prestigious royal gardens of Tabriz, the renowned Bāgh-Shomal Garden (North Garden), was esteemed for its expansive grounds, and a royal pavilion in the middle of the garden. Bāgh-Shomal was one of the important examples of residential and governmental royal gardens in Iran, and it has earned distinction for its long-lasting political and historical significance. About its historical background, Wilber comments that although there is a lack of information about the exact date of construction, it likely dates back to Aq Qoyunlu ruler Uzun Hasan (1423-1478) and his son's (Ya'qub) reign. He adds that this magnificent garden, which included several palaces and complexes, was comparable to Isfahan's Farah Abad Royal Garden (Wilber, 1962, p. 213). For Evliya Çelebi (1611-1682), a famous Ottoman traveler who visited Tabriz during the Safavid era in the 17th century, this garden belonged to Sultan Ya'qub and it was considered the most well-known garden in the northwest of Iran (Çelebi, 1896, pp. 255–256). As a crucial element in the royal family, this garden included a royal pavilion and was dedicated to the crown princes, and because of this issue, it was also known as Shazde Bāghi (The Garden of Prince). Particularly, during the Qajar era, this garden was used as a distinguished living area for the princes of time, hosting foreign ambassadors of Great Britain and Russia as well as royal ceremonies and weddings. During the years 1910 and 1911, Bāgh-Shomal garden, turned into a main military camp for Russian soldiers when they occupied Tabriz following the few days of siege. In the late Qajar era, following the new land policies and by the establishment of 'Urban Land Use Divisions', some parts of the garden were opened to the public, transforming it into a gathering space for the community (Khamachi, 2003).

It should be noted that besides vast royal gardens, which belonged to Shahs and princes, courtyard gardens in most houses constituted the majority of the city's green spaces (Figure 4). French traveler Jean Chardin, who visited Tabriz in 1673, mainly focused on the spatial formation of the city and how houses and residential neighborhoods were built around the bazaar. He appeared to be particularly impressed by the life in the outdoors of these houses: "Houses in Tabriz were not majestic, but every house had a large beautiful garden with fruit trees ... [and] most of the families used to receive guests in the garden of their houses" (Chardin, 1995, pp. 143–144). Although the vastness of central private gardens differed according to the status of families, the design of these gardens in the houses followed the ancient Persian garden pattern known as Chāhar Bāgh[3] in which the garden with trees and flowers was divided into four parts surrounding the central pool (Figure 5). During the Qajar era, courtyard houses were owned by extended families, and the garden in the middle of houses provided a platform for the socialization of extended families with neighbors and visitors. Since the public realm was constituted by traditional social spaces such as the bazaar and café houses, which were basically all male-dominated spaces, women could socialize mostly in the private realm of the houses and their courtyard gardens (see Figure 4 and 5).

4.1. The new urban identity of Tabriz

By the time Reza Shah came to power in 1925, the newly-born government realized that the physical environment in other large cities, such as Tabriz, had to change to propagate modernist messages; the pivotal objective was to transform cities, enabling the government to create a desired spatial

Figure 4. *A view from one of the historical neighborhoods of Tabriz, named Maghsudiyye during the 1950s. (Iran National Cartographic Center, edited by the authors).*

Figure 5. *Illustrative examples of extant Qajar-era houses featuring courtyard gardens (Esmaeili Sangari & Omrani, 2014, edited by the authors).*

condition to achieve two main goals: spatial control and expansion of the new capitalist system. As the main body of Haussmannization in Tabriz, the new networks of streets not only provided endless opportunities for military control but also allowed capitalism and the new mode of production to move into commercial and recreational areas. Meanwhile, two pivotal laws passed by the parliament contributed to the radical transformation of cities, pursued by the Ministry of Interior: 'The law of Municipalities' (*Nezamnāmeye baladiyye ha*) approved in 1930 and 'The Street Widening Acts' (Ghanun-e Taariz-e Māber)[4] approved in 1933. As stated by Burrell (1997) and Habibi (2006), these ratified policies not only provided a legal basis for the mass demolition of the traditional urban fabric but also offered guidelines for the conformity of the streets with new shops and modern urban space.

During this era, Tabriz witnessed significant structural transformations in different phases when Mohammad Ali Tarbiat (mayor from 1927 to 1933) and Arfaa-ol Molk Jalili (mayor from 1918 to 1920 and again from 1933 to 1936) held office in the city. The first phase of the transformation of Tabriz started with the construction of the main boulevard of the city known as Pahlavi Boulevard, constructed between 1921 and 1926 by the order of Abdollah Khan Tahmasebi, the commander of the Azerbaijan army (Bani-Masoud, 2009). This boulevard can be considered the most important street constructed during the first Pahlavi period, primarily aimed at connecting the eastern and western parts of Tabriz. This boulevard played a vital role in establishing military control over the strategic areas and shaping a modern cityscape with planted trees on the sidewalks and commercial activities. Furthermore, the growing numbers of cars and other vehicles accelerated the process of transformation of streets along this boulevard. According to the mandatory municipal regulations and instructions announced in the September 1928 circular, which were to be implemented not only in Tehran but also in other major cities like Tabriz, the concept of modern cityscape gained heightened importance (Kiani, 2014). These regulations prioritized a visually appealing urban environment, requiring that shop and storefront designs along main streets be extroverted, with large windows and entrances opening inward (Safamanesh et al., 1997, p. 256)[5]. Once a conventional introverted city with narrow streets, Tabriz was transformed by modern street layouts such as Pahlavi Boulevard as the main axis with its modern cityscape. Following that, to fulfill the municipality's spatial plans, this boulevard paved the way for creating a commercial street, featuring new stores on both sides with large windows and openings. These transformations also included the construction of modern hotels such as the Grand Hotel (Tabriz's first modern hotel)[6] and Jahan

Nema, built between 1925 and 1933 by Haj Ghanbar Tofigh Kouzehkanani, a well-known Tabrizian merchant. Featuring modern restaurants and cafés these hotels not only facilitated the emergence of a new public life but also introduced a new cityscape, signifying Tabriz's alignment with the contemporary global trends (see Figure 6).

In the second phase, the construction of several new streets branching from the main axis of Pahlavi Boulevard started between 1926 and 1932. As observed in Tabriz's town plan of 1942, the construction of Ferdowsi Street in 1927, which started from the citadel towards the bazaar, connected the citadel and Pahlavi Boulevard to the bazaar. As the construction of Ferdowsi Street progressed northward, it cut through the southern parts of the bazaar and destroyed residential neighborhoods, as well as some parts of the Shishegarkhane Bazaar and Amir Bazaar (Ranjbari Fakhri, 2013, pp. 23–25). Similar to the Haussmannization of Paris, in addition to coordinating new public circulation networks, the new roads and streets near the bazaar also served as the primary routes for other types of infrastructure, including sewage and water systems.

Reza Shah's interventions in Tabriz's urban fabric continued with the construction of, Monajjem, Melal Mottahed, Topkhaneh, Mansour, Khaghani, and Shahpour (Artesh) streets in the 1930s (Figure 7). Undeniably, the construction of these new streets cut through the residential neighborhoods and introduced a new order and modern transportation networks. Nevertheless, an important consideration is that the construction of these streets came at the cost of demolishing several residential neighborhoods, courtyard houses, and their gardens (Figure 8). For instance, just in the process of the construction of Ferdowsi, Tabrbiat, and Monajjem streets, more than two hundred houses were demolished, leading to widespread protests by the people who had lost their houses due to the 'Street Widening Act'. This issue prompted discussions in parliamentary negotiations to pass a law establishing a method for valuing properties within the development plans of the cities and

Figure 6. *A view from Tabriz Grand Hotel and new cityscape during the 1930s. (Tofigh family photo archive)*

compensating the owners accordingly, although no practical implementation followed (National Consultative Assembly Negotiations, 14th November 1933, Session 48) (see Figure 7 and 8).

Considering the complex socio-political situation of Iran at the time, Reza Shah's military background reflected itself in the urban design and the planning process. Thus, the planners and designers attempted to incorporate military perspectives, especially in the formulation of master plans. During this period, military personnel played a pivotal role in social and urban activities and the trustees responsible for implementing these new urban plans aimed to satisfy Reza Shah, and all changes in the cities reflected his opinions and directives (Kiani, 2014). As Benjamin has stated for Paris, one of the main themes of Haussmannian intervention in the urban fabric was controlling the city against civil movements; in the case of Iran, many scholars (Habibi & Hourcade, 2005; Mazumdar, 2000; Pakzad, 2015; Shirazi, 2018) are unanimous with regards to the vital role of the newly constructed wide streets and boulevard in providing easy and quick access for military troops and establishing control over cities against the potential civil protests. In Tabriz, the construction of the new networks of streets and the militarization of the city resulted in the destruction of Tabriz's most prestigious garden Bāgh-Shomal.

Between 1929 and 1931, the construction of northern and southern Shahpour Streets—also known as Artesh (army) Street— facilitated the connection of Bāgh-Shomal to Pahla-

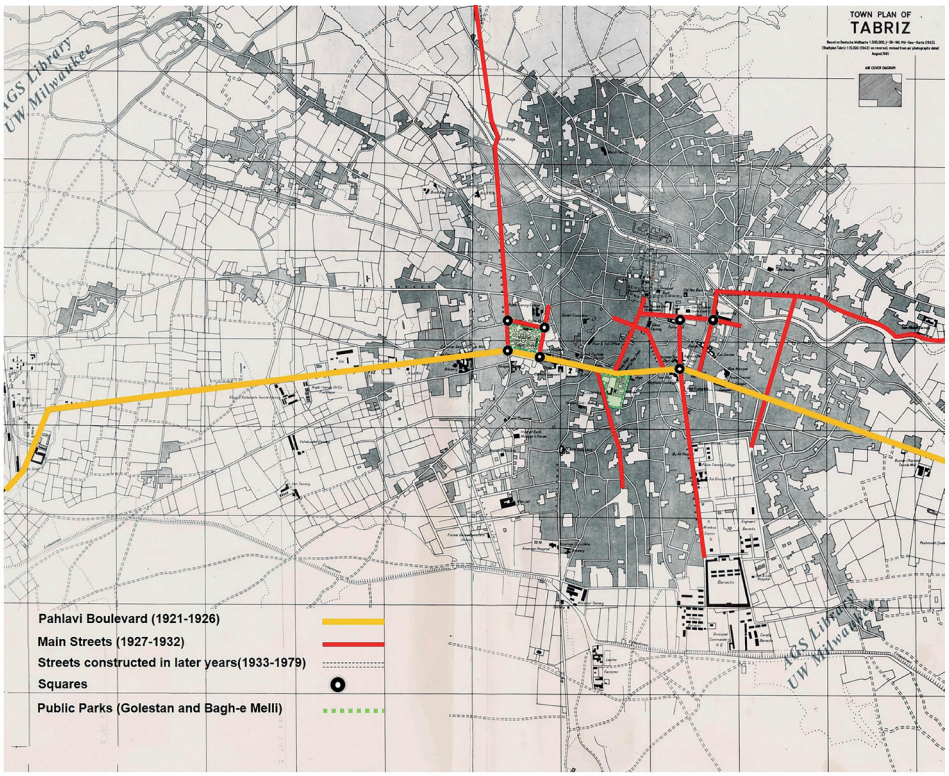

Figure 7. *Map of Tabriz 1941, showing the Pahlavi Boulevard, main streets and Public Parks. (The American Geographical Society Library, University of Wisconsin- Milwaukee Library. Edited by the authors).*

vi Boulevard and to the bazaar, which served as the city's core and administrative center. Due to its ideal location, military barracks were built there, providing easy access for troops to maintain control over the congested city center. Furthermore, owing to its size, Bāgh-Shomal, and its surrounding lands were deemed potential areas for the municipality to pursue its modernization goals. During the period between 1930 and 1933, the mayor of the time, Mohammad Ali Taribiat, divided the lands and allocated them to military camps and residential constructions (Bani-Masoud, 2011) (Figure 9). In the following years, the remaining lands of this traditional garden were also transformed into modern functions like sports complexes, stadium (Bāgh-Shomal stadium in 1948) and a modern hospital in 1970 (see Figure 9).

4.2. Modernization and modern public parks

While the initial phase of urban transformation in Tabriz considered the existing urbanscape as a tabula rasa—evidenced by extensive destruction of the historical urban fabric, including the neighborhoods and traditional gardens— in the second phase, new European-style spaces such as public parks, cinemas, and restaurants emerged, serving as significant social markers, advocating a vision of social modernity. Considering the improvement of

Figure 8. *The massive destruction of residential neighborhoods and houses and the construction of new Boulevards and squares between 1926 and 1932 (Tabriz Municipality archive).*

Figure 9. *The transformation of traditional Bāgh-Shomal Garden: a view of the garden in the map drafted by Qarahcedaghi map in1880 (left), Asad-Allah Khan Maraghei in 1910 (middle), a view of the lost garden in the aerial photo of 1967(right) (Fakhari et al., 2006), (Iran National Cartographic Center).*

hygiene in the city center from one side and the increasing demand of the newly established middle class for alternative ways of entertainment, from another side, municipalities of Tabriz, during Mohammad Ali Tarbiat's administration, aimed at transforming the cemeteries in the city center into modern public spaces (Safamanesh et al., 1997; Sattarzadeh, 2007). Hence, some historical cemeteries like Gajil and Ark were transformed into public Parks. For centuries, Gajil Cemetery (Al-Arafa Tomb) used to be one of the historical cemeteries in Tabriz, where dozens of the most famous Iranian writers, politicians, and poets were buried. Due to this issue, at the beginning of its deconstruction, there was direct opposition from people who believed the history of Tabriz was intertwined with the Gajil cemetery. However, along with the completion of Pahlavi Boulevard, the 5.5-hectare area known as Gajil historical cemetery was demolished in 1929, and the construction of Bāgh-e Golestan (Golestan Garden) was pursued by Mohammed-Ali Tarbiat, the mayor of the time. Inspired by the traditional Persian garden, the design of Bāgh-e Golestan was based on a traditional Persian Chāhar Bāgh layout; a large pool in the middle and four main axes in its surroundings. Establishing entertainment facilities for ceremonies and different cultural events and activities in the early years of its construction made this park a suitable place for different classes. One of the modern public facilities established for the first time in Iran was the open-air cinema, regularly set up and managed by the Armenian community during the summers in this park (Naficy, 2011).

It can be argued that Golestan Park, one of the earliest examples of a modern public park in Iran's history, changed the cityscape, introduced alternative ways of socialization, and became the means for other spatial transformations in Tabriz. The construction of this park at the heart of Tabriz was the backbone of the Haussmannization of the city, which involved the creation of four main squares at its corners, and the new streets that connected this park to different parts of the city. In other words, being located in the middle of Pahlavi Boulevard, Golestan Park became the central node of the city, connecting the northern part to the southern part as well as the eastern part to the western part of Tabriz. Concerning the presence of various modern public spaces lining the Boulevard, Ette'lā'āt newspaper, as the most popular newspaper of the time, played a crucial role in advertising new, alternative forms of socialization. This state-run newspaper served as a platform to showcase modern public spaces and amenities, which contributed to shaping public perception and enthusiasm for these newly emerged spaces. In its reports during the socio-spatial transformation of the city, it described Tabriz as the pioneer in urban modernization, synchronous with developments in Tehran, claiming that:

"Our city now enjoys a wide boulevard and new parks constructed in the city center… the municipality invites dear citizens to spend their leisure time in the Bāgh-e Golestan as the first public park of the city… The security of the garden is entrusted to the Shahrbani that is responsible for maintaining a safe environment within the garden… Bāgh-e Golestan café and restaurant is fully prepared to cater to the needs of esteemed citizens" (Ettelā'āt newspaper 1933, p.2, No 1819, Translated by the author)

An important consideration regarding Golestan Park is that, besides estab-

lishing modern facilities, different spatial expressions like Shah's monument placed in the center of the squares, were instances of borrowed elements from the European urban spaces, which became the symbol of Reza Shah's power. In other words, newly established public parks and the activities within them represented not only the openness and the symbol of modern lifestyle but also the power and will of the Shah in the complete transformation of the traditional urban space in Tabriz.

The period between 1929 and 1931 was the peak in the construction of public parks in Iran, particularly in Tabriz, when another renowned public park named Bāgh-e Melli, or National Garden, began to be constructed in 1930 along the Pahlavi Boulevard. Concurrent with the construction of Golestan Park during 1929-1931, Tabriz Municipality also started transforming Alishah Citadel's (Ark) cemetery into a public park. This park, at the intersection of Pahlavi Boulevard and the newly constructed Ferdowsi Street, "was very popular among the general public of Tabriz as a place of leisure and for taking strolls" (Werner, 2014, p. 207) (Figure 10). It also included a café, restaurant, and the most famous theatre hall in Iran known as Shir-o Khorshid (The Red Lion and Sun), which was inaugurated in the presence of Reza Shah. It can be claimed that Tabriz, following Tehran, served as a prominent showcase for cultural politics during this era, and the Bāgh-e Melli complex was considered one of the earliest and most prestigious public spaces in Iran's modern history. As stated by Christoph Werner, the multi-cultural atmosphere of the city—shaped by the religious and linguistic minorities—positioned Tabriz as the leading gateway of Western civilization to Iran and a pioneer in the introduction of modern Western-style theatre halls to Iranian culture (Werner, 2014, p. 206). This complex provided mixed-gender spaces like modern restaurants, a park, and a theater hall as alternatives for traditional café houses and socializing spaces in the male-dominated areas near the bazaar. The expansion of Bāgh-e Melli continued even during the second period of the Pahlavi dynasty, and a new restaurant and library were added to this complex.

Figure 10. *A view from Bagh-e Melli, its restaurant, and Ferdowsi Street Photographed by Annemarie Schwarzenbach in the 1940s (Swiss Literary archive, SLA-Schwarzenbach-A-5-06/043).*

From a broader perspective, the top-down socio-spatial upheavals during this time transformed the traditional, introverted lifestyle of the people into a more extroverted one. The physically extroverted design applied in Tabriz echoes Mehan's (2017) observations on Tehran, where the emergence of new public spaces, such as parks and cinemas, came to symbolize openness, modernity, and democracy. The emergence of modern public spaces in Tabriz marked the first opportunity for women to participate alongside their families in established public settings. As Werner (2014, p. 218) noted, these spaces attracted the new urban middle class, modern intelligentsia, and women with their families, particularly in venues like the Red Lion and Sun Theater Hall. Given the traditionally male-dominated spaces such as zourkhane, divankhane, tekiyeh, and chaykhane, the emergence of modern public spaces represents a pivotal moment in the history of socialization within Tabriz, marking a significant shift toward inclusive public spaces and the active presence of women in these settings (see Figure 10).

5. Conclusion

The history of Iranian modern architecture and urban design is marked by contradictory perspectives, oscillating between the various interpretations of the concept of modernity. Stimulated by an intense desire to be a part of the modern world, it was a model-oriented modernity, discarding tradition in all aspects and emulating European values. This issue finds a parallel in Abraham Williams Jackson's (1906) analysis of Iran regarding the simultaneous presence of the 'Orient and the Occident'. He criticized the process of Iranian Westernization during the Qajar era, arguing that the adaptation of European culture in Iran has made the imperfect combination of East and West. Subsequently, the city came to simultaneously represent multiple forms of urban life, which is neither totally traditional nor fully European and modern. This dual analysis reveals the complex and often contradictory nature of Iranian urban space, where ideological aspirations and everyday realities intersect and influence one another.

Similarly, by the beginning of the Pahlavi dynasty in Iran, cities became the stage of the manifestation of the radical break between the old and the new age. Drawing upon the perspectives of Lefebvre and Harvey regarding the force of authority and its ideology in shaping and dominating space, it can be argued that, in an attempt to create a potential space for a utopian project, Reza Shah unconsciously implemented the concept of tabula rasa and applied Haussmannian policies, which became the means of interventions, creative destruction and (re) constructions of Iranian cities. From a critical perspective, this research intended to argue that this intervention in Tabriz was all about methodical destruction, which resulted in the ruination of the traditional urban fabric of the city and the ideological imposition of a new urban identity. Along with the militarization of the city and the establishment of a new spatial order, the destruction of the Bāgh-Shomal royal garden— one of the largest traditional gardens in the northwest of Iran—and the conversion of cemeteries to public parks can be compared to urban interventions initiated by Louis Napoleon and Baron Haussmann in Paris. From another perspective, considering the social and spatial dichotomies in the Iranian discourse of modernity, their reciprocal transformation resulted in the revision of the other. In this regard, the socio-spatial interventions made by Reza Shah in Tabriz can be regarded not only as the (re)production of its spatiality but also as the (re)definition of its sociality. By referencing Lefebvre's concept of the 'representation of space' (conceived space), this research illuminated how state-led modernization efforts reshaped lived experiences and cultural practices. The state's radical spatial interventions—such as the demolishment of the traditional urban fabric and the construction of Pahlavi Boulevard, public spaces like Golestan Park, Bāgh-e Melli, Theater Hall, cinemas and restaurants, and modern infrastructure—aimed to impose a new order and control over residents' lives, memories, and cultural practices. By way of illustration, concurrent with the demolishment of the traditional urban fabric, the establishment of Pahlavi Boulevard, Golestan Park, Bāgh-e Melli, theater hall, cinemas, and restaurants paved the way for the transformation of Tabriz from an introverted, traditional Islamic city to a modern, extroverted one, where the emergence of the bourgeoisie and modern middle class facilitated the production of active public space and modern public life.

However, the significant topic of modern public spaces in the following era should not be overlooked. All these discussions open new doors for future studies regarding the implementation of zoning regulations and modern urban planning during the second Pahlavi dynasty (1941-1979). The establishment of new residential, commercial, and industrial zones amid rapid industrialization offers rich potential for further studies. Tracing the evolution of modern public spaces in Tabriz in the later periods can offer valuable insights for further studies regarding the recent planning and the decision-making process concerning

public space. It is worth noting briefly that, along with the growing social demand, public spaces continued to expand even during the second period of the Pahlavi dynasty and the use of public spaces reached its peak in the 1960s and 70s. However, after the Islamic Revolution in 1979 and the subsequent rise of the conservative state, a paradigm shift occurred in the use and creation of public spaces. Among many examples, Bāgh-e Melli and its associated structures, such as the Theater Hall, the restaurant, and the library were completely demolished since, according to the post-revolutionary leaders, these places were the gathering spaces of the bourgeoisie, promoting Western values and lifestyle. Following that, Tabriz Mosalla, the large mosque, was constructed on the ruins of the Bāgh-e Melli complex. This shift in the treatment of public spaces highlights the ongoing dialectic between ideology and space.

Endnotes

[1] Pier Vittorio Aureli (2015) summarizes the discourse of tabula rasa starting from Aristotle (4th century BCE), particularly, the 'inscribed tablet' in his De anima. Empiricists like John Locke have extended this concept to the human mind since prior to experiencing anything, the mind is a literary blank like a piece of white paper. With regards to the theory of tabula rasa, by referring to Walter Benjamin's ideas about the ethos of modernity, Aureli argues that an empty space must be created to make room for the possibility of producing something new.

[2] Mohammad Karim Pirnia (2001), a well-known architecture historian, believes that the key characteristics of Iranian Islamic architecture and urbanism are their introverted feature. This includes inward-facing architecture, especially in houses featuring courtyards with very small openings and unadorned external walls. In terms of urbanism, Iranian cities are specifically characterized by narrow alleys, streets, and spatial hierarchies designed to enhance privacy and security. This approach leads to the clear segregation of public and private spaces within community interactions. The reasons for this introversion include religious belief and its social-cultural implications, climate conditions, and security concerns.

[3] The term Chāhar Bāgh in Persian etymology is the combination of Chāhar, meaning four, and Bāgh, meaning garden. The Chāhar Bāgh concept can be seen in gardening and urban designing. Briefly, the structure is a rectangle or a square divided into four parts through water courses. The most common pattern of Persian gardens is the rectangular land with two perpendicular axes with a palace or pavilion constructed at the intersection of axes (for more, see Shahcheraghi, 2010, pp. 20–32).

[4]Along with the spatial transformations, the state imposed several regulations called nezāmnāmeh, which systemically were meant to control the Haussmannization of the city. According to these regulations, the width of the new boulevards should be 24 meters with 3.5 meters wide sidewalks. In the intersection of the boulevards, a square must have been established with a radius of 16 meters (For more see Ehlers and Floor, 1993).

[5] For more detailed information regarding the history of Baladiye in Iran before and after the Pahlavi era, as well as its activities and responsibilities see Mahbubi Ardakani, H. (1997). History of new civilizational institutions in Iran (volume 2) [*Tarikh-e Moassesat-e Tamaddoni-e Jadid Dar Iran*]. Tehran University.

[6] The Grand Hotel, Tabriz's first modern hotel, was a two-story building primarily catering to European guests. Construction of this hotel began in the late Qajar era and was completed in 1925. The ground floor housed commercial stores and a café called 'Café Novin,' known for its live musical performances and as a gathering place for modern intelligentsia, foreigners, and religious minorities (Memar Magazine, 2007).

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