

Allegories of the Veil

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Abstract

Allegories of the Veil analyses the relationship between architecture and clothing as architecture. It expands the meaning of dwelling and of dwelling places (as they have been defined and conceptualised by scholars such as Martin Heidegger and Edward Casey) from architecture to women's dress. People's awareness of space and their interaction with it are crucially mediated by *where* and *how* they dwell. Moreover, dwelling greatly influences behaviour. This study interrogates the way in which building belongs to dwelling. It conceptualises specific women's clothing (the traditional dress and the veil [*chādor* in Farsi]) as a dwelling place that influences (limits) women's spatial awareness and movement in space. It argues that once women's clothing has shaped the behaviour and awareness of women (mirroring the organisation of social relations) it becomes like a habitus. In that sense, clothes are not only physical but also generative spaces which can be translated into social space (and vice versa). Last but not least, this study explores how the changing architectural cityscape of Iran has altered the meaning of private and public space in the country. It argues that contemporary domestic architecture in Iran has disturbed the continuity of design and architectural forms, which previously had been an inherent feature of all architectural spaces in the country, including women's clothing. These new forms disrupted the complementary relationship between the *chādor* as an enclosed space and as an extension of the domestic sphere, as well as facilitating the fast encroachment of modernity on traditional architectural places, including the *chādor*.

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Table of contents

A note on transliteration -----	9
List of illustrations and diagrams -----	10

Chapter I: Introduction

A historiography -----	17
Interdisciplinary studies of the gender and space relation -----	22
Space and place -----	24
Outline of dissertation -----	26

Chapter II: Expanding the definition of dwelling

Dwelling vis-à-vis building -----	29
<i>a. Dwelling and intimacy</i> -----	33
Building vis-à-vis clothing -----	39
The dress / veil – microcosmic dwelling places -----	43
Emplaced -----	48
<i>a. Oxymoronic place</i> -----	50
<i>b. Social purity</i> -----	53

Chapter III: The cone place

The cone place and perceptual systems -----	59
<i>a. The basic-orienting system</i> -----	62
<i>b. The haptic system</i> -----	71
<i>c. The visual system</i> -----	74

<i>d. The auditory system</i> -----	76
The cone place as habitus -----	80
<i>a. Visible boundaries</i> -----	82
<i>b. Invisible boundaries</i> -----	84

Chapter IV:

The built place, the cone place – an analogy

The built place and the body boundary -----	91
The built place as a metaphysical space -----	98
Transformation of built places: the Iranian case -----	111
<i>a. The phenomenon of the open house</i> -----	111
The fusion of the cone place with new architecture -----	121

Chapter V:

Conclusion

Recapitulation -----	131
Built place: an emblem of power -----	133
The plight of dwelling -----	137

Bibliography

Selected exhibitions

The transliteration system used in this study is that used by the *International Journal for Middle Eastern Studies*:

Consonants

z	ض	b	ب
t	ط	p	پ
z	ظ	t	ت
'	ع	s	س
gh	غ	j	ج
f	ف	ch	چ
q	ق	h	ح
k	ك	kh	خ
g	گ	d	د
l	ل	z	ذ
m	م	r	ر
n	ن	z	ز
h	ه	zh	ژ
v	و	s	ص
y	ی	sh	ش
'	ء	s	ص

Vowels

short	long	diphthongs
a (as in <i>ashk</i>)	a or ā (as in <i>ensan</i> or <i>āb</i>)	-
e (as in <i>fekr</i>)	i (as in <i>melli</i>)	ey (as in <i>Teymur</i>)
o (as in <i>pol</i>)	u (as in <i>Tus</i>)	ow (as in <i>rowshan</i>)

List of illustrations and diagrams

Figure 1.1: Illustrations from Geoffrey Boumphrey’s “Façade and Function”, *Architectural Review*, 1935. Pictures from: Mark Wigley, *White Walls, Designer Dresses: The Fashioning of Modern Architecture* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: The MIT Press, 1995), p. 122.

Figure 1.2: Left to right: “See what chic people are wearing!” An advertisement for *nassāji-e Māzandarān* (*Māzandarān* textile company) in the 1970s. Picture from: ‘Fashion in Pre-revolutionary Iran’, http://www.parstimes.com/fashion/pre_revolution/ last accessed: 26 July 2013.

Figure 1.3: The cover page: a model (Forouzan) posing in secular (revealing) clothes in front of a modern building. Next to the picture is written: “Forouzan and the latest fashion; will the people of Tehran welcome it?” *ettelā’āt-e haftegi* (*weekly news*) journal, No. 1523 (1350–1971).

Figure 1.4: The cover page: a model (Mahnaz) posing in front of a modern building. *ettelā’āt-e haftegi* (*weekly news*) journal, No.5, 1549 (1350–971).

Figure 2.1: Left to right: A court dress, 1750. Picture from: Metropolitan Museum of Art page, <http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/C.I.65.13.1a->, last accessed: 26 July 2013.

Figure 2.2: A picture of an Iranian woman from the nineteenth century. Picture from: ‘Women’s Movements in Iran, 1850 – 21st Century A Brief History’, http://www.cultureofiran.com/history_of_women.html, last accessed: 21 June 2014.

Figure 2.3: Formal ensemble, about 1765. Picture from: Victoria and Albert (V&A) Museum’s page, ‘Introduction to 18th-Century Fashion’, <http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/i/introduction-to-18th-century-fashion/>, last accessed: 26 July 2013.

Figure 2.4: Ahmad Shāh, one of the kings of the Qājār dynasty (1785–1925), 1898. Picture from: ‘Art of Persia’, <http://www.artofp.com/PersianArt101.html>, last accessed: 28 July 2014.

Figure 2.5: Left to right: a woman in a *chādor* – the cone place. Drawing by the author, 2013.

Figure 2.6: A woman in a dress – the cone place. Drawing by the author. 2013.

Figure 2.7: A man in a room entitled (a). Drawing by the author, 2013.

Figure 2.8: A woman in a room entitled (a) and also in the cone place entitled (b). She is within two places. Drawing by the author, 2013.

Figure 2.9: A man out of a room in an open space. Drawing by the author, 2013.

Figure 2.10: A woman who is in an open space but still is in the cone place (here she is within a single place). Drawing by the author, 2013.

Figure 2.11: Left to right: “*hejāb masuniyat ast*” (“Hijab is immunity”): poster, comparing the body of a woman with an unprotected chocolate, Tehran, Iran. Picture from ‘Does the hijab protect women from harassment?’ <http://www.beliefnet.com/columnists/cityofbrass/2012/09/does-the-hijab-protect-women-from-harassment.html#vbxEkFZ9OzJUgACh.99>, last accessed: 25 August 2014.

Figure 2.12: *Hijab* poster, comparing the female body with an unprotected flame, Iran. Picture from: ‘zan va khanevadeh (woman and family)’, <http://www.lhmv123.blogfa.com>, last accessed: 25 August 2014.

Figure 3.1: Modelling of a boy and a girl throwing a ball. Picture from: Tamar Haspel, ‘Throw like a girl? With some practice, you can do better’, *Washington Post*, http://www.wchapterashingtonpost.com/national/health-science/throw-like-a-girl-with-some-practice-you-can-do-better/2012/09/10/9ffc8bc8-dc09-11e1-9974-5c975ae4810f_story.html, last accessed: 30 October 2012.

Figure 3.2: Modelling of a girl throwing a ball. Picture from: Haspel, ‘Throw like a girl?’ The dotted blue lines added by the author. 2012.

Figure 3.3: Left to right: **a.** a woman in a traditional black *chādor*. The photo illustrates the limited movement of the arms and hands as they keep the *chādor* fixed on the head (see the yellow arrows). The heaviness of the fabric (in this picture the woman is wearing a *chādor* made of black crêpe) used in the *chādor* is another obstacle and it makes it more difficult to hoist the *chādor*. Tabriz, Iran. Photograph by the author, 2011.

Figure 3.4: The *chādor* has its own movement in its own lateral space and it moves independently of the woman who is wearing it.

Figure 3.5: a. Pictures from the inside a *chādor*. The woman inside the *chādor* is holding it on her head with the help of her hands and arms. The photo also illustrates the limited space underneath it. Tehran, Iran. Photograph by the author, 2014.

Figure 3.6: Left to right: **a.** a woman in a dress with a crinoline. The picture shows the limited movement inside the dress and the movement of the dress in a wider radius around the body of the woman. The author added the arrows. Picture from: ‘The Cage Crinoline’, <https://thimblesandacorns.com/the-cage-crinoline/> last accessed: 15 July 2014.

Figure 3.7: b. The picture illustrates the restriction of the movements of the legs inside the cone place (the *chādor* or the dress): follow the blue and the red arrows. It also shows the movement of the cone place around the body (the green arrows) and the limited movement of the arms (the yellow arrows). Drawing by the author, 2014.

Figure 3.8: Left to right: **a.** a man in a room, at a distance from the cylinder; **b.** a woman in the cone place and in a room at the same distance as the man in part **a** from the cylinder; **c.** a woman in the cone place and in a room where the cone place is at the same distance from the cylinder as the man in part **a**. Drawing by the author, 2014.

Figure 3.9: Left to right: (from above) a man (the black circle) moving in a room with two cylinders (follow the violet arrow). Drawing by the author, 2014.

Figure 3.10: (from above) a woman in the cone place moving in a room at a similar distance from the limits of her cone (instead of her body) to the cylinders (follow the violet arrow). Drawing by the author, 2014.

Figure 3.11: Left to right: **a.** a woman who is inside the cone place has a different haptical perception. Her haptic system generates more knowledge and sensation within the boundaries of the cone place. Drawing by the author, 2014.

Figure 3.12: b. The restrictions that the cone place causes prevent the woman, who is inside the cone place, from expanding and developing her haptic sensations. Drawing by the author, 2014.

Figure 3.13: c. The cone place, to a very limited extent, extends the haptic sense and generates knowledge of numerous surfaces, which are located in an accessible radius around the body of a woman. Drawing by the author, 2014.

Figure 4.1: Left to right: an open lawn house. Picture from: http://etc.usf.edu/clipart/76800/76838/76838_ruledhouse.htm, last accessed: 20 July 2014.

Figure 4.2: A *meydān* (public square), marked with green arrows in the picture. Courtyard houses around the *meydān* are marked with the red arrows. Yazd, Iran. Picture from: Hossein Soltanzadeh, *tārikh-e mokhtasar-e shahr va shahr neshini dar Iran, as dōwrān bāstān tā 1355 (A brief History of the City and Urbanization in Iran: Ancient Era to 1976)* (Tehran: Chahar Tagh, 1390–2011), p. 203. Arrows added by the author.

Figure 4.3: Left to right: part of the roof of the Kashan bāzār. The picture illustrates how the surface of a traditional Iranian city is developed like the skin. Kashan, Iran. Picture from: Slotanzadeh, *shahr neshini dar Iran (Urbanization in Iran)*, p. 215.

Figure 4.4: Friday prayer picture. 4 February 2011. Tehran, Iran. Picture from: <http://www.thirdage.com/news-photo/friday-prayer-in-tehran-iran/57960>, last accessed: 7 May 2014.

Figure 4.5: Left to right: a *timche* (a section of a bāzār) in the Kashan bāzār. The picture illustrates how the elaborate motifs and rich colours appear inside the structure. Kashan, Iran. Picture from: ‘Wikitravel’, http://wikitravel.org/en/File:Inside_Kashan_Bazaar_-_2.jpg, last accessed: 23 August 2013.

Figure 4.6: A woman inside the cone place (the *chādor*). Tehran, Iran. Photo by the author, 2014.

Figure 4.7: Left to right: a two-storey house in the Safidrud delta. The house offers its façade to the outside world. Safidrud, Iran. 1974. Picture from: Encyclopaedia Iranica, <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/gilan-xii-rural-housing>, last accessed: 7 May 2014.

Figure 4.8: A woman from Gilān in a dress. Photo taken possibly by Anton Sevruguin. Gilān, Iran. Late nineteenth century. Picture from: http://www.parstimes.com/women/traditional_costume/period/ last accessed: 23 July 2014.

Figure 4.9: The walls of two different courtyard houses from the outside. Kashan, Iran. Photo by the author, 2012.

Figure 4.10: Albumen silver photograph of urban women. In general, they are more covered than village women. Taken possibly by Anton Sevruguin. Tehran, Iran. Late nineteenth century. Picture from: Brooklyn Museum collection of Collections: Arts of the Islamic World: Two Veiled Women and a child. http://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/159274/Two_Veiled_Women_and_a_Child, last accessed: 24 August 2014.

Figure 4.11: Left to right: Aghā Bozorg mosque and *madreseh* (school). Kashan, Iran. Photo by the author, 2012.

Figure 4.12: A residential house, Kashan, Iran. Photo by the author, 2012.

Figure 4.13: Left to right: open lawn houses in the neighbourhood of Braim. Staff quarters, Abadan, Iran, 1944. Picture from: <http://iranian.com/Abadan/2001/May/Abadan/6a.html>, last accessed: 18 August 2014.

Figure 4.14: A traditional arrangement of houses creating a unified space. Yazd, Iran. Picture from: Soltanzadeh, *shahr va shahr neshini dar Iran (the City and Urbanization in Iran)*, p. 203.

Figure 4.15: Left to right: a traditional window opening to the courtyard in *Imam Jom'eh* house. Tehran, Iran. Photo by the author. 2011.

Figure 4.16: Windows opening to the street in an alley in Tabriz. Tabriz, Iran. Photo by the author. 2012

Figure 4.17: Above: **a.** Pictures of patios. Pictures from: Pei.pcn.ir, <http://pei.pcn.ir/Product/21623>, last accessed: 24 August 2014.

Figure 4.18: Left to right: A woman on the balcony without any veiling. Tehran, Iran. Photo by the author, 2013.

Figure 4.19: Women on the balcony without any veiling. Tehran, Iran, 2013. Picture from 'An Iranian Journey Collection' by Hossein Fatemi, <http://www.panos.co.uk/stories/2-13-1629-2123/Hossein-Fatemi/An-Iranian-Journey/#>, last accessed: 2 August 2014.

Figure 4.20: Left to right: the opening of a *kuler*-channel inside an apartment. Tehran, Iran. Photo by the author. 2013.

Figure 4.21: Still from Daryush Mehrjuee's *ejāreh neshinhā* (*The Tenants*) (1986). One of the characters is spying on their neighbours through the *kuler*-channel.

Figure 4.22: Left to right: a residential building with a half matt glass in front of the main windows. Tabriz, Iran. Photo by the author, 2013.

Figure 4.23: View from the inside of a residential house in Tabriz. A half matt glass window in front of the main window is blocking the view from the inside and the outside. Tabriz, Iran. Photo by the author. 2013.

Figure 4.24: Left to right: picture of women with more fitted clothing. Tabriz, Iran. Photo by the author. 2011.

Figure 4.25: Accepted (suggested) forms of *hejāb* (hijab). The poster suggests how the students of a university should dress in order to obtain authorisation to enter the university: with a *chādor* or a long *māntow* (tunic) and a *magna'e* (a fitted scarf). Picture from: 'Muhajabat', <https://muhajabat.wordpress.com/category/iranianpersian-fashion/page/14/>, last accessed: 19 August 2014.

Figure 4.26: Picture of a woman with more fitted clothing. Tehran, Iran. 2014. Picture from: 'The Tehran Times', <http://thetehrantimes.tumblr.com/tagged/streetstyle>, last accessed: 25 August 2014.

Cities & Desires 5

From there, after six days and seven nights, you arrive at Zobeide, the white city, well exposed to the moon, with streets wound about themselves as in a skein. They tell this tale of its foundation: men of various nations had an identical dream. They saw a woman running at night through an unknown city; she was seen from behind, with long hair, and she was naked. They dreamed of pursuing her. As they twisted and turned, each of them lost her. After the dream, they set out in search of that city; they never found it, but they found one another; they decided to build a city like the one in the dream. In laying out the streets, each followed the course of his pursuit; at the spot where they had lost the fugitive's trail, they arranged spaces and walls differently from the dream, so she would be unable to escape again.

This was the city of Zobeide, where they settled, waiting for that scene to be repeated one night. None of them, asleep or awake, ever saw the woman again. The city's streets were streets where they went to work every day, with no link any more to the dreamed chase. Which, for that matter, had long been forgotten.

New men arrived from other lands, having had a dream like theirs, and in the city of Zobeide, they recognized something from the streets of the dream, and they changed the positions of arcades and stairways to resemble more closely the path of the pursued woman and so, at the spot where she had vanished, there would remain no avenue of escape.

The first to arrive could not understand what drew these people to Zobeide, this ugly city, this trap.¹

¹ Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities* (London: Vintage Books, 1997), p. 39.

Chapter I: Introduction

But inside and outside are not situated side by side, each one constituting a separate domain; indeed, on the contrary, they are reflected in each other, and it is only by this opposition and this complementary nature that they reveal their true meaning.²

A historiography

On 13 November 1933, the Iranian parliament (*majles*) of the Pahlavi dynasty (1925–1979) passed the Street Widening Act,³ which destroyed parts of the Tehran bazaar (*bāzār* in Farsi) and other traditional and historical places, transforming the cityscape into a much more open space.⁴ The law was representative of a policy of architecture that reflected the dynasty's wider concern with enclosed spaces and also the veil, which it regarded as bastions of the traditional lifestyle and as epicentres of the power of the Muslim elites, primarily the *ulamā* (Muslim legal scholars). Such spaces contradicted the sort of urban architecture envisioned by the modernising and nationalist government of Rezā Shāh (reigned: 1925–1941), which took inspiration from Kemalist Turkey and from the West.

In the West itself during the early twentieth century architects and theorists paid increasing attention to the links between clothing and architecture. When a “modern” style in architecture emerged, which sought to show structure without any ornaments, this

² Pierre Bourdieu, ‘The Sentiment of Honor in Kabyle Society’, *Honor and Shame: The Values of Mediterranean Society*, ed. J. G. Peristiany (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1965), p. 219.

³ Tallin Grigor, *Building Iran: Modernism, Architecture, and National Heritage under the Pahlavi Monarchs* (Pittsburgh: Periscope, 2009), p. 37.

⁴ The US embassy of Tehran in 1940 estimated that about 15,000 to 30,000 buildings and residential places were demolished and described Tehran as being as ‘if it has been destroyed by an earthquake.’ Ibid. pp. 37–38.

trend was paralleled in men's sportswear and in the fashion of clean-cut suits.⁵ These changes in architectural styles were often mirrored in women's clothing and in the way the latter was conceptualised. The female body was thus compared to a modern building and to a structure that needed to be presented without ornaments, making obsolete the flamboyant spacious dresses of previous periods. This phenomenon has been analysed by Leila W. Kenney, the Director of Arts Initiatives at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), whose article 'Fashion and Fabrication in Modern Architecture' argues that '[m]any modern architects (Henry Van de Velde, Josef Hoffmann, Lilly Reich, Frank Lloyd Wright) or their wives (Anna Muthesius and Lilli Behrens) designed clothes[;]' while '[o]thers, notably Otto Wagner, Adolf Loos, and Hermann Muthesius, wrote about fashion.'⁶ Similarly, Mark Wigley, the author of *White Walls, Designer Dresses: The Fashioning of Modern Architecture*, argues that architects have exploited the perception that dress and architecture stand in a complementary relationship to each other. The figure of a woman in a white sports dress, for instance, was used to promote modern architecture and the idea that practical dress required functional architecture and vice versa.⁷ In an issue of *Architectural Review* from 1935, Geoffrey Bounphrey created a collage, which showed a woman in an old-fashioned dress in a gymnasium (figure 1.1[left]) and asked: '[why] is our eye so offended by the juxtaposition of fancy dress and gymnasium?'⁸ His answer to this question was rather simple: because her 'dress suggests

⁵ Mark Wigley, *White Walls, Designer Dresses: The Fashioning of Modern Architecture* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: The MIT Press, 1995), p. 119.

⁶ Leila W. Kenney, 'Fashion and Fabrication in Modern Architecture', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, No. 3, 58 (1999): pp. 472–481.

⁷ Wigley, *White Walls*, p. 119.

⁸ *Ibid.* pp. 119–120.

one thing and the gymnasium is suggesting another.’⁹ In other words, the ‘function’ of the gym contradicts the ‘façade’ of the dress. Modern decoration, Boumphrey argued, should correspond to modern dress as depicted in figure 1.1 (right).¹⁰

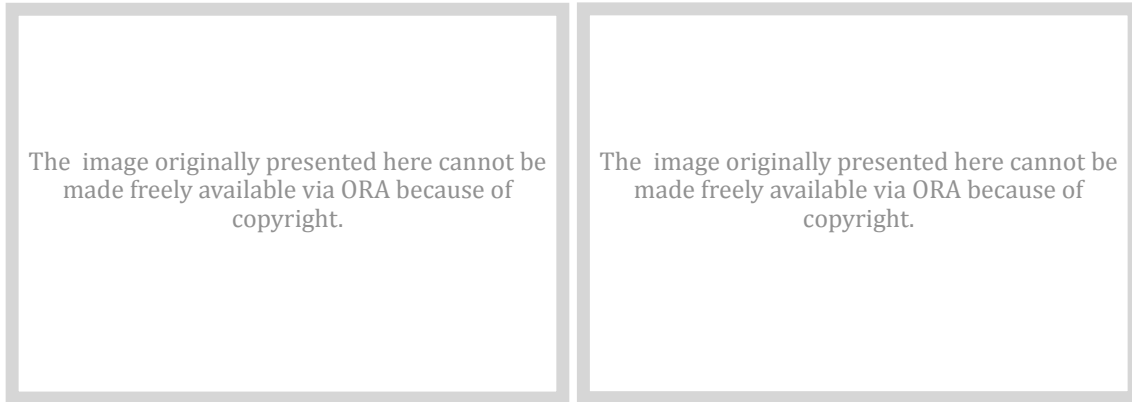


Figure 1.1: Illustrations from Geoffrey Boumphrey’s “Façade and Function”, *Architectural Review*, 1935. Pictures from: Mark Wigley, *White Walls, Designer Dresses: The Fashioning of Modern Architecture* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: The MIT Press, 1995), p. 122.

In the eyes of many Western modernist architects, then, ‘fancy dress’ and modern functional architecture were not compatible. The Iranian authorities in the 1930s took a similar stance regarding the relationship between urban architectural space and clothing, in particular women’s dress. To them, the veil (*‘chādor’*¹¹ in Farsi) was seen as an enclosed space, and as an extension of the private space of the home and of the power of *ulamā* into the public realm. The veil as a component of the traditional urban fabric was at odds with their Western-inspired vision of a modern city, an essential feature of which was the display of the female body.¹² Accordingly, the veil was banned in 1936. Beatriz

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ A *chādor* is a loose, sleeveless outer garment in compliance with Islamic *shari’eh* (Sharia) regarding dress codes.

¹² In the same vein, Lila Abu Lughod argues that to display the female body was always considered as an essential part of ‘democracy’ and ‘freedom’. Lila Abu Lughod, ‘Do Muslim Women Really Need Saving? Anthropological Reflections on Cultural Relativism and Its Others’, *American Anthropologist*, No.3, 104 (2002): pp. 783–790. Similar topics are also referenced in: Mariam Motamedi-Fraser and Farniyaz Zaker,

Colomina has pointed out that space can be a form of representation and the ‘politics of space’ can be sexual.¹³ Likewise, the Iranian authorities regarded space, in particular urban space, as a canvas on which to represent their power and vision, and from which to erase symbols that were seen as contradicting that power and vision, such as the *chādor*. The latter was a symbol of clerical power and enclosed spaces, which seemed to withdraw the female body from the state’s authority. Its ban was, therefore, more a move in a political power struggle than an issue of women’s rights. It is significant in this context that the Iranian women’s movement was dissolved in 1933 by Rezā Shāh,¹⁴ and that there was no discussion of women’s suffrage until 1963.

This study argues that this element – the (public) display of the female body, which was viewed by the authorities of the time as an indispensable part of modernity – was accomplished not only by legal measures, such as forced unveiling, but also through the introduction of new forms of architecture and dwelling, which were introduced during the reign of the Pahlavi dynasty and which continue to the present day. Open lawn houses and dense apartment blocks were considered modern and replaced courtyard houses and other more traditional ways of dwelling. All of this was, of course, part of a broader push for Western-style modernisation, which also encompassed other parts of public and private life in Iran; however, the promotion of new forms of dwelling and clothing was highly reciprocal. During the Pahlavi dynasty pictures of women wearing modern and secular western clothes flooded magazines and newspapers. Interestingly, many of these

‘Words and Walls, Texts and Textiles: A Conversation’, *Theory, Culture and Society*, Published online 27 May 2014. Digital Object Identifier (DOI): 10.1177/0263276414531051.

¹³ Beatriz Colomina, ‘Introduction’, *Sexuality and Space*, ed. Beatriz Colomina (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992).

¹⁴ Eliz Sanasarian, *The Women’s Rights Movement in Iran: Mutiny, Appeasement, and Repression from 1900 to Khomeini* (New York: Praeger, 1982), p. 67.

pictures were taken in front of the newly built mausoleums and public buildings, underlining the notion that modern (and national) architecture was supposed to go hand in hand with appropriate clothing (see pictures below). Figure 1.2 is an advertisement for the Mazandaran textile company (*nassāji-e Māzandarān*), which depicts a woman against the background of effigies of famous Iranian poets, built in a modern monumental style. The advertisement promotes both modern and western clothing for women and links that clothing to modern architecture (and to Iranian national identity, through the reference to Persian poets). The image’s message clearly is that modern clothes necessitate modern buildings and vice versa. The other images clearly point in the same direction, and are all examples of how intertwined the discourses on architecture and on women’s clothing had become.

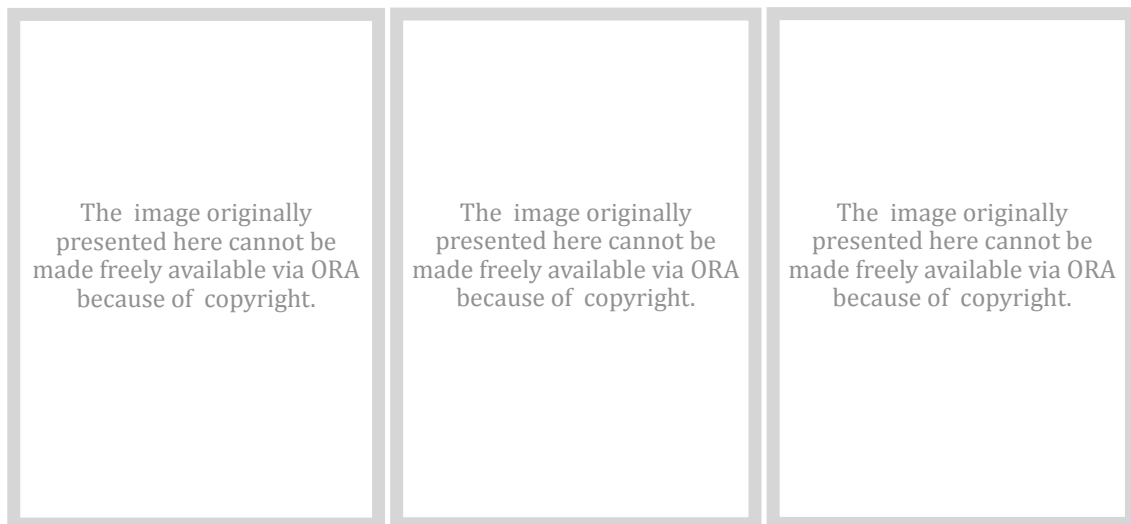


Figure 1.2: Left to right: “See what chic people are wearing!” An advertisement for *nassāji-e Māzandarān* (*Māzandarān* textile company) in the 1970s. Picture from: ‘Fashion in Pre-revolutionary Iran’, http://www.parstimes.com/fashion/pre_revolution/ last accessed: 26 July 2013.

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Figure 1.4: The cover page: a model (Mahnaz) posing in front of a modern building. *ettelā’āt-e haftegi* (*weekly news*) journal, No.5, 1549 (1350–971).

Therefore, when approaching the subject of the *chādor* one needs to categorise it not only in the context of other women's clothing (in which it historically and traditionally has fulfilled a role similar to skirts and dresses) but also as pertaining to, and interacting with, a broader architectural discourse and space.¹⁵

Interdisciplinary studies of the relationship between gender and space

In recent years scholars such as Luce Irigaray, Shirley Ardener, Elizabeth Grosz, Beatriz Colomina and Jane Rendell have written on the relationship between built places (architecture), interiors, place, space and gender. In particular, Ardener's *Women and Space*¹⁶ and *Defining Females*,¹⁷ Colomina's *Space and Sexuality*¹⁸ and Rendell's *Gender, Space and Architecture*¹⁹ analyse their subject in a multi-disciplinary way that covers a great variety of discourses regarding the relationship between gender and space.

¹⁵ This study considers the *chādor* as a form of dress, and therefore it includes it in the context of fashion. Elizabeth Wilson argues that fashion is dress, and all clothing, including uniforms and nuns' dress, is fashion. Accordingly, based on Wilson's argument, the *chādor* too falls within the context of fashion. Elizabeth Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams: Fashion and Modernity* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2003), p. 3. To regard the *chādor* as an ethnic dress and then to integrate it into the anti-fashion movement is paradoxical. In the continuous process of change in clothing and dressing styles, in the West and all other parts of the world, the boundaries between what is ethnic and what is fashion are very blurred. As Joanne Eicher and Barbara Sumberg suggest, 'ethnic dress in the late twentieth century cannot be analyzed without acknowledging the phenomenon of world fashion, for ethnic dress and world fashion are inter-related.' Joanne B. Eicher and Barbara Sumberg, 'World Fashion, Ethnic, and National Dress', *Dress and Ethnicity: Change Across Space and Time*, ed. Joanne B. Eicher (Oxford: and Washington: Berg, 1995), p. 296. Furthermore, the veil was and is a universal practice not limited to ethnic boundaries. Interestingly, Jenifer Heath argues that 'the black scarf worn for centuries by women in Greece, Corsica, Sicily, Sardinia, and other nations of the Christian Mediterranean is nearly indistinguishable from that of rural Turkey, Egypt, or Iran'. Moreover, it is a very clear indication of what was once a very common and fashionable practice. See Jenifer Heath, 'Introduction', *The Veil: Women Writers on Its History, Lore, and Politics*, ed. Jenifer Heath (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 2008), p.7.

¹⁶ Shirley Ardener, *Women and Space, Ground Rules and Social Maps* (Guildford, London, Oxford and Worcester: Billing and Sons Limited, 1993).

¹⁷ Shirley Ardener, *Defining Females, The Nature of Women in the Society* (London: Croom Helm in association with the Oxford University Women's Studies Committee, 1978).

¹⁸ Colomina, *Sexuality and Space*.

¹⁹ Jane Rendell, Barbara Penner and Ian Borden, *Gender, Space, Architecture: An Interdisciplinary Introduction* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000).

Nevertheless, the subject of gender and space offers a variety of lines of enquiry that remain to be explored.

Ardalan's and Laleh Bakhtiar's inspiring book *The Sense of Unity: The Sufi Tradition in Persian Architecture* regards the *chādor* as a 'walled space' of privacy.²⁰ In the same vein, Z. Pamela Karimi's article 'Women's Portable Habitat' defines the *chādor* as a habitat.²¹ These scholars take the word *chādor* literally: it actually translates as 'tent' in Farsi. Similarly, Giuliana Bruno, in *Public Intimacy: Architecture and the Visual Arts*, by drawing on etymological connections between the words *Wand* (German for wall) and *Gewand* (German for dress) and *abito* (Italian for a dress and an address) argues that 'to occupy a space is to wear it.'²² Irigaray describes a woman as 'homeless', and as someone for whom clothes, make-up and jewellery become masks in which to find refuge.²³ These scholars do not, however, elaborate on the concept of women's clothing more broadly as a built place, despite the fact that the perception of *chādor* (and certain women's clothing) as a habitat and a tent defines it as architecture. It contains the female body prior to any architectural space and limits a woman's movements, alters her perception of space, and so lends qualities to her movements and behaviour that we recognise as "feminine".

Scholars such as Elizabeth Grosz regard the body as a '*hinge* or threshold', which 'is placed between a psychic or lived interiority and a more sociopolitical exteriority that

²⁰ Nader Ardalan and Laleh Bakhtiar, *The Sense of Unity: The Sufi Tradition in Persian Architecture* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1973), p. 19.

²¹ Z. Pamela Karimi, 'Women's Portable Habitats' (*Body and Politics*) *ISIM Newsletter*, No.13, 1 (2003): pp. 14–15.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Luce Irigaray, *An Ethic of Sexual Difference*, trans. Carolyn Burke and Gillian C. Gill (London: Continuum, 2004), pp. 11–12.

produces interiority through the *inscription* of the body's outer surface.²⁴ Grosz suggests we reconsider the distinction between biology and culture, and focus explicitly on the role of built environments and of the city in socially constructing a biological order, or what she terms a 'sexed corporeality'.²⁵ She does not, however, analyse women's clothing as part of that built environment or in relation to it. This is what the present study attempts to do. This study approaches the issue by analysing the spatial characteristics of women's clothing. It conceptualises it as an *enclosed space* and a *dwelling place*, which restrains a woman's movements and spatial awareness and which is comparable to any architectural place.

Space and place

Certain women's clothes gain their meaning from the space they create.²⁶ This includes the *chādor* with its connotations of piety, privacy and segregation. Marsha Meskimmon, author of *Engendering the City: Women Artists and Urban Space*, argues that 'space is neither empty nor neutral' but 'is invested with meaning by and through the objects which interact within it; space is engendered by human subjects'.²⁷ However, space and place need to be defined in relation to each other. Yi-Fu Tuan in *Space and Place* writes that 'the meaning of space often merges with that of place'.²⁸ According to

²⁴ Elizabeth Grosz, *Space, Time and Perversion* (New York and London: Routledge, 1995), p. 33.

²⁵ *Ibid.* p. 104.

²⁶ By women's clothing, the author means Western European dresses/skirts, which until the beginning of the twentieth century were commonly worn, and the *chādor*. Aspects of the argument developed in this study may or may not apply to the situation of women's clothing in other societies, but it is not the concern in this study to determine to which (if any) other clothing habits in different societies this argument applies.

²⁷ Marsha Meskimmon, *Engendering the City: Women Artists and Urban Space* (London: Scarlet Press, 1997), p. 1.

²⁸ Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), p. 6.

Martin Heidegger, ‘space is in essence that for which room has been made, that which is led into its bounds.’²⁹ According to this study, the *chādor* (and other similar types of female clothing) is that which makes room for a woman’s body. Through its boundaries, it creates (delimits) around a woman’s body the space that constitutes the room in which she dwells. In other words, the *chādor* cuts her out of her environment and replaces that environment with its own microcosm.

This study argues that while *open space* is a symbol of freedom, threat and vulnerability (‘the etymological root of the word “bad” is “open”’),³⁰ place is an enclosed space (contained or limited by visible or invisible boundaries) and a symbol of safety. Moreover, place can either be an object with visible physical borders or an ‘imagined room’ (produced by social and cultural rules and by one’s relationship and interaction with that space). Physical walls or even imagined boundaries³¹ have the capacity to evoke a sense of protectedness, reminiscent of the prenatal feeling of dwelling. Moreover, the memory of a place in which a person once dwelled and felt safe and intimate stays with a person as she/he revisits and momentarily re-dwells within it.

Clothing can have the same capacity: it creates boundaries that surround the wearer like a room or an enclosure, protecting the wearer at the most basic level from rain or cold/hot weather. One can dwell in one’s clothes. And, through dwelling, people interact with different spaces and give meaning to them. In Edward Casey’s words, ‘with

²⁹ Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York and London: Harper and Row Publishers, 1971), p. 154.

³⁰ Tuan, *Space and Place*, p. 54.

³¹ For example, some open spaces may have religious connotations for a particular group of people and, therefore, for them that space (although it might not have any physical boundaries) has the quality of a place.

dwelling we are most astutely sensitive of the effects of places upon our lives.’³² Dwelling gives people an identity and a place in the world: it builds a bond between our environment and ourselves. However, the meaning of dwelling is generative and dynamic and it is doubly constructed in relation to its inhabitants: an enclosed place, with all its meanings and connotations, provides its dweller with a sense of protectedness. However, one can equally inscribe a ‘non-place’³³ with the qualities of a dwelling place, and with feeling safe and protected. The question that arises here is whether clothing possesses characteristics that qualify it as a *dwelling place*?

In the vein of Edward Casey, this study expands the definition of dwelling and extends its meaning from a concept that is exclusively applied to architecture to one that applies to the wider sphere of clothing. It conceptualises certain types of clothing as built places, following Gottfried Semper’s (1803–1879) observation that the first built environments were made from textiles, fabrics and carpets, and that there are various significant similarities and linkages between clothing and built environments.³⁴ This study attempts to contribute to future research on the subject of women’s clothing by arguing that the question of how women’s clothing affects their spatial awareness and generates a sense of belonging and dwelling is fundamental to the understanding of the relationship between gender and space.

³² Edward S. Casey, *Getting Back into Place, Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993), p. 341.

³³ ‘Non-place’ is a term coined by Marc Augé that describes places, such as stadia, airports and terminals, which are incapable of evoking any meaning or significance for their users. Marc Augé, *Non-Places: Introduction to Anthropology of Supermodernity* (London and New York: Verso, 2008).

³⁴ Gottfried Semper, *The Four Elements of Architecture and Other Writings*, trans. Harry Francis Mallgrave and Wolfgang Herrmann (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 246–247.

Outline of the dissertation

Chapter II of the study sheds light on different notions of dwelling, and considers traditional women's clothing, such as the traditional/historical dress and the *chādor* in Iran, not only as built places but as microcosmic dwelling places. Since women's dress and the *chādor* have configurations that are similar to those of a cone, this study considers *a cone place* to be the type of clothing that provides a room-like enclosure and a secure surrounding for the body of a woman. The last section of *Chapter II* briefly analyses the origins of the historical and cultural tendency to emplace women in the cone place. It does so in dialogue with Mark Wigley's study 'Untitled: The Housing of Gender',³⁵ and develops its analysis in two sections: the first section describes how the female body has been traditionally considered an oxymoronic place and an open entity that is incapable of protecting the soul; the second section analyses the notion that a woman's body is essentially a man's property that needs to be supervised as a symbol of social purity, status, wealth and aristocracy.

Chapter III argues that the cone place shapes women's movements, behaviour and identity. The cone place contains a woman's body and influences and affects her spatial awareness and perception. This part of the study also suggests that the confinement of women within the cone place might be the cause of certain divergences in the behaviour of women and men. It does so by referring to a study that analyses the throwing a ball by girls and boys, and by engaging with arguments by scholars such as Iris Marion Young, Seymour Fisher, Kent C. Bloomer, Charles W. Moore and Sophie Woodward. In addition, *Chapter III* examines the question of how femininity is shaped within the

³⁵ Mark Wigley, 'Untitled: The Housing of Gender', *Sexuality and Space*, ed. Beatriz Colomina (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992), pp. 327–389.

confined space of the cone place. The cone place is conceptualised as an entity, which is in an ongoing dialogue with social behaviour and the meaning of which is constantly shifting according to social, political and cultural changes. In that sense, this cone place functions like a habitus.

Chapter IV attempts to apply the theories which have been developed in *Chapters II* and *III* to the example of urban and domestic architecture and urban dress codes in twentieth-century Iran. This part of the study highlights the substantial linkages that existed (and still exist to some extent) between the spheres of a woman's privacy, her house and the cone place. Moreover, it argues that a woman's spatial awareness of her house is different from that of a man (in the vein of scholars such as Yi-Fu Tuan, Beverley Gordon and Gülsüm Baydar). It also explores the drastic changes in the cityscape of Tehran, in the course of which (and in the face of intense population growth) residential buildings and domestic architecture have undergone a huge transformation. Novel forms of architecture (in particular of domestic architecture) in Iran have not followed the patterns of earlier traditions, which were based on an organisation of space that was related to religious ideas such as the unity of space, and the seclusion of women. This break with earlier traditions had the effect of opening up Iranian domestic architecture, with wide-ranging consequences, particularly for women – who now became more visible in the privacy of their houses.

Chapter II: Expanding the definition of dwelling

*To at least some extent every real place can be remembered, partly because it is unique, but partly because it has affected our bodies and generated enough association to hold it in our personal worlds.*¹

*We bring our lares with us.*²

Dwelling vis-à-vis building

In his remarkable work *Getting Back into Place*, Edward S. Casey explains the inherent human need for place and dwelling. Casey describes two different places and two separate ways of dwelling. The first dwelling place is an indoor shopping arcade that he used to traverse regularly as a child (stretching between Crosby's Department Store and the Hotel Jayhawk and theatre).³ Since he often revisits this place in his memory, it also represents a specific (memorised) way of dwelling. The second dwelling place is his current study room, in which he dwells more immediately in terms of both time (in the present) and space (in a smaller space).⁴ By articulating these two scenarios Casey asks whether we know how dwelling occurs, and whether there is a specific form of dwelling.⁵ The accounts of dwelling in Casey's argument are founded on two principles: 1) '[t]o be is to be bounded by place [...],' and to belong to that place encapsulates the meaning of dwelling;⁶ and 2) there are various dwelling places and numerous ways of dwelling, but

¹ Kent C. Bloomer and Charles W. Moore, *Body, Memory, and Architecture* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997), p. 107.

² Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. Maria Jolas (Boston: Bacon Press 1994), p. 5.

³ Edward S. Casey, *Getting Back into Place, Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993), pp. 112–113.

⁴ *Ibid.* p. 113.

⁵ *Ibid.* pp. 114–115.

⁶ *Ibid.* pp. 15 and 109.

all dwellings ‘are built places.’⁷ Furthermore, he describes all built places as ‘buildings or parts of buildings,’ whether we are dealing with permanent structures such as pyramids or with temporary ones such as pitched tents.⁸ Moreover, a ‘built place’ to Casey ‘is any place transformed from an unbuilt, pre-given state by the manipulation of natural or artificial materials.’⁹ These characteristics of dwelling and built places will become important to our argument about the conceptualisation of certain women’s clothes as built places.

Casey is highly indebted to the theories of dwelling of Martin Heidegger and of Gaston Bachelard.¹⁰ He appreciates the fact that for both Heidegger and Bachelard dwelling plays an important role in assessing the influence of places on our life.¹¹ However, Casey regards the Heideggerian analysis of dwelling as more accurate than Bachelard’s, since the latter, according to him, fails to distinguish between space and place. Echoing Heidegger’s theory of dwelling and building, expressed in his essay ‘Building Dwelling Thinking,’ Casey states that ‘[b]uilding in a genuinely cultivational manner not only *leads* to dwelling but [...] is already part of dwelling.’¹² Casey’s use of the word cultivational refers to the German verb *bauen*. The latter means not only “to build” or “to dwell” but connotes a sense of cultivation (*anbauen* = to cultivate) and, thereby, hints at the overlap between dwelling and building.¹³ Furthermore, Casey draws our attention to the etymology of the word “building,” which stems from the Old English

⁷ Ibid. p. 115.

⁸ Ibid. pp. 114–115.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Casey states that neither philosopher ‘adequately assessed the role of the human body in the experience of significant places.’ Ibid. p. xv.

¹¹ Ibid. p. 341.

¹² Ibid. p. 176.

¹³ Ibid. Also in Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York and London: Harper and Row Publishers, 1971), p. 147.

verb “*bold*” and means to dwell.¹⁴ Casey writes: ‘[t]o *build* means, then, both to “construct a dwelling” and to “take up one’s abode, to dwell.”’¹⁵ In pursuing the argument of this chapter, too, it is crucial to note that building is not simply an act of producing or making but a way of dwelling per se.¹⁶ Heidegger, too, hints at this relationship when he writes that the human does not ‘dwell because [he has] built, but [he builds] and [has] built because [he] dwell[s], that is, because [he is a] *dweller*.’¹⁷ In this respect, Casey goes even further and argues that built places and dwelling places ‘overlap without being conterminous,’ just as the acts of building and dwelling are ‘distinct activities’ in nature but are often joined in practice.¹⁸ Heidegger qualifies this connection further by maintaining that not every *built place* has the quality of a dwelling place. Interrogating the way in which ‘building belongs to dwelling,’ Heidegger explains that buildings, such as stadia, power stations or bridges and so forth, possess dimensions of lived experience without being dwelling places.¹⁹ Such buildings, Heidegger concedes, ‘are in the domain of our dwelling’, a domain which extends over them ‘and yet is not limited to the dwelling place.’²⁰ Although a power station, for example, temporarily houses the engineers working in it, it does not provide a shelter for its inhabitants to “dwell” in.²¹ Therefore, in Heidegger’s opinion, built environments alone – or simply the existence of the visible boundaries which constitute them – do not necessarily constitute dwelling places.

¹⁴ Casey, *Getting Back into*, p. 176.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Heidegger, *Poetry, Language*, p. 148.

¹⁸ Casey, *Getting Back into*, p. 114.

¹⁹ Heidegger *Poetry, Language*, p. 145.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

This point leads us to the view that it is the use of a space within a built place, as a way of existing, that is important rather than the mere definition of the boundaries of that space. For instance, the *bāzār* (bazaar) in Iran is indeed a dwelling place for its shopkeepers (known as *bāzāri* in Farsi) and for some of their clients, regardless of the fact that it is a marketplace and as such not very different from the power station in Heidegger's example. The *bāzār* is a dwelling place because it is a habitat with shielding qualities, which protects the *bāzāriha* (shop-owners) – as well people who have an emotional bond with the *bāzār*, in which, on a daily basis, they spend a considerable amount of time. This point is further illustrated by the fact that some sections of the *bāzār* are designated by distinct names ending or beginning with the term *sarāy* or *sarā* (Persian for “house” or “dwelling” as in caravanserai [e.g. *sarāy-e mirza-mohammad* in Tabriz *bāzār*]).²² With their various shops, mosques, shrines, caravanserais, restaurants and cafes, Iranian *bāzār structures* provides a strong sense of a *community* and *identity* for those who work in them. Therefore, the concept of the *bāzār* as a dwelling place is very different from the power station in Heidegger's example.²³ Dwelling in this sense is not only the act of inhabiting or of living in a place; it is, indeed, existing in the world.²⁴ In other words, dwelling is a way of existing through *the community and the environment* with which humans bond. Thus, a built place provides one with a sense of settledness in the world. To belong to, to be sheltered in, to dwell in or to interact with a place always

²² Hossein Soltanzadeh, *Tārikh-e mokhtasar-e shar va shahr neshini dar Iran: az dōwr-e bāstān tā 1355 (A Brief History of the City and Urbanization in Iran: Ancient Era to 1976)* (Tehran: chāhar tāgh, 1390–2011), p. 211.

²³ The same example would be valid in the case of bridges in big cities where these spots become dwelling places for the homeless.

²⁴ Heidegger states that: ‘[i]t is not that there are men, and over and above them *space*; for when I say “a man,” and in saying this word think of a being who exists in a human manner – that is, who dwells’.

Heidegger, *Poetry, Language*, p. 145.

means having an emotional bond with a place and carrying a memory of that place. In the following discussion these notions will be explained further.

a. *Dwelling and intimacy*

Casey's two different dwelling places have been touched upon above: the Jayhawk arcade/theatre and his study. While the latter surrounded him at the time of writing, the former was a childhood memory. And while the (public and spacious) arcade was not a dwelling place in the way his (private and cosy) study was, both represent a specific place and an (actual or memorised) form of dwelling. 'I once dwelled in the Jayhawk arcade', Casey states.²⁵ Thus, there are different ways and places of dwelling: Casey felt safe, protected and intimate walking around the arcade as a child and watching a movie in the theatre (akin to the sense of protectedness one experiences in an enclosed room); he felt this way returning to that place in his memory, and while contemplating it in his study. In this regard Yi-Fu Tuan, in his book *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience*, describes how 'space becomes place as we get to know it better and endow it with value.'²⁶ While in Casey's example it is an arcade, which for him resembles an enclosed protective place, for many of us the most powerful memorised dwelling place, which we occasionally revisit in our mind, is our *childhood house* or a specific place/room in our childhood house. For the author the place she revisits and re-dwells in is a closet in her parent's bedroom. This was an exceptionally dark and small room in which she spent a considerable amount of time every day. The author still remembers the

²⁵ Casey, *Getting Back into*, p. 114.

²⁶ Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), p. 6.

aroma of her mother's perfume as she closed the door of the closet behind her. In the present, when she revisits the room in her daydreams, the lingering fragrance of a rich scent emerges from the gloom of that closet and invites her to dwell in that memory. To her, that closet resembles a protective shell inside a protective room. Casey's arcade and the author's closet evoke notions of protectedness and calmness.²⁷ Tuan, too, in his book *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values* argues that enclosed spaces indicate 'the cosy security of the womb, privacy, darkness, biological life.'²⁸ For the author, too, the darkness of the closet and the smell of her mother's perfume are so interconnected that the experience of one evokes the other. Juhani Pallasmaa, one of the most distinguished contemporary theorists of architecture, in his book *The Embodied Image: Imagination and Imagery in Architecture*, is another scholar who stressed the fact that built places evoke some of the 'prenatal [feelings and] experiences of enclosure, security, intimacy and pleasure.'²⁹ It is worth noting that all the abovementioned dwelling places invite their dwellers to experience the environment surrounding their dwelling places in a somewhat filtered and indirect way.

Although we inevitably leave our childhood house, the image and the memory of it stays – and lives – with us. The sensation of this living with the *past place* is similar to what Casey describes as being 'bounded by place.'³⁰ A similar thought has been expressed by Bachelard, who argues that the image of such a dwelling place "'clings" to

²⁷ The world of the theatre and the arcade took him far away from his personal and family problems. Casey, *Getting Back into*, p. 113.

²⁸ Yi-Fu Tuan, *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1974), pp. 28–27.

²⁹ Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Embodied Image: Imagination and Imagery in Architecture* (Chichester: John Wiley, 2011), p. 65.

³⁰ Casey, *Getting Back into*, p. 15.

its inhabitant and becomes the cell of a body with its walls close together.³¹ In another, book, *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses*, Pallasmaa has argued that the body is not just a ‘physical entity’ but that it is ‘enriched by both memory and dream.’³² As dwellers we are ‘enriched’ by the memories of built places, and our vivid memory of a place rests upon our interaction with it.³³ In other words, our dwelling in built places transforms them into ‘living rooms’, which have the capacity to ‘implace,’ ‘anchor’ and ‘orient’ us.³⁴ Casey argues that our bodies learn how to orient themselves according to the memory that they hold of certain places.³⁵ He insists that ‘places ingress into bodies in enduring and significant ways.’³⁶ In other words, places dwell inside bodies and, similarly, bodies enter into places and dwell inside them. Let us return to the example of the *bāzār*: working in a *bāzār* provides one with a strong sense of a *community* and *identity* – it means being a *bāzāri*. This is an example of the strong bond that develops between a dwelling place and its inhabitants, when inhabitants identify themselves ‘by – and with – the places in which [they] reside.’³⁷ Casey argues that dwelling places actually resemble in some basic aspects our bodies, and that since we identify with our ‘exact body configuration’ it is unsurprising that we also identify with our dwelling place. Moreover, just as our dwelling places reflect certain characteristics of ourselves, we obtain some features of the places in which we dwell.³⁸

The concept of *place* is commonly associated with security and stability, as

³¹ Bachelard, *The Poetics*, p. 46.

³² Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses* (London: Academy Editions, 1996), p. 31.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Casey, *Getting Back into*, p. 23.

³⁵ Ibid. p. 102.

³⁶ Ibid. p. 103.

³⁷ Ibid. p. 120.

³⁸ Ibid.

opposed to the openness, freedom and threat of the space surrounding it.³⁹ The most primitive and obvious examples of protective dwelling places, which shelter the body against external forces, include single-room structures (such as tents). The latter often consist of only one room – neither doors nor windows, nor any external structures distract from their essential principle: providing a protective shelter. These structures provide a more filtered experience of the environment surrounding them. Analysing dwelling places in *Dwelling with Architecture*, Roderick Kemsley and Christopher Platt argue that basic, single-room dwelling places (such as tents) convey a satisfying (albeit frugal) living experience, since within them exists ‘the right balance between privacy and sociability.’⁴⁰ They argue that in such structures the relationship between ‘inside and outside is [the one] between safety and danger, protection and exposure, the world of “us” and the world of “them”, regardless of who or what “them” is.’⁴¹ Because of the basic simplicity of such single-room structures, the relationship between the inside and the outside, between safety and danger, is very pronounced – because nothing distracts from their basic feature and function: protection. Thus, they have more potential to awaken prenatal feelings or to simulate one’s childhood house than do other forms of dwelling. Other authors have expressed the same notion: Bachelard perceives there to be a fusion between the memorised image of the mother and the house, and he analyses this fusion in his book *The Poetics of Space*.⁴² Therefore, Bachelard describes rooms and

³⁹ Tuan, *Space and Place*, p. 6.

⁴⁰ Roderick Kemsley and Christopher Platt, *Dwelling with Architecture* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2012), p. 82.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Bachelard in *The Poetics of Space* while talking about positive aspects of a house describes ‘protectiveness’ and ‘resistance’ as two important qualities of a house and refers to Henri Bosco (1888–1976). He argues that in Bosco’s *Malicroix* (1948) the house is called *La Redousse* (retreat) and is the symbol of man’s resistance: ‘the house clung close to me, like a she-wolf, and at times, I could smell her

houses (dwelling places) as ‘psychological diagrams’, which can guide ‘writers and poets in their analysis of intimacy.’⁴³ These fictional dwelling places are often set in a harsh environment (for example a snowscape) in order to emphasise their protectiveness and highlight their intimacy. Bachelard calls this kind of environmental set-up ‘cosmic negation’, in which the author (the dreamer of the house) ‘experiences all the qualities of intimacy with increased intensity.’⁴⁴ The harsh environment reduces the complexity and distraction of the outside world and creates an impermeable border between the house and its outside. It simulates a relationship between inside and outside, between safety and danger, in which the house (stripped down to one room and thus reduced to its essential protective function) represents the former and the environment the latter.

In a fundamental way, the house – and the memory of it – equips a person with something essential that prepares him/her to face the world. Bachelard emphasises that ‘a house that has been experienced is not an inert box. Inhabited space transcends geometrical space.’⁴⁵ By ‘transcending geometrical space’ Bachelard means that once an inanimate geometrical space (such as Casey’s example of the Jayhawk arcade) is interacted with, once it is experienced and remembered, and once it conveys a sense of protectedness, it acquires a social and personal dimension, which exceeds its purely geometrical qualities. Furthermore, the geometrical dimensions of such a space lose their

odor penetrating maternally to my very heart. That night she was really my mother.’ Bachelard also shows us the image of the house for Oscar Vladislav de Lubicz Milosz (1877–1929) ‘I say my mother and my thoughts are of you, oh, House. House of the lovely dark summers of my childhood.’ Therefore, Bachelard concludes that *La Redousse* (the described house in Bosco’s story) is different from Milosz’s image of the house where the image of mother and the house become inseparable (albeit both give protection), since the former is shaped by nostalgia, and the latter is *only* based on the protective qualities of a house. On the contrary, I believe that both of the descriptions presented by Bachelard in *The Poetics of Space* have an embedded nostalgia for childhood, which is rooted in the feeling of being protected by both the mother and by the house. Bachelard, *The Poetics*, pp. 43–46.

⁴³ Ibid. p. 38. Bachelard insists on ‘reading a house’ or ‘a room’.

⁴⁴ Ibid. p. 41.

⁴⁵ Ibid. p. 47.

meanings for their dwellers. Casey's arcade and the author's closet are transformed into a sphere or a place that, regardless of their dimensions, encapsulate one meaning for their dwellers: the tranquillity of feeling protected. Such a space becomes a uniform realm, an enclosed space providing protection and safety to its dweller. In the example of the Jayhawk arcade, Casey retains the memory of that place as an adult because he perceives the whole space, from the beginning of the arcade to its end (although it is vast in its dimensions), as one unified space, a place that is thus similar to the author's closet in which she felt secure as a child.

We dwell in, wander through, interact with and remember places, so '*places belong to bodies*'⁴⁶ as much as dwelling belongs to buildings. Casey explains that a mobile house, a tent or a yurt has the same potential for dwelling as an English country house.⁴⁷ Therefore, the nature of a dwelling place does not depend on its mobility or lack thereof; nor does it depend on its shape and dimensions, as was explained earlier. The nature of dwelling depends on the way an individual and her/his surroundings *adjust to each other*,⁴⁸ on the type of *interaction* it is capable of evoking within a defined space and, more importantly, on its capacity to awaken feelings of safety and protectedness, reminiscent of prenatal experiences of safety and enclosure. Single-room structures (such as tents) effectively and quickly convey the sense of protectedness, since the walls of such structures overtly and explicitly draw a line between safety (inside) and danger (outside). Our childhood experiences of sheltering and hiding underneath a blanket, inside a closet or underneath a table covered with a table cloth are all indicators of this

⁴⁶ Casey, *Getting Back into*, p. 102.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.* p. 115.

⁴⁸ Hilde Heynen 'Modernity and Domesticity: Tensions and Contradictions', *Negotiating Domesticity: Spatial Production of Gender in Modern Architecture*, eds. Hilde Heynen and Gülüşum Baydar (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), p. 21.

basic and primal human need: these structures awaken prenatal feelings that are reminiscent of the cosy security of the womb.⁴⁹ Therefore, one-room structures such as tents and yurts represent the ideal form of dwelling. There are as many forms of dwelling places (from simple single-room structures to the more complex system of a bazaar) as there are ways of dwelling (from residing in a place to wandering in an indoor shopping arcade), but all of these forms can be considered ‘built places,’ in which one dwells and which construct a significant part of the dweller’s identity. The act of *dwelling*, therefore, is an active dialogue between the dweller and the built place.

Building vis-à-vis clothing

The structure of clothing is very similar to that of a single-room building (such as tents and yurts): both are protective for whoever dwells in them and both are made of textiles. The idea of dressing and covering one’s body, according to Gottfried Semper (1803– 1879), ‘has greatly influenced style in architecture and in other arts in all periods and in all nations.’⁵⁰ Semper was a German architect and art critic who wrote extensively about the origins of architecture. He states that ‘most of the decorative symbols used in architecture have their origin and derivation in the textile art.’⁵¹ Semper points out that those primitive single-room structures, such as tents, were literally made of textile, such as carpets. Therefore, for Semper, today’s walls are the successors to earlier clothes,

⁴⁹ Tuan, *Topophilia*, pp. 28–27.

⁵⁰ Gottfried Semper, *The Four Elements of Architecture and Other Writings*, trans. Harry Francis Mallgrave and Wolfgang Herrmann (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 246–247. Semper’s writings on ‘colour’, ‘clothing’ and ‘architecture’ in the mid-nineteenth century to a great extent inspired the early twentieth-century discourses on modern architecture, which often address the subject of fashion. Sarah Williams Ksiazek, ‘Review of *White Walls, Designer Dresses: The Fashioning of Modern Architecture* by Mark Wigley’, *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, No. 1, 56 (1997): pp. 100–102.

⁵¹ Semper, *The Four Elements*, pp. 246–247.

carpets and other textiles.⁵² Furthermore, textiles in the Semperian definition are the essence of architecture and the structure is nothing more than a support for these textiles, which provide space for inhabitants. Describing ‘the profound and general influence that textiles and the covering and binding elements originally belonging to them had on style and the formal essence of the arts, and architecture in particular,’⁵³ Semper argues that textiles initially inspired many decorative symbols in architecture. Similarly, textiles have influenced the fine arts, and Semper discerns a direct link between costume and sculpture.⁵⁴ In his opinion, various ancient sculptures are developed forms of earlier wooden cult images that had worn actual dresses.⁵⁵

It is indisputable that all over the world discourses on modern architecture and clothing influenced each other in the second half of the nineteenth century, and that changes in buildings and architectural spaces were accompanied by alterations in dress codes. After Semper, numerous architects and theorists discussed the origins of architecture and many of them, like Semper, linked architecture to clothing.⁵⁶ Among

⁵² Gottfried Semper in Ruth Hanisch, *Absolutely Fabulous: Architecture and Fashion* (Munich and London: Prestel, 2006), p. 136.

⁵³ Semper, *The Four Elements*, pp. 246–247.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* p. 241.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ For example, Alois Riegl (1858–1905), who was an Austrian art historian and a member of the Vienna School of Art History, acknowledged and employed the notion of clothing as the origin of architecture: Mark Wigley, *White Walls*, p. 64; Alfred Mohrbutter (1867–1916), who in his book entitled *Die künstlerische Hebung der Frauentracht (The Artistic Survey of Female Costume)*, which was published in 1900, closely associated his philosophy of clothing with that of architecture: *Ibid.* p. 130; Jacob von Falke (1825–1897), a German art historian and writer who paid much attention to fashion, domestic interiors and their similarities. In his book *Art in the House: Historical, Critical, and Aesthetic Studies on the Decorating and Furnishing of the Dwelling*, von Falke describes how the domestic interior should ‘fit’ the inhabitant ‘like a more ample garment’. In Eric Anderson, ‘From historic dress to modern interiors: the design theory of Jakob von Falke’, *Performance, Fashion and The Modern Interior: From Victorians to Today*, ed. Fiona Fisher et al. (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2011), p. 23; Josef Hoffmann (1870–1956), an Austrian architect and designer, who also taught fashion, in his essay ‘Simple Furniture’ for ‘*Das Interieur II*’ in 1901, describes how modern dress must be used as a pattern for a setting. In Wigley, *White Walls*, p. 88; Henry Clemens van de Velde (1863–1957) a Belgian painter, architect and interior designer, designed dresses for his wife Maria Sétche to match the clothes with architectural interiors. In *Ibid.* p. 68;

these, the Austrian and Czechoslovak architect Adolf Loos (1870–1933) used Semper’s ideas extensively. His writings about fashion and architecture greatly influenced modern European architecture.⁵⁷ In his essay ‘Architecture 1910’, Loos asks whether our ‘contemporary houses correspond with our clothes?’⁵⁸ In his insightful book *White Walls, Designer Dresses: The Fashioning of Modern Architecture*, Mark Wigley shows how the relationship between clothing and architecture influenced the architects of the modern era. Furthermore, he describes how the transformation of sports dress served as a model for the rationalisation of men’s clothing for architects like Loos; and how, in this way, ornamentation was negated in architecture – a process that was reflected in the use of white paint in modern buildings instead of highly ornamented surface decoration.⁵⁹ Therefore, Wigley shows that modern architecture is in some way naked: ‘the white paint is skin rather than a dissimulating layer of clothing.’⁶⁰ Hermann Muthesius (1861–1927), a German architect and a theorist, in his most influential book *Style-Architecture and Building-Art (Stilarchitektur und Baukunst)*, published in 1903, introduces a subdivision under the title ‘Dress and Dwelling’, in which he praises the simplicity of the man’s suit and argues that changes in architecture are merely following the trend in clothing, with

The founder of the Bauhaus School Walter Gropius (1883–1969), in his essay ‘Wohnhaus-Industrie’ (‘Housing-Industry’), published in 1923, explains that architecture, like clothing, must follow ‘the modern standardisation’. Therefore, he states that to wear modern clothes and to live in a ‘rococo’ or ‘Renaissance style’ of furniture and households is a ‘fallacious’ idea. In *Ibid.* p. 102; Francis Reginald Stevens Yorke (1906–1962), one of the first English architects to design in the modern style, in his book entitled *The Modern House* published in 1934, discusses the modernisation of architecture in relation to that of dress. In Wigley, *White Walls*, pp. xx–xxi; Otto Wagner (1841–1918), an Austrian architect, and Hermann Muthesius (1861–1927), a German architect, also wrote about fashion. In Leila W. Kenney, ‘Fashion and Fabrication in Modern Architecture’, *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, No. 3, 58 (1999): pp. 472–481.

⁵⁷ Wigley, *White Walls*, p. 60.

⁵⁸ ‘[T]he style of 1900 differs from the style of 1800 only in so far as the dinner jacket of 1900 differs from the dinner jacket of 1800.’ Adolf Loos, ‘Architecture 1910’, *The Architecture of Adolf Loos: An Arts Council Exhibition*, trans. and eds. Yehuda Safran, Wilfried Wang and Mildred Budny (London: Precision Press, 1985), p. 107.

⁵⁹ Wigley, *White Walls*, p. 119.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.* p. xviii

both getting more simple.⁶¹ Furthermore, Muthesius defines clothing as a ‘closer dwelling’ which ‘envelops us’.⁶²

The art historian Heinrich Wölfflin (1864–1945) in *Prolegomena zu einer Psychologie der Architektur* (*Prolegomena to a Psychology of Architecture*) has also emphasised the power of architecture and costumes in shaping human movements and behaviour. He argues that ‘an architectural style reflects the posture [*Haltung* in German, which can also be translated as “attitude”] and movement of people in the period concerned. How people like to move and carry/hold themselves [*sich halten* in German] is expressed, above all, in their costume, and it is not difficult to show that architecture corresponds to the costume of its period [*Zeitkostüm*].’⁶³ Like architecture, costumes, and in general clothing, are capable of ascribing an identity and a position to people. The capacity of a built place to ascribe an identity and a position to a person is contingent on the potential bond between that person and her/his environment. Pallasmaa, for instance, argues that a built environment allows a human to ‘place [her/himself] in the continuum of culture’ and that ‘[o]ur domicile becomes integrated with our self-identity [and] becomes part of our own body and being.’⁶⁴ Our dwellings thus define who we are, and so does our clothing. Therefore, “costumes” are comparable to architecture and, in a similar way, illustrate and express the culture from which they have emerged.

If we accept, therefore, that architecture and clothing share certain qualities, as has been outlined above, clothing may be understood as a kind of built place; thus,

⁶¹ Herman Muthesius, *Style-Architecture and Building-Art: Transformations of Architecture in the Nineteenth Century and its Present Condition*, eds. Julius Posener et al. (Santa Monica and CA: The Getty Centre, 1994), pp. 79–80.

⁶² Ibid. p. 80.

⁶³ Heinrich Wölfflin, *Prolegomena zu einer Psychologie der Architektur* (Inaugural-Dissertation, hohen philosophischen Fakultät tat der Universität München, 1886), p. 46.

⁶⁴ Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin*, p. 50.

clothing as a built place, like any other built place, can be considered to constitute a dwelling place for its dweller. And, as a dwelling place clothing can be considered to influence and to construct an identity for those that dwell within that clothing.

The dress/veil – microcosmic dwelling places

The act of dwelling binds a human to a built place and awakens a sense of belonging. For clothing to be a dwelling there must be space (in which the body can move) between the wearer's skin and the limits of the clothes. In other words, in order for any built place, including clothing, to be transformed into a dwelling place, that place should provide *an enclosed/defined space*, which entirely envelops the body of the inhabitant. In order for a person to be able to dwell in a place, the place must convey the prenatal feelings of equanimity and protectedness. If these feelings are sustained, the mind will lull the body into the act of dwelling. Therefore, clothing can be considered as a dwelling place if it simulates a sense of safety and if it provides a *room-like* ambience, in which one can spend a considerable amount of time. All of the above-mentioned examples of dwelling places, whether they are huge shopping arcades, houses, bazaars or small closets, provide a defined space between the body of the dweller and the limits of the built place. The dwellers in such dwelling places, regardless of the dimensions of those places, define them as one unified enclosed space, and feel protected within that space. Just as not all built places necessarily constitute dwelling places, not all clothes can be considered as such. Clothing covers both male and female bodies and protects from cold and heat, rain and sun, and, additionally, constructs a particular identity for those wearing that clothing. However, in order to become a dwelling place, like certain

architectural places, clothing must be a way of existing in the world, and must be able to determine a person's position and status and provide that person with a room-like place. Clothing can be regarded as a dwelling place only if a person belongs to a certain dress in the way she/he belongs to a 'certain place'.⁶⁵

The history of clothing can be divided into the history of men's and women's fashion.⁶⁶ In general, men's clothing was drastically different from women's clothing until the 1920s. From the 1920s onwards, in the West radical changes in women's clothing took place: women's legs were seen for the first time in centuries, with hemlines rising and skirts/dresses becoming more fitted.⁶⁷ Later on, with the introduction of trousers to women's wardrobes, there came to be almost no difference in women's and men's clothing. Before the 1920s, however, dress had stayed essentially unchanged for women for centuries: until that time, whether it was the long dresses and the veils of ancient Greece and of the Roman Empire, or the various scarves and the long modest skirts/dresses of the Byzantine period, or the *chādor* of Iran, women's dress contained the body of a woman like an architectural place, or *a room*. The placing of the female body in an enclosed space was particularly pronounced in the Western fashion of the 1750–70s (see figure 2.1). During the 1750–70s, skirts reached their maximum size, as if the dresses with their wide skirts were 'architectural constructions made out of fabric.'⁶⁸ Men's clothing, however, has historically been relatively closer to the body and skin and,

⁶⁵ Christian Norberg-Schulz states that 'to dwell' means 'to belong to a certain (given) place'. Christian Norberg-Schulz, *The Concept of Dwelling: On the Way of Figurative Architecture*, trans. M. Amir Yarahmadi as *mafhome sokunat: be suye memāri-e tamsili* (Tehran: Aghā Publishing House, 1381–2002), p. 7.

⁶⁶ This study considers the *chādor* as a form of dress. See *Chapter I: Introduction* footnotes 15 and 27.

⁶⁷ Akiko Fukai et al., *Fashion: A history from the 18th to the 20th century* (Hong Kong and London: Taschen, 2006), vol. II, pp. 327–328.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* vol. I, p. 107.

accordingly, has given more freedom of movement and has not enclosed the male body to the same extent (compare figure 2.1 and figure 2.2 with figure 2.3 and figure 2.4).

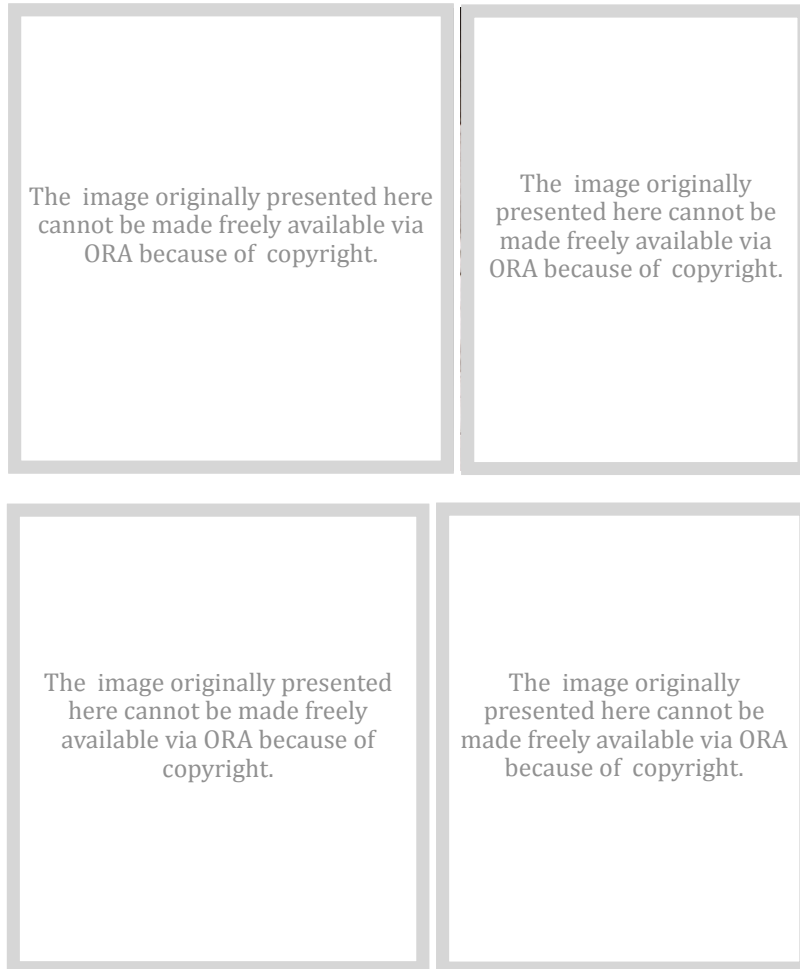


Figure 2.1: Left to right: A court dress, 1750. Picture from: Metropolitan Museum of Art page, <http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/C.I.65.13.1a->, last accessed: 26 July 2013.

Figure 2.2: A picture of an Iranian woman from the nineteenth century. Picture from: ‘Women’s Movements in Iran, 1850 – 21st Century A Brief History’, http://www.cultureofiran.com/history_of_women.html, last accessed: 21 June 2014.

Figure 2.3: Formal ensemble, about 1765. Picture from: Victoria and Albert (V&A) Museum’s page, ‘Introduction to 18th-Century Fashion’, <http://www.vam.ac.uk/content/articles/i/introduction-to-18th-century-fashion/>, last accessed: 26 July 2013.

Figure 2.4: Ahmad Shāh, one of the kings of the Qājār dynasty (1785–1925), 1898. Picture from: ‘Art of Persia’, <http://www.artofp.com/PersianArt101.html>, last accessed: 28 July 2014.

Thus, men’s clothing has not resembled an enclosed room-like space and men’s clothing, unlike women’s dress, could not be considered to constitute a dwelling place. Traditional women’s clothing (dresses and *chādor*), then, fulfills the above-mentioned qualifications

– since it has the capacity to create yet another private space in addition to the one generated by the walls of a house (see figures 2.1 and 2.2).

As described in *Chapter I*, scholars such as Z. Pamela Karimi,⁶⁹ Nader Ardalan and Laleh Bakhtiar⁷⁰ regard the *chādor* (which, after all, can literally be translated as “tent” in Farsi) as a ‘walled space’ of privacy. A woman’s *dress* or *chādor*, like the single-room structure of vernacular buildings (tents), provides an enclosed room-like space and separates her from the “perilous” outside world. In this context, I would like to extend the nature of building and dwelling to the sphere of women’s wear and dwelling. A woman, like a dweller in a building, inhabits her dress or her veil. Her clothes inscribe a certain feminine identity to her without which she would cease to be a woman, just as much as she renders these clothes distinctively feminine. In this respect, I would like to consider the dress and the veil – and, in general, the traditional ways in which women have clothed (wrapped) themselves – as microcosmic dwelling places. In other words, women are dwellers in their clothes (dress/veil) and their relationship with their surroundings is mediated through their dresses or their veils. The space underneath the veil/dress allows only a limited freedom of movement, and it is the first container of the female body. The veil and the dress have configurations that are very similar to those of a cone. As a result, this study considers women’s clothing that has the aforementioned qualities as *the cone place* (see figures 2.5 and 2.6).

⁶⁹Z. Pamela Karimi, ‘Women’s Portable Habitats’ (*Body and Politics*) *ISIM Newsletter*, No.13, 1 (2003): pp. 14–15.

⁷⁰Nader Ardalan and Laleh Bakhtiar, *The Sense of Unity: The Sufi Tradition in Persian Architecture* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1973), p. 19.

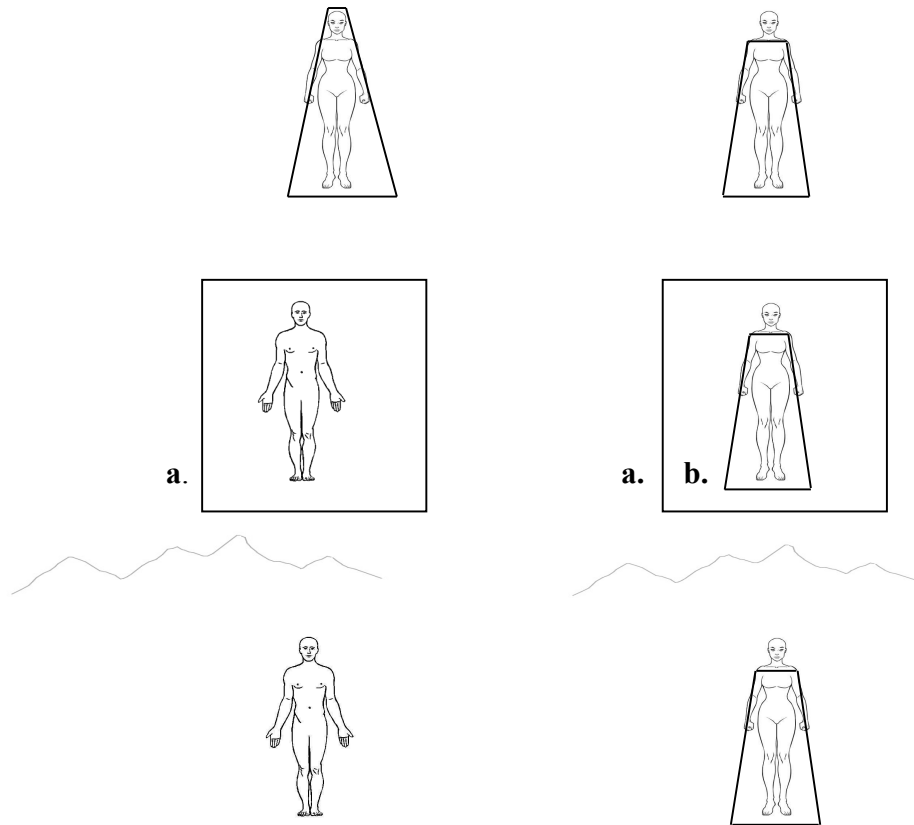


Figure 2.5: Left to right: a woman in a *chādor* – the cone place. Drawing by the author, 2013.

Figure 2.6: A woman in a dress – the cone place. Drawing by the author. 2013.

Figure 2.7: A man in a room entitled (a). Drawing by the author, 2013.

Figure 2.8: A woman in a room entitled (a) and also in the cone place entitled (b). She is within two places. Drawing by the author, 2013.

Figure 2.9: A man out of a room in an open space. Drawing by the author, 2013.

Figure 2.10: A woman who is in an open space but still is in the cone place (here she is within a single place). Drawing by the author, 2013.

Like architecture, *the cone place is a built place* that provides space for movement and dwelling inside its structure, but at the same time it is *mobile and portable*. Women who dwell in the cone place can traverse from A to B without leaving their mobile architecture: the cone place. In other words, even if a woman leaves her house or any other built place, she is still in an architectural place, since she is in her cone place. Accordingly, for women who wear such clothing any built place is always a *secondary* place or a *secondary* dwelling place (see figures 2.7, 2.8, 2.9 and 2.10).

The cone place has a very simple structure that is similar to that of a tent or a yurt:

a simple enclosure (a bent fabric) and a pole to hoist that fabric in the air (in this case a woman's body). The cone place is an essential and the most basic form of dwelling for a woman, since it effectively and quickly conveys a sense of protectedness and dwelling. Scholars such as Pallasmaa have argued that the built places in which we dwell tend to be integrated with our identities to the extent that these places become inseparable from our being.⁷¹ In other words, on the one hand the built places in which we dwell resemble our bodies and reflect the way we inhabit them and, on the other hand, we too are shaped by the places in which we dwell. This also holds true for the cone place. The latter as a built place, like any built place, relates to and reflects social, historical and cultural changes and events; at the same time, the cone place influences and shapes our behaviour (as women), as it is in a dialogue and in harmony with the body. A woman is indeed "bounded" by the cone place, since her dwelling in the cone place is not only the inhabiting of a place (wearing a spacious dresses or the *chādor*) but was (and is in traditional societies) rather a way of existing in a society and outside the privacy of the house.⁷² The next section will look at why women are confined within the walls of built places.

Emplaced

The visual and vocal appearance of a woman in public without a guardian or litter (palanquin), or without her veil and spacious clothes (the cone place), has traditionally been banned or considered taboo in many societies. In the Persian case it is difficult to say when exactly women became secluded in enclosed places, such as in cone places and

⁷¹ Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin*, p. 50.

⁷² See above footnote 24.

their houses, but according to Guity Nashat in *Women in Iran: From the Rise of Islam to 1800* archaeological findings and legal texts from the Mesopotamian civilization (3500–2000 B.C.E.) and from the mid-Assyrian period (1132–115 B.C.E.) suggest that women’s confinement in enclosed spaces stems from a very ancient tradition.⁷³ Wigley’s essay ‘Untitled: The Housing of Gender’ analyses gender in relation to architectural places on the basis of historical texts from the Renaissance period.⁷⁴ He points out that Leon Battista Alberti’s (1404–1472) books *On the Art of Building in Ten Books* and *Della Famiglia (Family in the Renaissance Florence)* make overt references to architecture’s role as a ‘mechanism’ in creating a ‘spatial order’ and a ‘system of surveillance’ in relation to gender.⁷⁵ According to Alberti, women are to be ‘confined deep within sequences of spaces’ while men ‘are to be exposed to that outside.’⁷⁶ Wigley argues that the discourse of opposing the ‘exposed male’ to the ‘confined woman’ was not an invention of Alberti’s time. Alberti’s texts were based on Xenophon’s (430–354 B.C.E.) treatise *Oeconomicus*, in which ‘the woman’s nature [is made] for indoor and the man’s for outdoor occupations.’⁷⁷ The question that arises here is: what are the historical origins and causes of the cultural tendency to pressurise, or to persuade, women to locate themselves in built places such as the cone place? The historical existence of enclosed

⁷³ Guity Nashat, ‘Women in Pre-Islamic and Early Islamic Iran’, *Women in Iran: From the Rise of Islam to 1800*, eds. Guity Nashat and Lois Beck (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003), p. 12.

⁷⁴ Mark Wigley, ‘Untitled: The Housing of Gender’, *Sexuality and Space*, ed. Beatriz Colomina (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992), pp. 327–389.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.* pp. 332–333.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.* p. 332.

⁷⁷ Xenophon, *Oeconomicus (The Economist)*, *The Works of Xenophon*, trans. Henry Graham Dakyns, in Wigley, ‘The Housing of Gender’, p. 334. In Ancient Greece a woman was considered a “cold body” while a man was a “warm body”, and because of this supposed physiological defect women were supposed to stay in enclosed spaces, since it was believed that the interiors were more suitable for their particular physiology. Furthermore, women were more covered outside of the realm of the house: knee-length tunics were used for the inside, and ankle-length tunics for the outside. Richard Sennett, *Flesh and Stone: The Body and the City in Western Civilization* (London and Boston: Faber and Faber, 1994), p. 34.

spaces designed to envelop the female body can be explained in various ways. In the vein of Wigley's study, the present study finds two major arguments for the historical and cultural tendencies that have caused people to enplace women's bodies. These two causes and arguments frequently overlap and collapse into each other, and are described in the following sub-sections.

a. *Oxymoronic place*

Wigley argues that the link between 'the treatment of the body as building' and the tendency to 'privatize bodies with buildings' is evidently traceable throughout the history of privacy.⁷⁸ According to Wigley, '[t]he body was increasingly subjected to the very same regimes of hygiene, order, discipline, and prohibition as buildings.'⁷⁹ It is thus interesting to note that throughout history and in many cultures the female body has been regarded as an open container that could not, therefore, be considered a solid built place comparable to a building. For example, take the alleged "impurity" of giving birth and of menstruation: the openness of the body of a woman in comparison to that of a man, and the notions of its "impurity" that were closely linked to menstruation and childbirth, authorised the male members of a society to "protect" her and her environment from possible pollution.⁸⁰ In this regard, Wigley refers to the fourteenth-century scholar Henri

⁷⁸ Wigley, 'The Housing of Gender', p. 358. For example, the Iranian philosopher Seyyed Hosseyn Nasr also considers the body as a 'temple' in which the *ruh* (spirit) resides. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, 'Foreword', *The Sense of Unity: The Sufi Tradition in Persian Architecture*, Nader Ardalan and Laleh Bakhtiar (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1973), p. xii.

⁷⁹ Wigley, 'The Housing of Gender', p. 359.

⁸⁰ Despite the fact that the pregnancy in general was regarded as something sacred, the act of giving birth and menstruation, with fluids and blood coming out of the body, were seen as something revolting or even sinister. Therefore, a woman was seen as a source of pollution. Victor Turner describes how in some societies the menstruation of women was associated with 'the absence or loss of a fetus.' Victor Witter Turner, *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1967), p.

de Mondeville (1269–1316), who discussed the body in relation to architecture and argued that the body was a house for the soul and hence a perfect construction.⁸¹ However, according to Mondeville the female body was denied this capacity: ‘her house has been disordered, leaving its walls full of openings.’⁸² A woman’s body was considered grotesque, ‘unfinished’, as something that ‘outgrows itself, transgresses its own limits.’⁸³ Therefore, de Mondeville maintained that any house (read: body) could only be maintained by constant surveillance of its openings.⁸⁴ According to Peter Stallybrass, the supervised areas are ‘the mouth,’ ‘chastity,’ and the ‘threshold of the house’,⁸⁵ all of which indicates the body’s openness to something exterior, from which it needs to be protected and to be supervised. Subsequently, the “open” female body, so the argument went, could not accommodate the soul. The female body was regarded as ‘convoluted’ and ‘turned inside out.’⁸⁶ In *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History*, Casey discusses the notion of the female body as something turned ‘inside out’ or as an open envelope or an architectural object with porous walls. He argues that the female

96. Menstruating women have in many societies been believed to be impure, and that has been used as an argument for their further confinement. Hilary Alton argues that the confinement of women in enclosed spaces during their menstruation has been practiced among many cultures. Hilary Alton, ‘The Moon and Menstruation: A Taboo Subject’ Selected Extracts from Robert Briffault’s *The Mothers*, the Radical Anthropology Group, available at: http://www.radicalanthropologygroup.org/old/pub_the%20mothers.pdf last accessed: 6 September 2013. The confinement of women during their menstruation was in practice among various castes in India. For more on this refer to: Nur Yalman, ‘On the Purity of Women in the Castes of Ceylon and Malabar’, *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, No. 1, 93(1963): pp. 25–58. In pre-Islamic Iran (during Zoroastrianism), menstruation was considered as something filthy and women were advised to stay in the isolated and uncomfortable section of the house known as *dashtānistān*. Edward W. West, *Pahlavi Texts Volume 1: The Bundahis, Bahman Yast, and Shāyast Lā-Shāyast* (Cambridge: The University of Cambridge Press, 1880), p. 277.

⁸¹ Wigley, ‘The Housing of Gender’, p. 358.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Peter Stallybrass, ‘Patriarchal Territories: The Body Enclosed,’ *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Margaret W. Ferguson et al. (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1986), p. 126.

⁸⁴ Wigley, ‘The Housing of Gender’, p. 358.

⁸⁵ Peter Stallybrass, ‘Patriarchal Territories’, p. 126.

⁸⁶ Wigley, ‘The Housing of Gender’, p. 358.

body was traditionally ascribed with an ‘oxymoronic quality’: it was seen as both open and enclosed.⁸⁷ This alleged anatomical anomaly has in various historical contexts repeatedly provided an important justification for the perceived need to confine not only the female body but also great parts of women’s existences in enclosed built places.⁸⁸

While Wigley believes this enclosed built place to be the house, this study considers it to be primarily the cone place, being the continuation of the static architecture (which serves the same purpose), and only secondarily any other built place.



Figure 2.11: Left to right: “*hejāb masuniyat ast*” (“Hijab is immunity”): poster, comparing the body of a woman with an unprotected chocolate, Tehran, Iran. Picture from ‘Does the hijab protect women from harassment?’ <http://www.beliefnet.com/columnists/cityofbrass/2012/09/does-the-hijab-protect-women-from-harassment.html#vbxEkFZ9OzJUgACh.99>, last accessed: 25 August 2014.

Figure 2.12: *Hijab* poster, comparing the female body with an unprotected flame, Iran. Picture from: ‘zan va khanevadeh (woman and family)’, <http://www.lhmv123.blogfa.com>, last accessed: 25 August 2014.

Propaganda posters, such as the ones in figures 2.11 and 2.12, promote the need to cover the female body, which they conceptualise as a vulnerable or even perishable entity, such

⁸⁷ Therefore, the male body was defined as an entity closer to the definition of God, since it was considered to be more complete than the body a woman. Edward S. Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: The University of California Press, 1997), p. 325.

⁸⁸ Interestingly, in Ancient Rome, men who allowed their bodies to be penetrated by other men were considered *infamis* (lacking reputation), as they had treated their bodies similarly to that of a woman. Catharine Edwards, ‘Unspeakable Professions: Public Performance and Prostitution in Ancient Rome’, *Roman Sexualities*, eds. Judith P. Hallett and Marilyn B. Skinner (Princeton and New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997), p. 73.

as a chocolate or a flame. They clearly propagate the same idea of the alleged imperfection of the female body and even its vulnerability to danger (as symbolised by decay and fire) if left unprotected/uncovered.

b. Social purity

The second reason for the emplacement of women's bodies in a secondary place is related to notions of virtuousness and chastity. The growth of urban life and the great accumulation of personal wealth during and after the Mesopotamian civilization (3500–2000 B.C.E) increased the importance of securing what was regarded as the 'purity of the bloodline', and of one's heritage, for one's children.⁸⁹ In line with this, the role of women in society was reduced to that of a wife and a mother: confined, and deprived of almost any contact with strangers.⁹⁰

Wigley argues that in Ancient Greek society women were often described as lacking 'internal self-control', i.e. control over their boundaries, since their 'fluid sexuality endlessly overflows.'⁹¹ For that reason, the role of protecting women was given to men, and was treated as an indicator of their masculinity.⁹² Wigley continues that 'the house literally provides the boundaries which control female sexuality.'⁹³ Therefore, in Ancient Greek ideology the house 'assumes the role's of the man's self-control. The virtuous woman becomes woman-plus-house or, rather, woman-as-housed, such that her

⁸⁹ Nashat, 'Women in Pre-Islamic and Early Islamic Iran', pp. 11–12.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Wigley, 'The Housing of Gender', p. 335.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid. p. 337.

virtue cannot be separated from the physical space.⁹⁴ Therefore, Wigley adds, the role of architecture (the house in his argument) becomes explicitly associated with control over ‘women’s sexuality, the chastity of the girl, [and] the fidelity of the wife.’⁹⁵ In this regard, Kirsten Hastrup describes how women’s chastity became a symbol of ‘social purity’ and that in every society ‘a biological model [is] being used to serve distinct social purposes, and for natural reasons it is the model of women’s virginity that is of most use to the society.’⁹⁶ Moreover, a woman’s body has been regarded as a visible part of the community, and the contamination of one woman has therefore been considered a pollution of the entire community. The alleged pollution has often been perceived as a danger to the whole society and to its constitution. Thus, patriarchal societies tend to supervise women and their “open bodies”, by structuring the physical boundaries surrounding them. They also limit women’s control over their bodies and sexual behaviour and demand chastity as a proof of their successful supervision. Therefore, in many societies chastity and virginity have been (and often still are) expected of women at the time of marriage. It has been the men’s responsibility to safeguard the threshold of a woman’s body and of the house, and to safeguard her chastity within a built place.⁹⁷ Wigley describes how the famous architect and thinker Alberti tells us that, while it was accepted for honourable women to build a monument for their husbands (their guardians), a “well-know harlot” was banned from doing so.⁹⁸ It seems that a woman could only

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid. p. 336.

⁹⁶ Kirsten Hastrup, ‘The Semantics of Biology: Virginity’, *Defining Females, The Nature of Women in the Society*, ed. Shirley Ardener (London: Croom Helm in association with the Oxford University Women's Studies Committee, 1978), p. 56.

⁹⁷ For example, Hastrup describes how in many societies the public displaying of a white sheet stained with blood was used as a proof of the bride’s virginity. Ibid. p. 56.

⁹⁸ Wigley, ‘The Housing of Gender’, p. 357.

represent her husband ‘when [her] virtue [was] immobile, [and] non-exchangeable.’⁹⁹ A prostitute or a slave, unlike a “virtuous woman”, was associated with immodesty and with notions of ‘mobility, detachment from the ground, independence, exchangeability.’¹⁰⁰ Wigley rightly argues that ‘the domesticated woman is the mark of man, the material sign of an immaterial presence.’¹⁰¹ The association of the body with architecture and of control over women’s sexuality with built spaces – ‘woman-as-housed’– was particularly pronounced in the Victorian era (1837–1901). As a result, it became a popular subject of many moralistic pictures of that era.¹⁰²

Both the house and the cone place are enclosed places that provide permanent and regular surveillance. In other words, as an extension of the house (a mobile built place), the cone place symbolically and physically protects the woman’s body and chastity, as well as also marking her body as the property of a man even outside the house. Its symbolic significance is reflected by the fact that many ancient cultures banned prostitutes and slaves from wearing “respectable” female women’s clothing.¹⁰³ Generally seen as outcasts, slaves and prostitutes were not regarded as part of the “bigger entity” of society and as such were not a threat to its “social purity”. For example, in ancient Rome

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² In paintings, such as William Morris’s (1834–1896) *Queen Guinevere*, George Elgar Hicks’s (1824–1914) *Woman’s Mission: Companion of Manhood* or Charles West Cope’s (1811–1890) *The Young Mother*, faithful and loyal women are depicted in enclosed and richly ornamented spaces. In pictures of the subject of infidelity and adultery, on the contrary, open spaces (a landscape, an open window or an open door in the background) emblemise the female unfaithfulness and its potential consequences. For instance, John Roddan Spencer Stanhope’s (1829–1908) *Thoughts of the Past*, Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s (1828–1882) *Found* and Augustus Egg’s (1816–1863) *Past and Present No. 1*. These are a few examples among many.

¹⁰³ Nikki R. Keddie, *Women in the Middle East: Past and Present* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2007), p. 14. And also in: Fadwa El Guind, *Veil: Modesty, Privacy and Resistance* (Oxford: Berg, 1999), p. 15. And also in: Edwards, ‘Unspeaking Professions’, p. 81.

after the second century B.C.E., prostitutes were banned from wearing the ‘stole’¹⁰⁴ – the usual dress for women – and were required to wear the ‘toga’,¹⁰⁵ usually worn by men.¹⁰⁶ In many cultures and societies prostitutes and slaves, whose bodies were regarded as mobile (not as housed) and as purchasable property, were not required to wear female clothing or to be emplaced in the cone place while outside the realm of the house. According to Wigley, the perceived compatibility of the female nature with indoors (private spaces) and of the male one with outdoors (public spaces), which was propagated by Xenophon and later by Alberti, reflected the idea that a person’s ‘mental and physical character’ was linked to the place she/he inhabits.¹⁰⁷ For example, sitting indoors for a man was regarded as being in the ‘wrong place’, because ‘compelled to sit indoors, the body becomes effeminate and mind loses its strength.’¹⁰⁸ Accordingly, if a woman detaches herself from her designated architectural places (here the house, and supervision by a man) she becomes more ‘dangerously feminine rather than more masculine.’¹⁰⁹ The aforementioned prostitutes and harlots in ancient Rome were detached from static architecture (the house) and from a man’s surveillance. They were consequently recognised as ‘monsters’ who had ‘violated the boundaries’¹¹⁰ and, as such, were banned from wearing women’s clothing. They wore men’s clothing while in public: in which they were not perceived as ‘dangerously feminine’ or, in other words, as capable of endangering the virtue of the entire community, but rather as asexual.

¹⁰⁴ A long white dress covering the female body to above the feet.

¹⁰⁵ A cloth that was wrapped around the body and worn over a tunic.

¹⁰⁶ Edwards, ‘Unspeakable Professions’, p. 81.

¹⁰⁷ Wigley, ‘The Housing of Gender’, p. 334.

¹⁰⁸ Xenophon, ‘*Oeconomicus*’ (‘The Economist’), *The Works of Xenophon*, trans. Henry Graham Dakyns, in Wigley, ‘The Housing of Gender’, p. 334.

¹⁰⁹ Wigley, ‘The Housing of Gender’, p. 334.

¹¹⁰ Holt N. Parker, ‘The Teratogenic Grid’, *Roman Sexualities*, eds. Judith P. Hallett and Marilyn B. Skinner (Princeton and New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997), p. 59.

The above-mentioned examples illustrate certain practices that celebrated a man's exclusive ownership of a woman's body and its confinement in and conflation with built places. Similar practices are not confined to ancient societies, however; they can be found in twentieth-century Iran. It is telling in this regard that Rezā Shāh (reigned: 1925–1941) attempted to discredit the *chādor* in the eyes of the society, by forcing prostitutes to wear the black *chādor*.¹¹¹ However, the Shah did not succeed in breaking the link between notions of domesticity, the *chādor* and respectability. In various cultures, including Hellenic, Judaic, Byzantine and Balkan cultures, the wearing of veils and of spacious skirts has been a symbol of wealth and aristocracy.¹¹² The cone place – just like sophisticated and expensive architecture – demanded space for itself and, by emplacing the body of woman within its boundaries, also showed its association with wealth, power and social status since it was extending men's property into the streets.¹¹³ Karimi has compared the culture of the public life of migrants from villages in cities with that of villagers in rural areas. She concludes that migrant women in cities were more isolated, since the seclusion of women in rural areas 'was neither practical nor necessary as almost everybody in the village was non-stranger.'¹¹⁴ The size of the community was, however,

¹¹¹ From my conversation with Doctor Soheila Shahanshahi, in the School of Social Science, The University of Shahid Beheshti, 2012, Tehran, Iran.

¹¹² El Guind, *Veil: Modesty, Privacy*, p. 149.

¹¹³ Tuan argues that space is a symbol of prestige and prosperity and power. He continues that 'the "big man" occupies and has access to more space than lesser beings' and, therefore, '[a]n aggressive ego endlessly demands more room in which to move.' Tuan, *Space and Place*, p. 58. The argument here is that the demand among aristocrats for more space was one of the reasons for the transformation of women's clothing into tent-like places. In this regard, Soheila Shahanshahi argues that for women in Iran there was a direct correlation between wealth and special isolation and social exclusion. Therefore, the *chādor* and the dress were markers of social status but also the showcases and extensions of male wealth and capital. In the cone place a woman remains within the sphere of a man's property even when leaving his house or presence – which provides regular and permanent surveillance. From my conversation with Doctor Soheila Shahanshahi.

¹¹⁴ Z. Pamela Karimi, 'Transition in Domestic Architecture and Home Culture in Twentieth Century Iran' (PhD diss. Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2009), p. 262. Guity Nashat too argues that '[in] rural areas, division along gender lines was not stringent because of a higher degree of trust' because these

not the only reason for the greater visibility of women in public in small towns, villages and among nomads. In such societies the distribution of wealth was more equal, class differentiation was less pronounced, and the toleration of higher residential density was greater. Consequently, the *chādor* was less widespread and women were normally dressed in long skirts or dresses – which are still a cone place, but one of a lesser extent.

‘communities were smaller’, and people ‘were either related by kinship or acquainted since childhood.’ Guity Nashat, ‘Introduction’, *Women in Iran: From the Rise of Islam to 1800*, eds. Guity Nashat and Lois Beck (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003), p. 5. Layla S. Diba also references the same issues. Layla S. Diba, ‘Lifting the Veil from the Face of Depiction in Persian Painting’, *Women in Iran: From the Rise of Islam to 1800*, eds. Guity Nashat and Lois Beck (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003). p. 230.

Chapter III: The cone place

*A boundary is not that at which something stops but, as the Greeks recognized, the boundary is that from which something begins its presencing.*¹

*The power of place will be remarkable.*²

The cone place and perceptual systems

How does/did the cone place affect women's self and spatial perception? How does it construct the qualities that are associated with femininity? First of all, we should remember that the first built place in which the body of a woman was/is emplaced is the cone place. Accordingly, her experience of the second environment (e.g. the house) would appear to differ from that of a man.

In 'Questions of Perception: Phenomenology of Architecture', Steven Holl describes how architecture, more than any other medium, 'engages the immediacy of our sensory perceptions.'³ For him all architectural details, from '[t]he passage of time; light, shadow, and transparency;' to 'colour phenomena, texture, and material', have an impact on our spatial perception.⁴ Accordingly, for Holl, only architecture 'can simultaneously awaken all the senses – all the complexities of perception.'⁵ For instance, Holl describes how in the mind of a person sitting at a desk in a room by a window all the details and

¹ Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York and London: Harper and Row Publishers, 1971), p. 154.

² Aristotle, *Physics* (210b27–30), in Edward S. Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: The University of California Press, 1997), p. ix.

³ Steven Holl, 'Questions of Perception: Phenomenology of Architecture', Steven Holl, Juhani Pallasmaa and Alberto Pérez-Gómez, *Questions of Perception: Phenomenology of Architecture* (San Francisco: William Stout Publishers, 2006), p. 41.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

information generated by the senses – ‘the distant view, light from the window, floor material’ – ‘merge perceptually’ and shape the architectural space, and the person’s spatial perception.⁶ However, our spatial perception is not solely dependent on different architectural places and their particularities. It is also dependent on the psychic image (the unconscious image) of our bodies and of the boundary of our bodies (the “body boundary”), which, in turn, shapes the knowledge of the space we inhabit and enables us to use our bodies as a means of orientation. In their inspiring book *Body, Memory, and Architecture*, Kent C. Bloomer and Charles W. Moore describe how this image (the unconscious image) of our bodies is quite different from what we know ‘objectively and quantifiably about [our] physicality.’⁷ Seymour Fisher in *Body Experience in Fantasy and Behaviour* employs the term ‘body image’ to describe a person’s unconscious image, – the subjective experience and awareness – of his or her body in space in relation to the surrounding objects.⁸ An integral part of this ‘body image’ is our awareness of our ‘body boundary.’⁹ In other words, an ‘individual must learn to demarcate [his/her] body from [his/her] environs and that the clearness of this demarcation may have significant behavioural implications.’¹⁰ In the same vein, Bloomer and Moore argue that individuals unconsciously locate their bodies in a ‘three-dimensional boundary’ enveloping the actual body.¹¹ This ‘body boundary’ adjusts one’s perception of the forces affecting it by

⁶ Ibid. p. 45.

⁷ Kent C. Bloomer and Charles W. Moore, *Body, Memory, and Architecture* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997), p. 37.

⁸ Seymour Fisher, *Body Experience in Fantasy and Behaviour* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1970), p. 15.

⁹ Fisher argues that the body boundary is the ‘demarcation of the one’s body limits from the world.’ Ibid. p. 155.

¹⁰ Seymour Fisher and Sidney E. Cleveland, ‘Personality, Body Perception, and Body Image Boundary’, *The Body Percept*, eds. Seymour Wapner and Heinz Warner (New York: Random House 1965), p. 52.

¹¹ Bloomer and Moore, *Body, Memory*, p. 37.

‘magnifying or suppressing the psychological effect of those forces.’¹² The ‘body boundary’ can be modified: for example, it can be extended by clothing or by any other object – for instance a vehicle can be the extension of our legs, or a microphone can be the extension of our voice.¹³ As was described in *Chapter II*, the “open body” of a woman was “amended” by the permanent emplacement of her in the cone place (the dress or the *chādor*), which created a more solid image of her body. In other words, the body boundary is located around our actual body and in our lateral space. While the cone place physically envelops the actual body the body boundary does so in an imagined or psychological way. However, sometimes the psychological body boundary shrinks – with the result that a person perceives his or her body as smaller than it actually is. To compensate for this he or she might use clothing. For example, people who have experienced a chain of failures in their lives might feel shorter and in order to address this feeling they might begin to wear a hat.¹⁴ In his studies, Fisher characterises a boundary as something having the qualities of ‘barrier’ (boundary definiteness) and ‘penetration’ (boundary weakness). He describes how various people experience the plasticity or the firmness of these boundaries differently.¹⁵ Some might consider their body as clearly separate from ‘non-self objects’, while others might find their body to be poorly demarcated and as merged with other objects.¹⁶ Fisher’s findings show that women experience their body boundaries as more rigid, clearly articulated and impenetrable than men because women more clearly distinguish their bodies from their surrounding

¹² Ibid. p. 38.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid. p. 37.

¹⁵ Fisher, *Body Experience*, pp. 155–157.

¹⁶ Ibid.

environment.¹⁷ These concepts will become important to our argument about the conceptualisation of women's clothing as body boundary.

If we accept that all the details in an architectural space are crucial in shaping one's spatial awareness and also that one can amend or alter her/his body boundary and body image by the use of external objects and tools, then the existence of the cone place as a built place that contains a woman's body would definitely change that architectural space and one's spatial perception of it. The basic senses are sight, smell, sound, taste and touch; however, James Gibson, in his book *The Senses Considered as Perceptual Systems*, categorises the basic senses as the basic-orienting system, the haptic system, the visual system, the auditory and the taste-smell.¹⁸ He categorises these senses as 'perceptual systems' and as sources of knowledge.¹⁹ In the following I will analyse how women's *perceptual systems* are altered by the cone place.

a. *The basic-orienting system*

Bloomer and Moore argue that the 'basic-orienting system' and the 'haptic system' (among other perceptual systems) are directly shaped by our engagement with three-dimensional spaces such as architecture.²⁰ Our basic-orienting system is the 'postural senses' of right/left, up/down, front/back and here-in-the-centre, which create

¹⁷ Ibid. p. 528. Also in this regard, Fisher and Cleveland in 'Personality, Body Perception, and Body Image Boundary' argue that 'the high barrier subject exceeds the low barrier subject in level of physiological arousal of exterior body areas [e.g. skin, or the cone place in our argument, while] the low barrier subject manifest higher arousal of interior regions [e.g. heart] than the high barrier subject.' Fisher and Cleveland, 'Personality, Body Perception', p. 59.

¹⁸ James J. Gibson, *The Senses Considered as Perceptual Systems* (Westport and Connecticut: Greenwood Press 1983), p. 49.

¹⁹ Ibid. p. 47.

²⁰ Bloomer and Moore, *Body, Memory*, p. 33.

our ‘body equilibrium’ and enable us to orient ourselves in space, according to our position (and the position of objects) in space.²¹

First of all, a woman who is in the cone place does not move her body in the same way that a way a man does, and her use of the lateral space is very limited and close to her body. On the difference in the use of the lateral space, Erwin Straus (1891–1975), the phenomenologist and neurologist, states as follows: ‘[a] girl of five does not make any use of lateral space. She does not stretch her arm sideward; [...] she does not move her legs, [...]. All she does in preparation for throwing is to lift her right arm forward to the horizontal and to bend the forearm backward in a pronate position.’²² Straus continues: ‘[t]he excursion of her motion in the elbow joint does not exceed an angle of about 90°. [Then, she releases the ball] without force [...]’.²³ This description indicates that a girl does not use any of her lateral space. However, unlike a girl, a boy of the same age uses all his lateral space and all the possible movement, as ‘the excursion of his final motion reaches an angle of 180°’, and then he throws the ball.²⁴ Figure 3.1 clearly illustrates Straus’s point. Straus explains this difference by arguing that the way boys throw a ball corresponds to ‘masculine “eccentricity”’, while the feminine style of throwing indicates a ‘deep-seated restraint’ and ‘an inclination to circle around one’s own centre’, which coincides with the ‘feminine attitude’ in relation to world and space.²⁵

²¹ Ibid. pp. 33 and 40.

²² Erwin W. Straus, *Phenomenological Psychology: The Selected Papers of Erwin W. Straus*, trans. Erlin Eng (London, Sydney and Wellington: Tavistock Publication, 1966), p. 157.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid. p. 158.

²⁵ Ibid.

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Figure 3.1: Modelling of a boy and a girl throwing a ball. Picture from: Tamar Haspel, ‘Throw like a girl? With some practice, you can do better’, *Washington Post*, http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/throw-like-a-girl-with-some-practice-you-can-do-better/2012/09/10/9ffc8bc8-dc09-11e1-9974-5c975ae4810f_story.html, last accessed: 30 October 2012.

Iris Marion Young, in *Throwing Like a Girl and Other Essays in Feminist Philosophy and Social Theory*, criticises the essentialist approach of scholars such as Erwin Straus, which reduce the body of a woman to a feminine body and her movements and manners to ‘feminine attitude’ and ‘feminine essence’.²⁶ Young rejects the notion of a ‘feminine essence’, but she warns that one should not ‘fall into that “nominalism” which denies the real experiences in the behaviour and experiences of men and women.’²⁷ Her essay seeks to trace some of the basic behavioural differences between the sexes and argues that differences in the act of throwing a ball should not be seen in isolation but rather in connection with how girls/women sit, how they carry objects, walk, run and how they stand.²⁸ In general, women are not as open as men in their movements and with their

²⁶ Iris Marion Young, *Throwing Like a Girl and Other Essays in Feminist Philosophy and Social Theory* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1990), p. 142.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid. p. 145.

bodies.²⁹ In recent years, many scholars, among them Janet Hyde, professor of psychology and women's studies at the University of Wisconsin – Madison, have suggested that the physiological differences between men and women are not as great as has often been portrayed.³⁰ However, Hyde acknowledges that there is a notable difference in motor behaviour: for example, in regard to the velocity and distance and the use of lateral space between men and women when throwing a ball.³¹

The difference in motor tasks is observable from the age of four, and the difference between males and females in throwing velocity and throwing distance is greater than the difference between them in any other motor task.³² However, according to the study of ‘Developmental Gender Differences for Overhand Throwing in Aboriginal Australian Children’, such differences in throwing performance may be the result of cultural differences.³³ In some cultures, therefore, differences in gender-specific activities may be less pronounced.³⁴ For instance, historical accounts describe how women in Australian Aboriginal cultures, like men in other cultures, threw stones and spears for defence and also for hunting.³⁵ Accordingly, the differences between Aboriginal Australian girls and boys are *lower*, when compared with American boys and girls, and

²⁹ Young explains that there are three modalities of feminine motility that are apparent in the movements of a woman: 1) ‘*ambiguous transcendence*’ (her actions are not ‘pure fluid’ and she perceives her body as a ‘burden’); 2) ‘*inhibited intentionality*’ (she is often hesitant towards different tasks and often replies “I cannot”); and 3) ‘*discontinuous unity*’ (she often finds herself ‘the object’ of an action rather than its ‘originator’). Ibid. pp. 147–150.

³⁰ Janet S. Hyde ‘The Gender Similarities Hypothesis’, *American Psychologist*, No. 6, 60(2005): pp. 581–592.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Tamar Haspel, ‘Throw like a girl? You can do better’, *The Washington Post*, 10 September 2012, from: http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/throw-like-a-girl-with-some-practice-you-can-do-better/2012/09/10/9ffc8bc8-dc09-11e1-9974-5c975ae4810f_story.html, last accessed: 9 September 2013.

³³ Jerry R. Thomas et al. ‘Developmental Gender Differences for Overhand Throwing in Aboriginal Australian Children’, *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, No. 4, 81(2010): pp. 432–441.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

while Aboriginal Australian girls throw *substantially* better than American, German, Japanese and Thai girls, Aboriginal Australian boys throw slightly better than Americans.³⁶ The differences in body-movements and use of the lateral space between men and women are at least in part also a function of the cone place. The cone may, therefore, be held responsible for the fact that women's movements, in general, are closer to their bodies and performed in a limited radius comparable to the radius of the cone place. The cone place is, first and foremost, a geometrical structure, which physically limits body-movements within its boundaries and shapes a woman's spatial perception outside its boundaries. The cone place imposes certain restraints on a woman's mobility and also strictly influences and shapes her perception of her lateral space.

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Figure 3.2: Modelling of a girl throwing a ball. Picture from: Haspel, 'Throw like a girl?' The dotted blue lines added by the author. 2012.

A woman's body is restricted in its movements (as regards the movements of the arms) within the confined space within the cone place (see figures 3.3 and 3.5); thus, her strides and all her body-movements are closer to the body, since they are limited to the space provided by the hemlines of the cone place (see figures 3.6 and 3.7). Moreover, the cone place also restricts movement within its lateral space. Because of the cone place a woman should with every movement not only think of her body-movements inside the cone place but also, and more importantly, of the movements of the cone place itself and of the

³⁶ Ibid.

motion it causes in its lateral space (see the green arrows in figures 3.4, 3.6 and 3.7). Therefore, a woman's body is contained within and "modified" by the larger boundaries of the cone, which moves to some extent independently of her.



Figure 3.3: Left to right: **a.** a woman in a traditional black *chādor*. The photo illustrates the limited movement of the arms and hands as they keep the *chādor* fixed on the head (see the yellow arrows). The heaviness of the fabric (in this picture the woman is wearing a *chādor* made of black crêpe) used in the *chādor* is another obstacle and it makes it more difficult to hoist the *chādor*. Tabriz, Iran. Photograph by the author, 2011.

Figure 3.4: The *chādor* has its own movement in its own lateral space and it moves independently of the woman who is wearing it.

Figure 3.5: a. Pictures from the inside a *chādor*. The woman inside the *chādor* is holding it on her head with the help of her hands and arms. The photo also illustrates the limited space underneath it. Tehran, Iran. Photograph by the author, 2014.

The image originally presented here cannot be made freely available via ORA because of copyright.

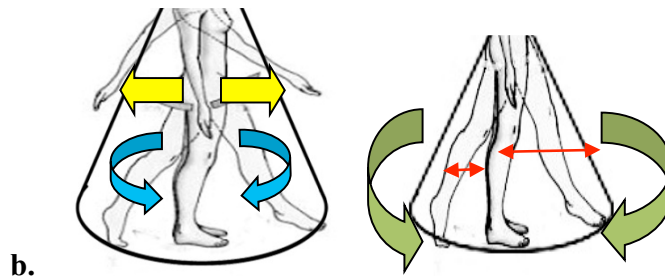


Figure 3.6: Left to right: **a.** a woman in a dress with a crinoline. The picture shows the limited movement inside the dress and the movement of the dress in a wider radius around the body of the woman. The author added the arrows. Picture from: ‘The Cage Crinoline’, <https://thimblesandacorns.com/the-cage-crinoline/> last accessed: 15 July 2014.

Figure 3.7: b. The picture illustrates the restriction of the movements of the legs inside the cone place (the *chādor* or the dress): follow the blue and the red arrows. It also shows the movement of the cone place around the body (the green arrows) and the limited movement of the arms (the yellow arrows). Drawing by the author, 2014.

Figures 3.8 (part a, b and c), 3.9 and 3.10 illustrate that women inside the cone place (and men outside it) perceive space differently, and consequently move and orient themselves in it differently. These differences are the result of the two different types of information gathered by their basic-orienting systems. While the distance from an object (here a cylinder) for the man, in part a of figure 3.8, is marked by the black arrow (from the limits of his body (his skin) to the limits of the object), in the case of the woman inside the cone place in part c of figure 3.8, the black arrow marks a *similar* distance, but from the limits of the cone place to the cylinder. However, the real distance from the cylinder to the body of the woman is the sum of the black arrow (the distance from the cone to the cylinder) and the blue arrow (the distance inside the cone), i.e. the red arrow. Additionally, as illustrated in part c, to keep the same distance from the limits of the cone place to that of the cylinder, the woman has to move closer to the limits of the square

(e.g. the walls of a room). The differences between the position of the man and the woman in the parts a, b and c of figure 3.8 illustrate how a woman within and a man (or a woman) outside the cone place measure space differently, and how this can influence their spatial perception (compare the green arrows). Figures 3.9 and 3.10 illustrate how a man and a woman in the cone place move differently in space along a selected path (the violet arrow).

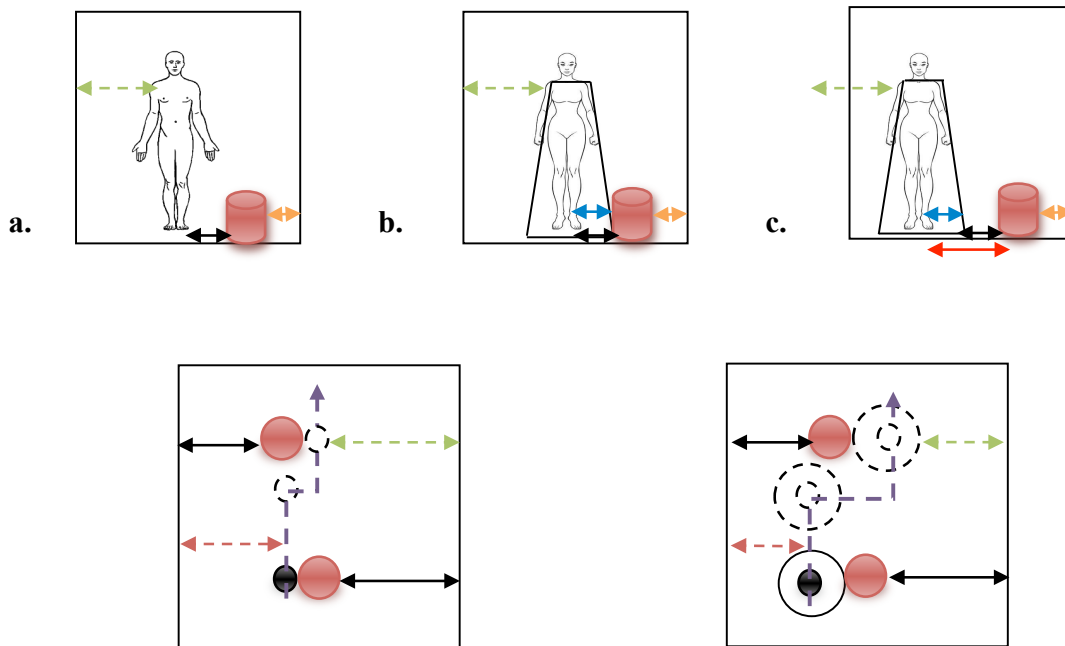


Figure 3.8: Left to right: **a.** a man in a room, at a distance from the cylinder; **b.** a woman in the cone place and in a room at the same distance as the man in part **a** from the cylinder; **c.** a woman in the cone place and in a room where the cone place is at the same distance from the cylinder as the man in part **a**. Drawing by the author, 2014.

Figure 3.9: Left to right: (from above) a man (the black circle) moving in a room with two cylinders (follow the violet arrow). Drawing by the author, 2014.

Figure 3.10: (from above) a woman in the cone place moving in a room at a similar distance from the limits of her cone (instead of her body) to the cylinders (follow the violet arrow). Drawing by the author, 2014.

Obviously the man has more freedom of movement within the room in comparison to the woman in the cone place. The former moves *bodily* (the ever present body), taking only the limits of his body and the objects around him into account when perceiving space.

However, the latter moves in and perceives of space with the cone place (the ever-present cone place), essentially ensuring there is no difference between the limits of her body and those of the cone when moving in space and relating to the objects inside it. Moreover, if we imagine the cylinders in figures 3.9 and 3.10 to be pieces of furniture, their distance from the limits of the cone may not be crucial; however, if the cylinders were something hazardous (e.g. a fire), then the generation of a correct spatial perception of it could be vital.

We unconsciously calculate the space around us when we orient ourselves in different spaces; an extra object attached to our body disturbs our spatial perception, as we do not automatically calculate the height and the width of the attached object in relation to the limits of our body. It is not for no reason that people are asked to take off their backpacks in museums. Thus, a constant awareness of the limits of the cone she inhabits was/is crucial for a woman. In Iran, for instance, a woman wearing a *chādor* (the cone place) must pay considerable attention to the motion of her *chādor* in her lateral space. She has to *adapt* her spatial perception and body image to the “circumstances” of the cone place, or face potential accidents involving hemlines getting entangled in the doors of buses, taxis or underground trains, etc. However, if the cone is worn long enough it alters our spatial perception and our body boundary to the extent that we begin to unconsciously identify its limits with those of our body. In other words, our body image includes the cone place. For example, a woman who is climbing stairs in a dress or veil automatically lifts its rims and holds it for a practical reason: an easier climb; and if

she happens to wear trousers (but has worn a dress or veil before), she will do so subconsciously although there is no practical reason to do so.³⁷

b. *The haptic system*

Above we have shown how *the cone place* influences women's *basic-orienting system*. Its effects on her *haptic system* will now be addressed. Gibson argues that the haptic system, like other perceptual systems, is 'an apparatus by which the individual gets information about both the environment and his [/her] body.'³⁸ Moreover, Bloomer and Moore reconsider the sense of touch 'to include the entire body rather than merely the instruments of touch, such as hands.'³⁹ Therefore, to 'sense haptically is to experience objects in the environment by actually touching them ([for example] by climbing a mountain rather than staring at it).'⁴⁰ In the same vein, Juhani Pallasmaa in his essay 'An Architecture of Seven Senses' describes how '[t]he skin reads the texture, weight, density and temperature of matter.'⁴¹ He illustrates this fact by describing how we all have pleasurable experiences and memories of our homes (our dwelling places) and how we bodily (entirely) feel our homes to be tranquil, as '[t]here is a strong identity between the skin and the sensation of home.'⁴² In Pallasmaa's opinion, then, the experiencing of home is mainly connected to the 'experience of warmth.'⁴³ Although Pallasmaa's example of experiencing the house does not mention the haptic sense, it nonetheless suggests a close tie between the skin and the sense of touch: to feel haptically comfortable. Therefore, to sense and to touch the warmth inside our homes (or any other environment), with the

³⁷ This corresponds with Fisher's findings about women experiencing their body boundary more rigidly. The cone place constructs a physical three-dimensional space around the body. And it seems that the limits of the cone merge with the limits of the body boundary or, in other words, with a person's perception of the limits of her body.

entire body and not exclusively with our hands, indicates the fact that we experience our environment and any place including our dwelling places haptically.

So, how does the cone place affect and alter the haptic system of a woman dwelling inside it? Due to the confinement of her body within the cone place's boundaries, but also because of the weight of the constitutive materials (heavy and often thick fabrics), it is almost impossible for the body inside the cone place to haptically generate knowledge of the temperature outside of the cone place (see figure 3.9). The haptic system of a woman in the cone, in contrast to that of a man, generates more knowledge and sensation *within* the boundaries of the cone place, so that she dwells haptically within the cone place.

It was explained at the beginning of this section that the cone may be held responsible for the fact that women's movements, in general, are closer to their bodies and are performed within a smaller radius compared to that of a man. The body of a woman who is emplaced in the cone place is less capable of ascending – lifting the body toward a particular task. In order to hoist the heavy fabric a woman's body turns into a pole, which makes her less capable of developing her motor skills. The cone place, with its heavy fabrics, gives the woman inside it the perception that her body has shrunk. This in turn results in a more bent body posture, less use of lateral space, shorter strides and gaits, and limited movements because of the heavy fabrics and the limited space within

³⁸ Gibson, *Senses as Perceptual Systems*, p. 97.

³⁹ Bloomer and Moore, *Body, Memory*, p. 34.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Juhani Pallasmaa, 'An Architecture of Seven Senses', Steven Holl, Juhani Pallasmaa, Alberto Pérez-Gómez, *Questions of Perception: Phenomenology of Architecture*, (San Francisco: William Stout Publishers, 2006), p. 33.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

them. The woman's hands, her body and the spacious skirt and veil are entangled with one another in a way that inhibits her body's movement and her haptic perception. There is little doubt that a woman in the cone place is more likely to stare at a mountain than to climb it. In other words, the cone place creates distance between a woman's body and her environment; it enlarges the personal space and pushes the extrapersonal space further away. In Iran, for example, in places and among people where more traditional values are prominent, unveiled women are referred to as "*lokht*" ("naked") because the body underneath the cone place is regarded as private and as belonging to the interior, the display of which is tantamount to the showing of skin. Figures 3.11 and 3.12 illustrate the immobility of a woman in the cone, which deprives her of many haptic sensations.

Nevertheless, the cone place, to some extent, extends a woman's haptic sensation of *objects around her*. Since the cone place moves in a woman's lateral space and touches the objects around her it can also generate knowledge. Earlier we described how clothing can modify and extend the 'body boundary'. The cone place equally extends the limits of the woman's actual body to the limits of the cone. Therefore, physiologically, and to some extent even physically, a woman in the cone place touches the objects nearby with the limits of her cone place. For example, inside the cone place a woman inevitably needs to haul and to pull along the hemline and heavy fabrics, which permanently touch the ground and limit her freedom of movement and expand her haptic sensation. On the one hand, this close contact with the earth invites her body to descend and to return to earth; on the other hand, this being in touch with the ground extends her haptic sense and generates knowledge of the numerous surfaces and diverse textures. This extension of the haptic sensation and of our 'body boundary' by, for example, a tool is called 'extended

physiological proprioception' (EPP).⁴⁴ In this regard a 'tool' such as a cane transfers the haptic perception and the perceptual experience of its user from his/her hands to the end of the cane.⁴⁵ In our example, too, the cone place extends a woman's body limits and haptic perception to the nearby objects touching the limits of the cone place. Figure 3.13 illustrates how the cone place extends its wearer's haptic perception to objects that lie outside the limits of her body, by extending the body boundary.

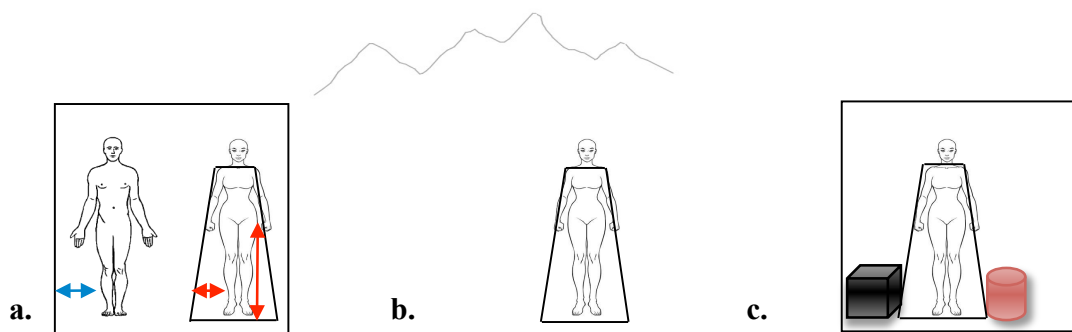


Figure 3.11: Left to right: **a.** a woman who is inside the cone place has a different haptical perception. Her haptic system generates more knowledge and sensation within the boundaries of the cone place. Drawing by the author, 2014.

Figure 3.12: b. The restrictions that the cone place causes prevent the woman, who is inside the cone place, from expanding and developing her haptic sensations. Drawing by the author, 2014.

Figure 3.13: c. The cone place, to a very limited extent, extends the haptic sense and generates knowledge of numerous surfaces, which are located in an accessible radius around the body of a woman. Drawing by the author, 2014.

c. *The visual system*

The limitations that the cone place enforces on the haptic senses must be compensated by other senses. Here, *the visual system* is of vital importance. The information the visual system generates depends on the light from an object, which

⁴⁴ Dick H. Plettenburg, 'Prosthetic control: a case for Extended Physiological Proprioception', *MEC '02 The Next Generation*, Proceedings of the 2002 MyoElectric Controls/Powered Prosthetics Symposium, Fredericton, University of New Brunswick (2002) from: <http://hdl.handle.net/10161/2669>, last accessed: 18 July 2014.

⁴⁵ Bloomer and Moore, *Body, Memory*, p. 34.

creates an inverted image on the retina and constructs our visual sensation.⁴⁶ In other words, through the ocular mechanism, stimulated by the ambient light, we register information about the environment.⁴⁷

However, Pallasmaa writes that the eyes can equally touch, describing how the gaze provides identification with an object with ‘unconscious bodily mimesis’.⁴⁸ Pallasmaa describes how the ‘gaze strokes distant surfaces, contours and edges, and the unconscious tactile sensation determines the agreeableness or unpleasantness of the experience.’⁴⁹ However, the sensation of stroking distant surfaces with the eyes depends on having previously had the *actual experience* of stroking those surfaces intimately, and having a memory of that experience. Without having had that earlier experience, we are unable to have the same intensity of intimacy from a distance. Like the two ways of dwelling outlined in the section on ‘dwelling *vis-à-vis* building’ in *Chapter II*, it is only possible to dwell in a memorised place once we have dwelled in a physical place and felt the space haptically. Bloomer and Moore, too, argue that our ‘visual images’ are developed after the ‘primal experiences’ that were acquired haptically.⁵⁰ In other words, the haptic experiences obtained earlier and which involve the entire body ‘give fundamental meanings to visual experiences, while visual experiences serve to communicate those meanings back to the body.’⁵¹ Yet, of course, we continue to gain spatial knowledge far beyond that held in our childhood: if this were not the case, ‘we

⁴⁶ Gibson, *Senses as Perceptual Systems*, p. 154.

⁴⁷ Ibid. p. 50.

⁴⁸ Pallasmaa, ‘Architecture of Seven Senses’, p. 34.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Bloomer and Moore, *Body, Memory*, p. 44.

⁵¹ Ibid.

would be quite dead before adulthood’, to use the words of Aristotle.⁵² However, for a woman in the cone place the early childhood experience of space, during which her body is not strictly confined to the boundaries of the cone place, is more important in sensing the environment haptically. The haptic limitations of the cone place forestall not only the initial experiences of certain places and environments (e.g. a mountain) but also limit the capacity to experience (touch) them visually. Consequently, while a man’s knowledge is linked to direct contact with surfaces and environments, a woman’s knowledge is more purely visual: flatter and lacking plasticity. For instance, a woman staring at a mountain has a flatter and more retinal image of a mountain (or of other surfaces in the distance), since she has not experienced it intimately and beholds it from outside. In this regard Pallasmaa rightly states that ‘the eye is the sense of separation and distance, whereas touch is the sense of nearness, intimacy and affection.’⁵³ Therefore, a woman’s haptic perception is more confined than a man’s, as she is separated and distanced from the objects and the environment by the boundaries of her cone and by her eyes.

d. The auditory system

Our experience of architecture and of our environment is not limited to the visual, the haptic and the basic-orientation systems: it also includes the auditory system. The auditory system generates knowledge through the ears (cochlear organs), the act of listening (an active attention to the source) and hearing (the recognition of the nature and the source of sound).⁵⁴ The aural properties of a place are one of its essential qualities, the

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Pallasmaa, ‘Architecture of Seven Senses’, p. 34.

⁵⁴ Gibson, *Senses as Perceptual Systems*, pp. 50 and 75.

importance of which we should not neglect. Pallasmaa argues that we investigate the edges and the surfaces of the space surrounding us with our ears; therefore, we characterise every building and space aurally with qualities such as intimate, monumental, or hostile.⁵⁵ We dwell aurally in buildings as much as we do haptically and visually. How, then, does the cone place affect the *aural experiences* of space? The gentle stroke of the hemline fondling various surfaces; the caress of the various layers of fabrics (e.g. satin, velvet, silk, etc.) and accessories sliding along each other, the body, the head (hair), and the objects in the environment; the rustling of fabrics such as georgette and silk with every placid move or a gentle breeze around the body – all of these are sonic events, representing the cone as ‘aural architecture’.⁵⁶ Therefore, a woman in the cone place experiences her cone place aurally, as the sounds of the cone place merge with other sounds in the environment to shape her aural perception of it.

Concerning the relation between sound and space, Yi-Fu Tuan in *Space and Place* argues that the world of sound does not have the ‘sharpness’ of the visual world but is spatially structured.⁵⁷ Therefore, sound ‘can convey a strong sense of size (volume) and of distance.’⁵⁸ Our auditory system can enrich and enlarge our ‘spatial awareness’ and ‘visual space’.⁵⁹ Barry Blesser and Linda-Ruth Salter give the example of a blindfolded

⁵⁵ Pallasmaa, ‘Architecture of Seven Senses’, p. 31.

⁵⁶ This study uses ‘aural’ instead of ‘acoustic’ architecture, based on Barry Blesser’s and Linda-Ruth Salter’s book *Spaces Speak, Are You Listening?* In their book they remind us that the adjective *aural* parallels *visual*. It also refers to the human experience of sonic processes. In their opinion, aural architecture is experiencing the space by listening and, therefore, one might select specific aural attributes of a space based on what is desirable in one’s particular culture. However, acoustic architecture implements a space with previously defined attributes. For more on the difference between the two see: Barry Blesser and Linda Ruth Salter, *Spaces Speak, Are You Listening? Experiencing Aural Architecture* (Massachusetts and London: The MIT Press, 2007), p. 5.

⁵⁷ Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), p. 14.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* p. 16.

person, who can realise that she/he is approaching a wall without touching it, simply by paying attention to the changing frequency balance of the background noise as she/he approaches it.⁶⁰ However, the cone place (particularly the veil), by either covering the ears or by creating a void between the body and the external environment, disturbs the aural perception of space. It is essentially a barrier that distorts the background noise and, accordingly, the recognition of the nature and the source of sound. Thus the cone makes its wearer even more dependent on their visual perception of space. For example, in Iran, where women are obliged to wear headscarves, the crossing of a street is an act much more dependent on the visual system. Men can rely on all of their senses in such a situation.

Furthermore, Tuan argues that '[a]ll human beings learn, however, to relate sound to distance in the act of speaking.'⁶¹ He continues that '[w]e alter our tone of voice from soft to loud, from intimate to public, in accordance with the perceived physical and social distances between ourselves and others[:]' and, accordingly, '[t]he volume and phrasing of our voice as well as what we try to say are constant reminders of proximity and distance.'⁶² In other words, people tend to adjust their voice according to the spatial dimensions of the place in which they find themselves. The fact that in many cultures women traditionally speak in a lower voice than men, or are even discouraged from speaking in the presence of men, is reflected in the nature of their clothing (of course this is not the sole explanation). Since the dimensions of the first place (the cone place) in which they dwell are smaller than men's, and because they very rarely leave that limited

⁶⁰ Blesser and Salter, *Spaces Speak*, p. 1.

⁶¹ Tuan, *Space and Place*, p.15.

⁶² Ibid.

space, they lower their voice. It is interesting to note that in Iran in religious cities where women have traditionally been more covered (for instance, in the city of Qom⁶³), they have been discouraged from speaking in public at all. However, whenever they did speak in public, they were encouraged to put their finger in their mouth or to place their *chādor* (or a piece of fabric) over the mouth while speaking, in order to alter and lower their voices.

Leon van Schaik's book *Spatial Intelligence: New Futures for Architects* describes how one's spatial history and perception, composed of numerous memories and experiences of various places, can foster the understanding of spatiality and our ability to inhabit and move in space.⁶⁴ However, in the case of a woman such spatial perception is often distorted through her *emplacement within the cone place*, which stands between her and her second built environment, and which makes her more reliant on her visual perception of space and on her memories of different places. A man's spatial perception, in contrast, is shaped to an equal extent by all his *perceptual systems*: the visual system, haptic system, basic-orienting system and by the auditory system (to this one could add the 'smell/taste system', which in this study we have ignored as it does not seem to be significantly limited by the cone place, which leaves the nose and mouth exposed). As a result, the spatial perception and intelligence of those who are emplaced in the cone differs from that of those who are not. And since the cone was/is traditionally considered a female garment, this has contributed to a diverging experience of space on the part of men and women. While a man senses his environment and interacts with it more directly

⁶³ Also known as Ghom, a city located in the centre of Iran.

⁶⁴ Leon van Schaik, *Spatial Intelligence: New Futures for Architecture* (Chichester: John Wiley and Sons, Ltd, 2008), p. 40.

through all his senses, a woman in the cone place experiences the same environment in a more indirect and filtered (and to some extent different, but ultimately reduced) way.

The cone place as habitus

Above we have shown how the cone place, like other dwelling places described in *Chapter II* (e.g. the closet of the author), influences (limits) a woman's perceptual systems and her movements by dividing the space that is taken up by the body from the environment surrounding it. However, in many contemporary and Western societies women no longer dwell in the cone place anymore: the wearing of long dresses and spacious skirts made from a variety of heavy fabrics is deemed impractical.⁶⁵ Nevertheless, and quite rightly, Young argues that although women are now wearing more relaxed clothes and 'pants more than [they] used to and consequently do not have to restrict [their] sitting postures because of the dress [or veil], women still tend to sit with their legs relatively close together and their arms across their bodies.'⁶⁶

Of course, many women in contemporary societies transcend the typical behaviour acceptable for women; yet the phenomenon of particular ways of movement, posture or gait, etc., which society defines and recognises as "feminine", has not become obsolete. Consequently, one should not overstress the importance of the cone place as merely a physical space for enforcing such behaviour: physical space also translates into social space as what is deemed acceptable behaviour for women appears to be embedded in culture and society. The great varieties of impetuses that motivate people to behave

⁶⁵ The argument developed here may not apply to the situation of women in other societies and cultures. For example, in many cities in Iran women still dwell in the cone place.

⁶⁶ Young, *Throwing Like a Girl*, p. 145.

and move in a certain way, or to carry out particular gestures or ways of speaking, cannot be reduced to one factor alone; and yet the concept of habitus, first developed by Pierre Bourdieu, offers us helpful insights into the question of why the cone place is more enduring than might initially be expected. Bourdieu argues that habitus both shapes social practice and also is shaped by it. He defines the concept of habitus as follows:

systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them. Objectively 'regulated' and 'regular' without being in any way the product of obedience to rules, they can be collectively orchestrated without being the product of the organizing action of the conductor.⁶⁷

Habitus is a section of social space; in Bourdieu's argument, cultural capital (and all its subdivisions: embodied, objectified and institutionalised), plus social capital, symbolic capital and economic capital, together structure (form) *social space*. Habitus as a section of social space stands in a long-lasting and mutable reciprocal relationship with its agent, who is profoundly influenced by it. Jean Hillier and Emma Rooksby, in the introduction of *Habitus: A Sense of Place*, have analysed the social sense of a place and one's perception of the place in the world. They concluded that habitus is an understanding of one's 'place and role in the world of one's lived environment', and that it is 'an embodied, as well as cognitive, sense of place.'⁶⁸ Therefore, a habitus surrounds each individual with its visible and invisible boundaries, and it is what makes her/him understand (know) the world of her/his lived environment directly as she/he positions herself/himself within it. However, the knowledge of non-lived environments is

⁶⁷ Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1990), p. 53.

⁶⁸ Jean Hillier, and Emma Rooksby, 'Introduction', *Habitus: A Sense of Place*, eds. J. Hillier and E. Rooksby (Aldershot, Burlington USA, Singapore, Sydney: Ashgate, 2002), p. 5.

transferred in a more indirect and filtered way. In this sense the habitus resembles a dwelling place, and ‘social practice’⁶⁹ is something like developing a sense of dwelling in that place.

Similarly, in our argument, the cone place provides a filtered and enclosed space and invites a woman to dwell within its boundaries – it both influences/is influenced by and structures/is structured by the women dwelling within it, by the society, and by its own *visible* and *invisible* boundaries. Therefore, the cone place functions as a habitus.

a. *Visible boundaries*

As outlined in *Chapter II* and the beginning of this chapter, dwelling places, such as the cone place, Casey’s study room or the closet of the author, are all built places that divide their dwellers’ environment from the surrounding environment. They also frame and limit the senses and movements of their dwellers as they evoke notions such as protectedness. Habitus is a term that was first used in relation to architecture and which is borrowed from that context.⁷⁰ Kim Dovey argues that ‘[t]he connections of habitus to architecture lie in the connection of habitus to habitat; the way in which space frames social practice.’⁷¹ Bourdieu, in *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, argues that there is a dialectical relationship between the body and a structured space.⁷² He conceptualises this

⁶⁹ Kim Dovey argues that for ‘Bourdieu the habitus is a way of knowing the world, a set of divisions of space and time, of people and things, which structure social practice.’ Kim Dovey, ‘The Silent Complicity of Architecture’, *Habitus: A Sense of Place*, eds. Jean Hillier and Emma Rooksby (Aldershot, Burlington USA, Singapore, Sydney: Ashgate, 2002), p. 268.

⁷⁰ Dovey describes how habitus is a term borrowed from Panofsky’s ‘Gothic architecture and Scholasticism’, which interprets architecture as a ‘form of knowledge’. Dovey, ‘Complicity of Architecture’, p. 268.

⁷¹ *Ibid.* p. 269.

⁷² Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 89.

relationship as a form of ‘structural apprenticeship,’ in which we (as agents) are ‘embodying’ the structure of the world, meaning we are ‘appropriating’ our world, and, also, that we are appropriated by the world.⁷³

The appropriation described by Bourdieu – or, in other words, the relationship between one’s place, behaviour and role in society – has been discussed by many scholars, including Shirley Ardener. The latter argues in her brilliant book *Women and Space* – one of the first studies to analyse space and behaviour – that space is constantly changing because its meaning is defined by individuals within it; equally, individuals are defined by the space surrounding them.⁷⁴ For example, as explained earlier, a woman who is climbing stairs in the cone place automatically lifts the rims of that cone place and holds it (not to do so would be very unpractical). In this situation a woman changes the architectural space (the cone place); and if she happens to be wearing trousers, in a temporary removal of herself from the cone place (presuming she has worn a dress or a veil before), she will do so subconsciously, with the architecture (the cone) thus influencing the behaviour. Another example is that within Iranian domestic architecture, inside the house, women are/were able to communicate without the *chādor*. The entry of a man who is a *nāmahram* (unrelated to the closest kinship networks of the traditional extended Iranian family) changes the room and the way women behave inside it. Although previously seen as private, the presence of this unrelated man transforms the room into a public space. In other words, the social requirement to segregate women and men (social structure) translates into two physical spaces: the *chādor* and the room. Built

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Shirley Ardener, ‘Ground Rules and Social Maps for Women: An Introduction’, *Women and Space, Ground Rules and Social Maps*, ed. Shirley Ardener (Guildford, London, Oxford and Worcester: Billing and Sons Limited, 1993), p. 12.

places in this context are not neutral surroundings but apply their own influence and are influenced by the power of agents. In this sense, like social structure, architecture becomes a ‘generative grammar’⁷⁵ able to produce an infinite number of new meanings and functioning like Bourdieu’s habitus.

A woman both dwells inside a cone place and the latter occupies her and exerts its influence upon her. This peculiar relationship between the dwelling and the dweller and the cone place as a dwelling place and habitus is literally reflected in Bourdieu’s statement: that the agent inhabits the world ‘like a garment (*un habit*) or a familiar habitat [recalling the etymology of the word habit from habitus, meaning ‘dress’ or ‘appearance’]. He feels at home in the world because the world is also in him, in the form of habitus’.⁷⁶ Equally, this notion (of the relationship between an inhabitant and a built place) has been articulated by Beatriz Colomina, who has written that ‘[a]rchitecture is not simply a platform that accommodates the viewing subject. It is a viewing mechanism that produces the subject. It precedes and frames its occupant.’⁷⁷ Tuan, too, has argued that our built environment influences us in crucial ways: ‘[it] clarifies social roles and relations [, and people] know better who they are and how they ought to behave.’⁷⁸ The same seems to hold true for the cone place. The latter plays a crucial role in constructing a specific culture of womanhood, characterised by various visible boundaries.

⁷⁵ Pierre Bourdieu, ‘Habitus’, *Habitus: A Sense of Place*, eds. Jean Hillier and Emma Rooksby (Aldershot, Burlington USA, Singapore, Sydney: Ashgate, 2002), p. 30.

⁷⁶ Pierre Bourdieu, *Pascalian Meditations*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge: Polity Press 2000), pp. 142 – 143.

⁷⁷ Beatriz Colomina, ‘The Split Wall: Domestic Voyeurism’, *Sexuality and Space*, eds. Beatriz Colomina (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992), p. 83.

⁷⁸ Tuan, *Space and Place*, p. 102.

b. Invisible boundaries

In line with scholars such as Gaston Bachelard, Edward Casey and Juhani Pallasmaa, *Chapter II* of this study argued that the body that dwells in a place exceeds its corporeality and therefore can be defined as an entity that is ‘enriched by both memory and dream.’⁷⁹ Similarly, Bourdieu elaborates on the notion of habitus by illustrating the role of human memory (the unconscious) and history in its structure and indicates that one’s position is shaped and is defined by habitus. ‘The “unconscious” is never anything other than the forgetting of history,’ Bourdieu writes, continuing: ‘which history itself produces by incorporating the objective structures it produces in the second natures of habitus.’⁸⁰ Elaborating on the nature of habitus, Bourdieu cites Emile Durkheim’s *L’évolution pédagogique en France* in which the author states that, ‘in each of us, [...], there is part of yesterday’s man; it is yesterday’s man who inevitably predominates in us, since the present amounts to little compared with the long past in the course of which we were formed and from which we result.’⁸¹ However, ‘we do not sense this man of the past, because he is inveterate in us; he makes up the unconscious part of ourselves.’⁸² Therefore, even when the origins, causes or intentions of a certain behaviour, which had previously been enforced by people to structure society, are forgotten, it is often sufficiently embedded in present-day society to persist.

Henri Bergson divides memory into two categories: ‘independent recollections’

⁷⁹ Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses* (London: Academy Editions, 1996), p. 31.

⁸⁰ Bourdieu, *A Theory of Practice*, pp. 78–79.

⁸¹ Emile Durkheim, *L’évolution pédagogique en France*, in *ibid.* p. 79.

⁸² *Ibid.*

and ‘motor mechanisms’ (bodily habits).⁸³ *Chapter II* argued that dwelling in a memory (by *recalling* a memory of a dwelling place from the past) is tantamount to the actual act of dwelling in some room in the present. These types of memories fall into the ‘independent recollections’ category in Bergson’s division. However, we remember bodily (unconsciously) as intensely as we do consciously, and certain objects and places in a way belong to the body – they are habitually remembered (the phenomenon of ‘body memory’ testifies vividly to this). One feature of this ‘body memory’ (the memory of the sensation, smell, location, etc. of objects) is our subconscious motoric memorisation of, for instance, computer passwords by our fingers. Casey, too, in illustrating his point about the mutual relationship between bodies and places, describes the ‘cognitive map’ as an ‘internalised representation’ of a place, which helps us to orient ourselves in space.⁸⁴ The above-mentioned accounts echoes Henri Bergson’s category of memory as ‘motor mechanisms’ (bodily habits).⁸⁵

Isabelle McNeill rightly argues that the concept of memory troubles the boundaries ‘between the individual and the collective, self and other, mind and body, inside and outside.’⁸⁶ In other words, other people’s memories (for instance, our parents’ stories about us as a child) can merge with our own to the extent that we cannot differentiate between the two. And the very idea of bodily memorising something, or confusing someone else’s memory with our own, seems to contradict our concept of memory as something cognitive. *Habitus* in this situation ‘is not cognitively understood

⁸³ Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, trans. Nancy Margaret Paul and W. Scott Palmer (New York: Zone Books, 1988), pp. 86–87.

⁸⁴ Edward S. Casey, *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993), pp. 102–103.

⁸⁵ Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, pp. 86–87.

⁸⁶ Isabelle McNeill, *Memory and Moving Image: French Film in the Digital Era* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2012), p. 19.

but rather internalized and embodied.⁸⁷ The cone place as a habitus affects us in a similar way: we can be unconscious of its cultural and historical origins but still accept it as given and memorised, identifying it as part of us and of our body. Moreover, even if we used to dwell within the cone place but do not anymore, our body will still remember that place for some time and it will continue to affect our movements. Even if we were *never* actually surrounded by the cone place, our movements are still (through imitation and education) to some extent informed by its past influence on women's behaviour (and thus on their memory). The habitual memory of a place sometimes induces us to move (e.g. to crouch) or to behave (e.g. to whisper) in certain ways, even after this place no longer surrounds us. The cone place as a habitus, even after its visible boundaries have disappeared, is still alive in our memory and continues to inform the way women move and behave: it has constructed gender-specific performances, and thereby continues to produce normative expectations regarding gender roles. Like memorised cognitive maps of places these norms are still reflected in the bodily movements of many women, even if they never wore cone place-like garments or if they do so less and less. These are the protracted invisible boundaries of the cone place. The example of Australian Aboriginal girls vividly illustrates the argument of this study that since the cone place has not featured in their history (culturally their female clothing was less restrictive) gender-specific divergence in motor behaviour between Australian Aboriginal males and females is less pronounced. As a result, these women use their lateral space better and in a way that is more similar to men than is the case in other societies.

On the one hand, then, the cone place is created by a society and culture, which

⁸⁷ Dovey, 'Complicity of Architecture', p. 268.

urges women to emplace themselves in it and ultimately to dwell in it; on the other hand, the cone place (with its boundaries) perpetuates the behaviour and movements that are regarded as *feminine*, by limiting bodily movement. Sophie Woodward, in her analysis of the relationship between women and clothing in *Why Women Wear What they Wear*, argues that women ask two questions when trying on a new piece of clothing: ‘does this go?’ and ‘is this me?’⁸⁸ With these questions they imply that forms of clothing reveal certain of their characteristics.⁸⁹ Woodward describes how ‘[t]his acquires a particular poignancy as clothing is displayed on the body, because women have to measure whether their bodies live up to the clothing.’⁹⁰ For example, a woman who wears a funky top, Woodward explains, ‘not only has to believe that she is a funky and fashionable person, but moreover when she actually wears the top, she has to both look and act in an appropriate manner.’⁹¹ In other words, in the argument of the veil and the dress, a woman by emplacing herself in the cone place not only has to behave in a manner that is induced by her clothing, but also she has to believe in the character imposed on her. In other words, the cone place is influenced by, and it influences, its environment; and the cone place also denotes certain social obligations and rules of behaviour, which are linked to it. Ardener, for instance, argues that the environment we inhabit ‘imposes certain restraints on our mobility, and, in turn, our perceptions of space are shaped by our capacity to move about’.⁹² The cone place is a crucial part of the environment we (as women) inhabit; it restraints women’s mobility and alters our perception of space and our interaction with it.

⁸⁸ Sophie Woodward, *Why Women Wear What They Wear* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2007), p. 11.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid. p. 12.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ardener, *Women and Space*, p. 12.

In other words, the mutual dependency between women and their clothing shapes how women are able to move their bodies, which affects their identities.⁹³

Furthermore, the movement of women's bodies in space is a clear illustration of the 'embodiment relationship' that women have with their clothing. A woman in her clothes behaves in a certain limited manner and she also believes in the character imposed on her.⁹⁴ The argument of this study, therefore, is that the cone place prompts women to engage in feminine acts and tasks that specify gender, and therefore the cone place as a habitus makes a woman gendered. In other words, it perpetuates certain norms of behaviour that have come to define femininity and which are performed by women dwelling inside the cone place. The cone place is therefore as much the outcome of gender rules as it is the cause of such rules, since the effect its physical boundaries have on women's movement reifies notions of femininity. Where the cone place is present as a factor, it is not so much biology that determines the mobility and status of women, rather that mobility and status are determined by the cone place women inhabit. Equally, while social norms and ideas about gender have influenced dress codes and, thereby, created the cone place, its capacity to restrain movement actually reinforced and materialised those norms and psychologically and physically instilled them in women.

The cone place, then, is a 'structuring structure' and plays a role comparable to a habitus in generating and organising social practices. Just like the habitus, the cone is both socially *constructed* and socially *constructive*: it is both a place one physically inhabits and a part of one's place/position in society; it structures the space around and

⁹³ Woodward, *Why Women Wear*, p. 17.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.* p. 17.

within it, according to concepts such as the private and public, the female and male; and, therefore, it powerfully influences people's behaviour.

Chapter IV:

The built place, the cone place – an analogy

The city [...] consists of [...] relationships between the measurements of its space and the events of its past: the height of a lamppost and the distance from the ground of hanged usurper's swaying feet; [...] [the] city however, does not tell its past, but contains it like the lines of a hand, written in the corners of the street, [...].¹

The built place and the body boundary

As outlined in *Chapter III*, the gendered experience of space, or the importance of the cone place as an *intermediary* between the woman and outside space, makes a woman more dependent on her visual system because of the limitations it imposes on her remaining perceptual systems. Thus, a woman's relationship with both her immediate environment (the cone place) and with the space surrounding her differs from a man's spatial awareness. While a man directly and immediately inhabits the architectural environment, a woman (who is in the cone place) merely indirectly interacts with it. How does this difference affect the spatial perception of a woman *within the house she inhabits*? Yi-Fu Tuan argues that place is 'essentially a static concept.'² He maintains that a lack of mobility results in higher spatial awareness.³ He continues that 'the "feel" of a place takes longer to acquire.'⁴ It consists of experiences, 'mostly fleeting and undramatic, repeated day after day and over the span of years.'⁵ In the same vein, Steen Eiler Ramussen, in his book *Experiencing Architecture*, argues that the interiors of Dutch

¹ Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities* (London: Vintage Books, 1997), p. 9.

² Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), p. 179.

³ *Ibid.* 183.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

merchant houses (during the sixteenth century) differ from those of Italian or French merchant houses, since the harsh climate induced the Dutch merchants to spend more time indoors.⁶ As a result, Dutch merchants paid more attention to detail,⁷ to give only one obvious example of how spatial awareness of one's dwelling place increases with the time spent in it. On the one hand, then, women who were traditionally within the cone place were limited in their 'perpetual systems'; however, the greater amount of time they spent inside the house (as a result of social restrictions and the cone place) caused, on the other, a greater intensity in her experience of the house. A woman's spatial awareness of her house was thus, arguably, more intense than that of a man. This lack of mobility for women strengthened their emotional attachment to the house and to domestic culture, which – as if in a vicious circle – furthered her lack of mobility.

This brings us to the arguments that were touched on at the end of *Chapter II*, where we discussed how the prevalent practice of comparing the human body to architecture and of conceptualising the human body as 'the house of the soul' is deeply rooted in human history and classical architectural theory.⁸ We have shown that this discourse did not apply to the same extent to the female body because that body was not represented as a complete container, preserving the soul, but rather as an open space and vulnerable to penetration and thus needing to be completed by specific clothes and by the house. We have given several examples of this. In Renaissance England, for instance, the threshold of the house was often compared to the chastity of a woman, both of which

⁶ Steen Eiler Ramussen, *Experiencing Architecture* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1959), p. 200.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Mark Wigley, 'Untitled: The Housing of Gender' in *Sexuality & Space*, ed. Beatriz Colomina (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992), p. 358.

required supervision.⁹ In Iran, too, the comparison between the body and architecture is clearly reflected in proverbs such as: *chahār sotun-e badanat sālem bāshad!* / May the four columns of your body be healthy! Or *mesl-e sotun baāh!* / Be like a pillar! However, it appears that in Iran too the tendency to connect the body specifically with enclosed spaces and particularly to domestic architecture is used more often in relation to women: *zan/madar cheshm va cherāgh-e khāne ast!* / A woman/mother is the eye and the light of a house! Moreover, sometimes the connection between a woman and a house is represented as interdependent: *khāne bedun-e zan khāne nist!* / The house without a woman is not a house! There are, of course, many other examples, from various cultures and from various epochs, of a connection being made between domesticity and femininity.

According to Beverley Gordon, nineteenth-century scholars, such as Jacob von Falke (1825–1897), described a woman as ‘the noblest ornament of her ornamented dwelling’ and, accordingly, women were thus expected to ‘fit their houses.’¹⁰ A curious example is that in Iran, until the first half of the twentieth century, in most parts of the country, men avoided calling their wives by their names in public, referring to them as *mādar-e bacheha!* / mother of the children! Or, *āshpazkhaneh!* / kitchen! Or, *manzel!* /

⁹ Peter Stallybrass, ‘Patriarchal Territories: The Body Enclosed,’ *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Margaret W. Ferguson Maureen Quilligan and Nancy J. Vickers (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago press, 1986), p. 126. Stallybrass’s argument is also mentioned by Mark Wigley in his article ‘Untitled: The Housing of Gender’. Wigley, ‘The Housing of Gender’, pp. 358–359.

¹⁰ Jacob von Falke, *Art in the House: Historical, Critical, and Aesthetic Studies on the Decorating and Furnishing of the Dwelling*, in Beverly Gordon, ‘Women’s Domestic Body, The Conceptual Conflation of Women and Interiors in the Industrial Age’, *Winterthur Portfolio* (Gendered Spaces and Aesthetics), No.4, 31(1996): pp. 281–301. Also in: Eric Anderson, ‘From Historic Dress to Modern Interiors: The Design Theory of Jakob von Falke’, *Performance, Fashion and The Modern Interior: From Victorians to Today*, ed. Fiona Fisher et al. (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2011), p. 23.

residence!¹¹ In other words, a woman's name was considered too private to be used in the public sphere. This widespread practice illustrates how conflated the spheres of the woman and of the interior of the house and the private were. In the same vein, Gordon argues that between 1875 and 1925 the association between home and women in Western middle-class culture was so strong that 'the woman was seen as the embodiment of home, and in turn, the home was seen as an extension of her – an extension of both her corporeal and spiritual self.'¹²

In this regard, Hilde Heynen in her study 'Modernity and Domesticity: Tensions and Contradictions' refers to ethnographical studies on domestic architecture that show that the house is often understood as a 'symbolic container', 'expressing the identities of its inhabitants',¹³ and in particular of women. Therefore, Gülsüm Baydar argues that 'it is not only the body of a woman that is associated with the house, but the house itself is inscribed with maternal feminine qualifications.'¹⁴ The inscription of the house with feminine material is a very important fact.¹⁵ In most cultures the domestic house in which the feminine members of the family reside has been considered a *feminine space* (the women's universe, or the domain of female activity) while the space outside the house

¹¹ The same tradition existed in England, where to his friends a husband would refer to his wife as "her indoors".

¹² Gordon, 'Women's Domestic Body', pp. 281–301.

¹³ Hilde Heynen, 'Modernity and Domesticity: Tensions and Contradictions', *Negotiating Domesticity: Spatial Productions of Gender in Modern Architecture*, eds. Hilde Heynen and Gülsüm Baydar (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), p. 21. Nevertheless, Heynan acknowledges the fact that 'there are many conflicts between the agency expressed by individuals, by the family, the household, and by the material structure of the house itself.' Ibid.

¹⁴ Gülsüm Baydar, 'Figures of Wo/man in contemporary Architectural Discourse', *Negotiating Domesticity: Spatial Productions of Gender in Modern Architecture*, eds. Hilde Heynen and Gülsüm Baydar (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), p. 36.

¹⁵ However, one should not forget that most of the time the house as an entity belonged to men (under property rights). In this regard, Alison Findlay argues that the house 'is a female space but a male possession.' In Alison Findlay 'Remaking Homes: Gender and the Representation of Place', *Home Cultures*, No.2, 6(2009): pp. 115–121.

has been considered a masculine one. Therefore, as outlined above, women's spatial awareness of the house they inhabited was more intense compared to men. Juliet Blair has also analysed the connection between women and the private sphere, arguing that women 'acquir[e] their social identity *and* personal individuality solely in the sphere of the private.'¹⁶ As a result, *the interior of the house* gains female characteristics, as it becomes a space exclusively for women, almost to the same extent as female clothes.

In *The Complete Home: An Encyclopaedia of Domestic Life and Affairs* (1879), Julia McNair Wright (1840–1903) claimed that decorating her house helps a woman to find "inner beauty" and "satisfaction". McNair Wright tells a story of a young disabled girl who was given some tasks to embellish her room. At the end she identified with the room to such an extent that she exclaimed: 'don't I look nice!'¹⁷ In other words, the girl was identifying with the interior space of her house/room to the extent that the border between the latter and her physical self was blurred.¹⁸ This brings us back to the subject of 'body image' and 'body boundary' theories that were discussed in *Chapter III*, and according to which individuals unconsciously locate their bodies in a 'three-dimensional boundary' that envelops the actual body.¹⁹ Accordingly, individuals can change the image (the psychic image) of their bodies by making certain alternations (e.g. extensions: such as the wearing of a hat to compensate for feeling short).²⁰ In McNair Wright's story too,

¹⁶ Therefore, in Blair's opinion women were defined in relation to men, and also 'have functioned as men's private life, secreted in the attic, displayed in the reception room.' See Juliet Blair, 'Private Parts in Public Places: The Case of Actresses' in *Women and Space, Ground Rules and Social Maps*, ed. Shirley Ardener (Guildford, London, Oxford, Worcester: Billing and Sons Limited, 1993), p. 212.

¹⁷ Julia McNair Wright, *The Complete Home: An Encyclopaedia of Domestic Life and Affairs* (Philadelphia: J.C. McCurdy and Co., 1879), pp. 168–169. McNair Wright's story was also discussed by: Gordon, 'Women's Domestic Body', pp. 281–301.

¹⁸ Gordon, 'Women's Domestic Body', pp. 281–301.

¹⁹ Kent C. Bloomer and Charles W. Moore, *Body, Memory, and Architecture* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997), p. 37.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

the disabled girl, in order to modify and amend her ‘body image’, extended her actual body limits to those of a house/room. In other words, by beautifying the interior of the house the girl psychically mended her ‘body image’ and her disability. McNair Wright’s narrative echoes the argument that Sophie Woodward put forward in her study of the relationship between women and clothing, where – as we have seen – she described how women ask the question ‘is this me?’ when trying on a new piece of clothing.²¹ As such, the border between the physical self and clothing is blurred. In Woodward’s example, as is the case in the story of the disabled girl, the body image is improved by extending the ‘body boundary’ to that of clothing, in order to make up for any perceived defects a woman might associate with her body. By asking ‘is this me?’ a woman finds her clothing to be unified with her body (or with parts of her body), as she hopes to improve her body image through clothing. For example, by wearing a certain piece of clothing (e.g. black jeans) a woman might feel thinner and sexier and accordingly more satisfied and confident with her body image. This shows how women develop (or are expected to develop) a very similar relationship with their clothing as they do with the interior of their houses.

In Iran, the actual body and the cone place were conflated by some ideologists to such an extent that, for example, Morteza Motahari (1919–1979) – one of the most influential thinkers in Iran’s Islamic revolution (1979) – argued that ‘a woman’s body is an *‘owrat*’ (‘vulnerable’) and incomplete house that needs to be protected by extra walls.²² Similarly, Mehdi Hojjat, the dean of the Architecture School at Tehran’s Science and Technology University, has claimed that ‘a good house is like a good Muslim

²¹ Sophie Woodward, *Why Women Wear What They Wear* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2007), pp. 11–12.

²² Morteza Motahari, *Mas’aleh-e Hejāb (the problem of Hijab)* (Tehran: Sadra, 1390–2011), p. 232.

woman. The beauty of such a woman in public is not shown through her physical appearance; similarly, the beauty of a courtyard house is not displayed on its façade.²³ According to such thinking, a house without walls is as incomplete and imperfect as a woman without the veil. As was mentioned before, in the public culture unveiled women were referred to as “*lokht*” (“naked”). Expressions such as “*dāman-aludeh*” (the one with the polluted skirt) or “*dāman-tar*” (the one with the wet skirt), which are used to describe a woman’s disloyalty or immodesty, are a further indicator of this. Therefore, traditionally a woman’s body was conflated with clothing and with the house to such an extent that one could be considered the continuation of the other. There is a very close link between a woman’s body, the cone place she inhabits, and her house. This association is so dominant that her ‘body image’ depends on all of these boundaries (of the body/cone/house), which make her the person she wants to be – or the person society wants her to be.

The ‘body boundary’ for a woman, whether it is the walls of the house or the boundary of her clothes, is more opaque and impenetrable than that of a man.²⁴ Kent C. Bloomer and Charles W. Moore argue that, on the one hand, a ‘body boundary, or any outer boundary that envelopes the body, which is opaque and difficult to penetrate becomes a surface that gathers and concentrates the forces acting on it from all directions.’²⁵ On the other hand, in their opinion a ‘transparent and penetrable’ boundary lacks that quality and therefore provides ‘greater fusion between personal and

²³ Mehid Hojjat, ‘*jajabin-e eslami va Honar*’ (‘The Islamic Worldview and Art’), *Faslnameh-e Honar*, in Z. Pamela Karimi, ‘Transition in Domestic Architecture and Home Culture in Twentieth Century Iran’ (PhD diss. Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2009), p. 274.

²⁴ This closely corresponds with Fisher’s findings discussed in *Chapter II*, which show how women experience their body boundary more rigidly than men. Seymour Fisher, *Body Experience in Fantasy and Behaviour* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts: 1970), p. 528.

²⁵ Bloomer and Moore, ‘*Body, Memory*’, p. 42.

environmental events.²⁶ However, for a woman in the cone place, if we conceptualise the experience of the cone place and the house as a ‘body boundary’ (or even as an ‘outer boundary’), then the latter prevents her from experiencing the fusion between personal and environmental events. The boundaries of the house and the cone place cling to her body and, as a result, a woman cannot separate and distance herself from the house and the cone place.

Of course, many women in our contemporary societies have transcended the norms of traditional societies, which conflated the female body with the domestic interior and with clothing. Nevertheless, as Gordon argues, although this conflation was previously more endemic (particularly during the industrial era), it is, to some extent, still visible in today’s society. Thus, for example, “women’s pages” in magazines and newspapers, with their “living sections”, continue to pay special attention to clothing and to the home.²⁷

The built place as a metaphysical space

Shirley Ardener, analysing the link between the concepts of the home, the private and the female, argues that ‘the home, far from being an arid arena deprived of rich significance compared to the world outside, may render up spiritual meanings lacking elsewhere.’²⁸ The spiritual meaning of private spaces in many cultures is shaped by the perception that ‘little expectation of trust [exists] beyond the family circle, [so that] the

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Gordon, ‘Women’s Domestic Body’, pp. 281–301.

²⁸ Ardener, ‘Ground Rules and Social Maps’, pp. 22–23. Similar topics are also discussed by: Lidia Sciama, ‘The Problem of Privacy in Mediterranean Anthropology’, *Women and Space: Ground Rules and Social Maps*, ed. Shirley Ardener (Guildford, London, Oxford, Worcester: Billing and Sons Limited, 1993), p. 97.

domestic environment represents a sanctuary from the perils outside.²⁹ The home and a woman inside it gain significant importance whenever the border between the outside world (characterised as ‘hostile’) and the house (characterised as safe and ‘favourable’) is reduced to that of the door.³⁰ This reminds us of that common comparison between the threshold of the house and the chastity of women,³¹ which juxtaposed the safe, harmless and female private being with the aggressive male public, and, consequently, which saw the role of men as guardians of the private/female.

However, the importance of privacy and its connection to spirituality was more essential in traditional Iranian architecture compared to Western architecture. Therefore, the conflation of women, the privacy of the house and the cone place was more explicit in Iran, being practiced by the wearing of the *chādor* over women’s dresses and clothing. Moreover, the importance of that conflation was reflected not only in the wearing of a more constrained cone place but also in more enclosed architectural places. In this regard, Seyyed Hossein Nasr argues that the meaning of space in Western architecture is different from its meaning in the Islamic-Iranian case.³² While in the former ‘a house is placed within a space and the space is defined by the contours of the material forms it surrounds’, in the latter space ‘is “cut out” from the material forms around it, and is defined by the inner surfaces of these forms.’³³ Bloomer and Moore have described American open lawn houses, whose ‘lawns set off the house by well-understood

²⁹ Ibid. p.19.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ For example, in Renaissance England, the body of a woman was compared to the threshold of her house. Stallybrass, ‘Patriarchal Territories’, p. 126. Stallybrass’s argument is also mentioned by: Wigley ‘The Housing of Gender’, pp. 358–359.

³² Seyyed Hossein Nasr, ‘Foreword’ in Nader Ardalan and Laleh Bakhtiar, *The Sense of Unity: The Sufi Tradition in Persian Architecture* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1973), p. xiii.

³³ Ibid.

prearrangement, giving some measure of the house's stature and autonomy, at times even calling attention to its existence.³⁴ In Iran, however, in most parts of the country (mostly in cities and towns) traditionally the most common form of architecture, from mosques to residential houses, was the courtyard house,³⁵ which, in contrast to the American open lawn houses, does not call attention to itself but rather prefers to hide behind its high walls (compare figures 4.1 and 4.2).

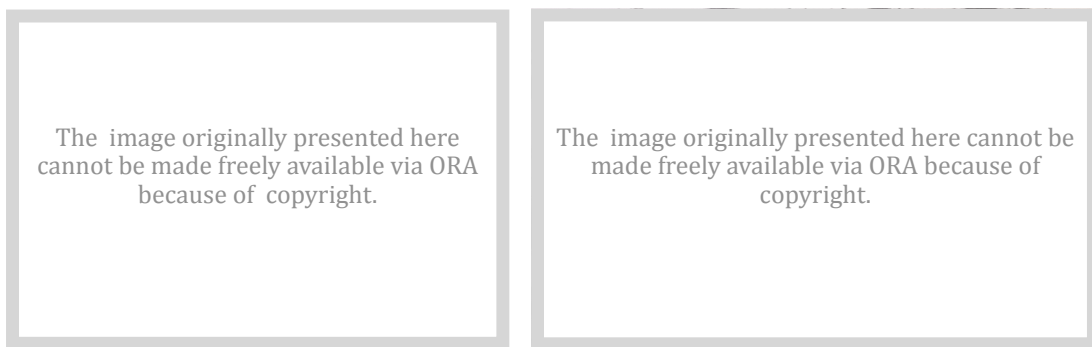


Figure 4.1: Left to right: an open lawn house. Picture from:

http://etc.usf.edu/clipart/76800/76838/76838_ruledhouse.htm, last accessed: 20 July 2014.

Figure 4.2: A *meydān* (public square), marked with green arrows in the picture. Courtyard houses around the *meydān* are marked with the red arrows. Yazd, Iran. Picture from: Hossein Soltanzadeh, *tārikh-e mokhtasar-e shahr va shahr neshini dar Iran, as dōwrān bāstān tā 1355 (A brief History of the City and Urbanization in Iran: Ancient Era to 1976)* (Tehran: Chahar Tagh, 1390–2011), p. 203. Arrows added by the author.

The residents of courtyard houses enjoyed better ventilation, and with their tall walls and enclosed spaces this specific pattern provided better security for those residents.³⁶ Arguably, the ‘cut out’ form of Iranian architecture, and especially the courtyard house, intensifies the experience of dwelling. It was illustrated earlier in *Chapter II* how effective single-room built structures (e.g. tents) are in evoking a feeling of protectedness

³⁴ Bloomer and Moore, ‘*Body, Memory*,’ p. 3.

³⁵ Courtyard houses commonly consist of two sections: inner (*andaruni*) and outer (*biruni*). For more on courtyard houses in Iran see: Mohammad Abouzari, Ahmad Tehrani-Moghaddam and S. Abdol Al Majid Sharifzadeh, *āshnānyy bā mirās-e honary va farhangy-e Iran (An Introduction to Iran’s Cultural and Artistic Heritage)* (Tehran: sherkat-e chāp va nashr-e ketābhay-e darsi-e Iran, 1999), pp. 128–131.

³⁶ Angelo Costa Silveira, *Lived Heritage, Shared Space: The courtyard house of Goa*, trans. by Maria Flavia Ribeiro (New Delhi: Yoda Press: 2008), p. 15.

and intense dwelling, since the walls of such structures overtly and explicitly draw a line between safety (inside) and danger (outside).³⁷ The courtyard house, although it does not have the structure of a single-room built place, equally transforms the space within its high walls into an ‘one-space structure’³⁸ and unambiguously defines who is an “outsider” and who is an “insider”. It therefore provides a more intense form of dwelling. Furthermore, in the ‘cut out’ form the importance is given to the inside rather than the outside – life takes places under domes and behind walls and less attention is given to outer surfaces and spaces. Nader Ardalan and Laleh Bakhtiar argue that in Iran the ‘[s]urfaces within the city are developed like the skin, which both hides and reveals the structure beneath it, or like the plain surface of a pomegranate.’³⁹ In other words, elaborate motifs and rich colours appear inside of the structure rather than outside. The pictures below, figures 4.3 and 4.5, illustrate the discrepancy between the interior and exterior of a building that is suggested by Ardalan and Bakhtiar’s argument. In his book *tārikh-e mokhtasar-e shahr va shahr neshini dar Iran, az dōwrān bāstān tā 1355 (A Brief History of the City and Urbanisation in Iran, Ancient Era to 1976)*, Hossein Soltanzadeh, argues that in a traditional Iranian city in most parts of the country the continuity of an urban design involving enclosure is unbroken; its balconies, gardens, yards, *bāzārs*, pavements, and even its *meydāns* (public squares) are built within enclosed spaces and in a continuous form.⁴⁰ However, to the continuity of architectural places in Iran must be

³⁷ Roderick Kemsley and Christopher Platt, *Dwelling with Architecture* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2012), pp. 81–84.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Nader Ardalan and Laleh Bakhtiar, *The Sense of Unity: The Sufi Tradition in Persian Architecture* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1973), p. 17.

⁴⁰ Hossein Soltanzadeh, *tārikh-e mokhtasar-e shahr va shahr neshini dar Iran, az dōwrān bāstān tā 1355 (A brief History of the City and Urbanization in Iran: Ancient Era to 1976)* (Tehran: Chahar Tagh, 1390–2011), pp. 257–261. In this regard Michel Conan argues that traditional Persian gardens and public spaces

added the cone place (*chādor*).

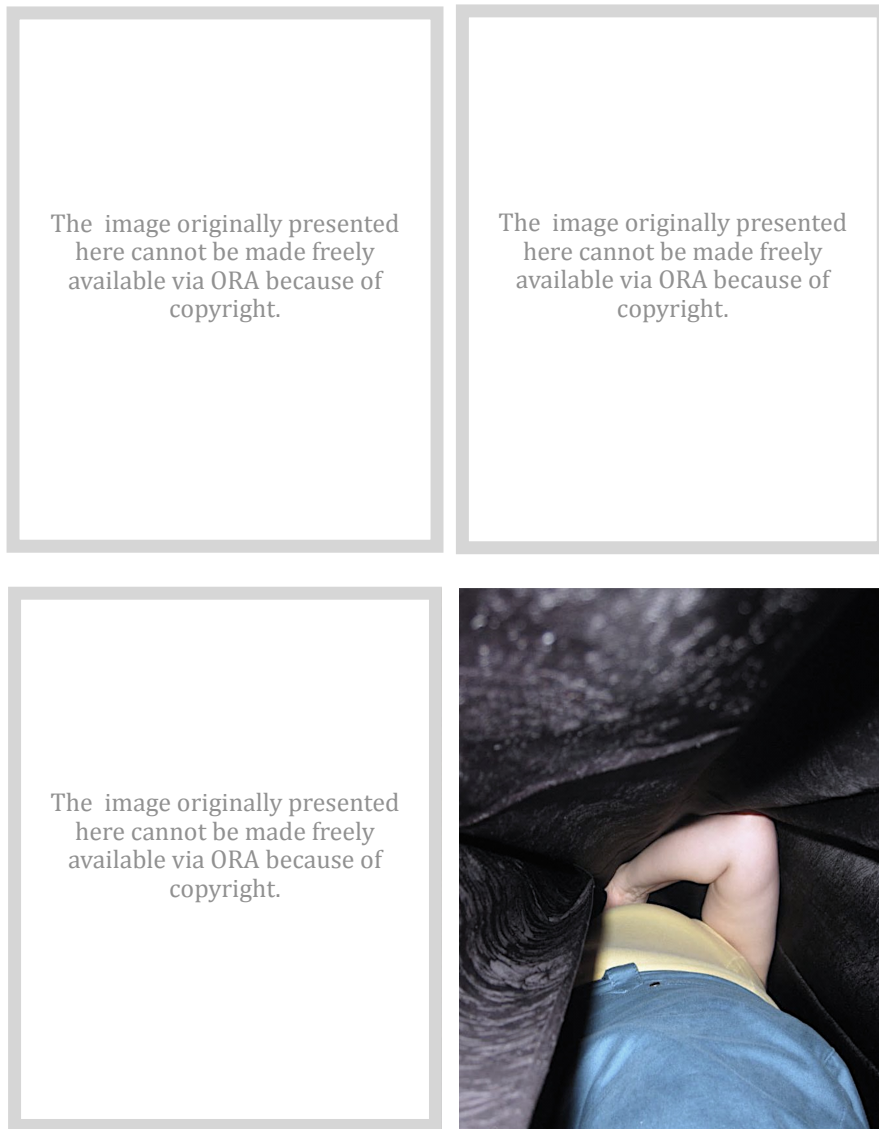


Figure 4.3: Left to right: part of the roof of the Kashan bāzār. The picture illustrates how the surface of a traditional Iranian city is developed like the skin. Kashan, Iran. Picture from: Slotanzadeh, *shahr neshini dar Iran (Urbanization in Iran)*, p. 215.

Figure 4.4: Friday prayer picture. 4 February 2011. Tehran, Iran. Picture from:

<http://www.thirdage.com/news-photo/friday-prayer-in-tehran-iran/57960>, last accessed: 7 May 2014.

Figure 4.5: Left to right: a *timche* (a section of a bāzār) in the Kashan bāzār. The picture illustrates how the elaborate motifs and rich colours appear inside the structure. Kashan, Iran. Picture from: 'Wikitravel', http://wikitravel.org/en/File:Inside_Kashan_Bazaar_-2.jpg, last accessed: 23 August 2013.

Figure 4.6: A woman inside the cone place (the *chādor*). Tehran, Iran. Photo by the author, 2014.

were so much connected that the border between the two was blurred. Additionally, Persian gardens were presented as places of 'profane refinement in the shade's of God's creation.' Michel Conan, 'Learning From Middle East Garden Tradition', *Middle East Garden Traditions: Unity and Diversity*, ed. Michel Conan (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2007), p. 7.

The consideration of the cone place as a continuation of architecture leads us to the arguments of *Chapter II*, which outlined the ‘primeval relationship’ between built places and clothing, according to which the ‘original principle of clothing’ has influenced architecture, and also according to which textiles can be seen as the essence of both building and clothing.⁴¹ The domestic house, as the extension of the early tents and dwellings made from fabrics or carpets (which also have a configuration similar to that of a cone), indicates the fact that the cone place has also traditionally been a way of extending privacy.⁴² As such, the cone place extends the private space into the public space, since under its cover a woman remains in a secluded space. In other words, its design as an enveloping, loose and sleeveless garment emulates the unbroken smooth and sleek ‘cut out’ forms of Iranian-Islamic architecture, inside the introversion of which one can move from one place to another within a single continuity. By treating the body of a woman as a delicate and vulnerable entity, the cone place’s function becomes very similar to that of architecture – to hide what lies beneath. A comparison of figures 4.3 and 4.5 with figures 4.4 and 4.6 explicitly illustrates this fact.

However, the prevailing traditional architecture in many villages in Iran differs very much from the traditional architecture of its cities and big towns. Villages in northern Iran, for instance, have a unique style of domestic architecture. For example, compare the picture of a rural house in figure 4.7 with the picture of a city house in Kashan in figure 4.12.

⁴¹ Gottfried Semper ‘*Der Stil*’ in Ruth Hanisch, *Absolutely Fabulous: Architecture and Fashion* (Munich and London: Prestel 2006), p. 136. It is very interesting to note that in numerous cultures and in different societies (e.g. in Russia and Iran), people still tend to cover the interior of their houses with textiles and carpets.

⁴² In Ardalan’s and Bakhtiar’s argument, too, the *chādor* was described as an extension of privacy, which ‘creates a “walled” space of infinite privacy.’ Ardalan and Bakhtiar, *Sense of Unity*, p. 19.

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Figure 4.7: Left to right: a two-storey house in the Safidrud delta. The house offers its façade to the outside world. Safidrud, Iran. 1974. Picture from: Encyclopaedia Iranica, <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/gilan-xii-rural-housing>, last accessed: 7 May 2014.

Figure 4.8: A woman from Gilān in a dress. Photo taken possibly by Anton Sevruguin. Gilān, Iran. Late nineteenth century. Picture from: http://www.parstimes.com/women/traditional_costume/period/ last accessed: 23 July 2014.

Figure 4.9: The walls of two different courtyard houses from the outside. Kashan, Iran. Photo by the author, 2012.

Figure 4.10: Albumen silver photograph of urban women. In general, they are more covered than village women. Taken possibly by Anton Sevruguin. Tehran, Iran. Late nineteenth century. Picture from: Brooklyn Museum collection of Collections: Arts of the Islamic World: Two Veiled Women and a child. http://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/159274/Two_Veiled_Women_and_a_Child, last accessed: 24 August 2014.

Unlike city houses, village houses in Iran are very similar to the American open lawn houses described above (compare figures 4.1 and 4.7). While traditional domestic houses in central Iran (in cities and towns such as Yazd and Kashan) are usually ‘hidden behind plain walls’ (figures 4.3 and 4.9), for example in the province of Gilān (located in the north of Iran) the houses ‘offer their façades to the outside world.’⁴³ Therefore, in rural houses in Iran there is a clear ‘predominance of the “open” over the “closed”.’⁴⁴ Differences in house construction in villages (e.g. houses in the north of Iran) and in towns and cities are clearly shown in the comparative views from the outside of such houses given in figures 4.7 and 4.9. The differences in architecture are also visible in the cone place as the other architectural place.⁴⁵ Women who live in villages and in open lawn houses are less covered than women who live in the courtyard houses of cities and towns (compare figures 4.8 and 4.10).

In her anthropological analysis of space, Helen Callaway divides space into three spheres: the physical, social and metaphysical. She argues that physical space is defined by ‘physical things’, by ‘human constructions within a particular ecology’, such as ‘the layout of cities, the spatial ordering of family compounds, the divisions and allocation of space within individual domestic dwelling, the placing of various items of furniture and domestic tools.’⁴⁶ She also describes how physical space consists of ‘constructions for allowing movement through space, such as streets and roads’, and of other constructions

⁴³ GILĀN xii. Rural Housing’, *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, from: <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/gilan-xii-rural-housing>, last accessed: 7 May 2014.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ The differences in the architectural styles, prevalent in villages and in cities, are not the sole explanation for the differences in the clothing of women. As described at the end of *Chapter II*, communities were also smaller (everyone inside the community was a non-stranger) and the distribution of wealth was more equal.

⁴⁶ Helen Callaway, ‘Spatial Domains and Women’s Mobility in Yorubaland, Nigeria’, *Women and Space, Ground Rules and Social Maps*, ed. Shirley Ardener (Guildford, London, Oxford, Worcester: Billing and Sons Limited, 1993), p. 171.

for ‘arresting movements, [...] such as walls and fences.’⁴⁷ Social space is ‘kinship structure, the social and economic organisation, the division of labour between sexes and the generations’ and so on.⁴⁸ Metaphysical space, according to Callaway, refers to ‘the cosmology or world-system, [to] the moral and religious order, [and to] the belief structures which have developed through the historical and material conditions of a particular society and [which] define its uniqueness.’⁴⁹ In addition, metaphysical space ‘presents the logical ordering of the visible and invisible universe, with its detailed classification of knowledge and rules for moral action.’⁵⁰ Traditionally, architecture has been perceived as a pious and sacred entity, and not only as a physical but also a metaphysical space. For example, as described in *Chapter II*, it was only acceptable for “honourable” women to build and represent an architectural place, whereas prostitutes were banned from doing so, as the famous architect and thinker Leon Battista Alberti (1404–1472) tells us.⁵¹ A prostitute or a slave, unlike a “virtuous woman”, was not associated with the morality and belief structures of a society, and her “openness” and her interchangeability between different men contradicted the idea of a self-sufficient cosmos and of architecture as a metaphysical space and earthly representation of that idea.

Leon van Schaik links architecture to spatial thinking and mental spaces. In van Schaik’s opinion, one’s mental space, which is shaped by constructing a spatial history for oneself, and which is composed of different memories of different places, helps ‘to

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Wigley, ‘The Housing of Gender’, p. 357.

construct diverging assumptions about the nature of the spatiality of the world'.⁵² Therefore, in his opinion, architecture must represent the unity of the 'mental space', as it did, for example, in Egypt and in many ancient and medieval societies, in which art, architecture and lifestyle constituted one mental space – which were all alike.⁵³ In that sense, pre-modern architecture was successful in 'represent[ing], within the belief systems of specific societies, their fullest understandings of the working of the universe.'⁵⁴ In the same vein, Juhani Pallasmaa argues that '[a]rchitecture has always fictionalised reality and culture through turning human setting into images and metaphors of idealised order and life,' and even into 'fictionalised architecture narratives.'⁵⁵ Therefore, Pallasmaa believes there is a constant negotiation between 'the cosmic and human dimensions'.⁵⁶ Traditional Iranian architecture (including the cone place) reflects the same idea of the self-sufficient cosmos and is part of the same single 'mental space': it encloses and perpetuates its existence, and reproduces and develops structures such as *bāzārs*, neighbouring warehouses, mosques and houses within itself, with one building flowing into another. Nasr, too, describes how traditional Iranian architecture represents the idea of a closed and self-sufficient cosmos in the best way possible. Therefore, he conceptualises that architecture in relation to 'cosmology' and to the 'world system.'⁵⁷ According to Nasr, both men and cosmos reflect a 'divine principle' and a 'Metacosmic reality', and traditional Iranian-Islamic architecture is 'also an image of the cosmos or of

⁵² Leon van Schaik, *Spatial Intelligence: New Futures for Architecture* (Chichester: John Wiley and Sons, Ltd, 2008), p. 40.

⁵³ Ibid. p. 45.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Embodied Image: Imagination and Imagery in Architecture* (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 2011), p. 19.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Nasr, 'Foreword', p. xii.

man taken in his cosmic dimension.’⁵⁸ Architectural practices in Iran are often embedded in religious metaphors, and the link between architecture and ‘metacosmic reality’ is not just an *idée fixe* discussed by scholars such as Nasr. For example, windows are mediators of “the material world” and “the other world”, while a pond in the middle of a courtyard can manifest a close relationship between architecture and divinity. In particular, Iranian residential houses are strongly influenced by sacral and religious buildings, namely by mosques. A comparison between figures 4.11 and 4.12 shows us the similarities in the design and the arrangement of space of mosques and of domestic architecture.



Figure 4.11: Left to right: Aghā Bozorg mosque and *madreseh* (school). Kashan, Iran. Photo by the author, 2012.

Figure 4.12: A residential house, Kashan, Iran. Photo by the author, 2012.

Mosques and shrines are also houses: they are the house of God, where the divine presence is more sensible.⁵⁹ The similarities between sacral and domestic architecture are striking: for instance, the usual ground plan of an Iranian mosque is identical to that of a courtyard house. In this respect in his book *Space and Muslim Urban Life, At the Limits of the Labyrinth of Fez*, which is an analysis of the Islamic pre-modern architectural environments, Simon O’Meara notes that ‘the house is a sacred enclave, or *haram*,

⁵⁸ Seyyed Hosein Nasr appears to quite literally believe that Iranian traditional architecture reflects a ‘divine principle’. Nevertheless, Nasr skillfully illustrates the Islamic roots of traditional Iranian architecture. Ibid.

⁵⁹ Nasr, ‘Foreword’, p. xii.

scarcely less inviolable than other enclaves held sacred in Muslim thought, including the *harams* of Mecca and Medina (*al-Haramayn* [in Arabic]) and the *zawiya* of Idris.⁶⁰ Furthermore, the toilets and bathrooms in traditional Islamic-Iranian architecture were not supposed to point in the direction of the *Ka'beh* (the most sacred place for Muslims, being the building located in Mecca, Saudi Arabia), as it was considered impure or unclean (*najēs* in Farsi) if these were located within the house.⁶¹ This religious ideology even affected personal affairs inside the house; for example, people believed that sleeping in the direction of *Ka'beh* would bring a calm sleep.

In Iran, the cone place (*chādor*) – like any other architectural place, and as the continuation of the privacy of domestic architecture – was traditionally regarded as a symbol of sacred inspiration and of religion. According to such a view, the *chādor* was seen as transporting its wearer (*zan-e bā hayā* / a modest woman) to the heavens. As was described in *Chapter II*, Rezā Shāh Pahlavi (reigned: 1925–1941) attempted to separate the *chādor* from its spiritual meaning by forcing prostitutes to wear it.⁶² Furthermore, in Iranian literature the cone place (the *chādor*) and the sky (cosmos) are often associated with each other, and poets sometimes use the former as an allegory for the latter.⁶³ Subsequently, because of the link between the domestic and the divine, the cone-like domestic architecture, apart from being an extension of the domestic sphere, is an extension of the religious sphere too. It is therefore a metaphysical place. Architectural

⁶⁰ Simon O'Meara, *Space and Muslim Urban Life, At the Limits of the Labyrinth of Fez* (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 22.

⁶¹ Normally they were located in the back yard.

⁶² From my conversation with Doctor Soheila Shahanshahi, in the School of Social Science, The University of Shahid Beheshti, 2012, Tehran, Iran.

⁶³ For example, see Ferdowsi (940–1020) the author of the epic of *Shahnameh* (*Book of Kings*, written between 977 and 1010): *cho khorshid az an chādor -e lājavard bar āmad bepūshid dibāye zard* (as the sun rises in the blue sky [cosmos = *chādor* in the poem] it wears a yellow garment).

places in Iran (including the cone place) are, of course, as physical as the bricks and fabrics with which they are constructed, but the way they are used stands in close relationship to a metaphysical (religious, moral and social) order. Therefore, a woman's body was traditionally conflated with clothing, with the house and with metaphysical spaces to such an extent that one could be considered the continuation of the other. The association between women's bodies and with metaphysical spaces is clearly reflected in proverbs such as *behesht zire pāy-e mādarān ast!* / Paradise is at a mother's feet! Or *mādarān/zanān hamānande payāmbaran khārkhāneh-e ādām sāziand!* / mothers/women like prophets make us human!

Van Schaik has argued that modern architecture is not representative of the belief systems of specific cultures and societies and thus lacks the specific homogenous 'mental space' that used to characterise it.⁶⁴ An obvious example that appears to validate van Schaik's argument is Iranian architecture, which in the course of the last century has changed drastically. For example, domestic architecture and the organisation of space within it have changed to such a point that the clear boundaries of the courtyard house are now substituted by the permeable glass walls of block apartments. New dwellings in Iran provide a novel communal form of living, which violates the previously 'cut out' form and constructs a different 'mental space' for the inhabitants. It interrupts the continuity of the form and design of different architectural places, including the cone place. In the next section of this study we will discuss the causes which laid the ground for the sudden and fast transformation of architectural places in Iran in the course of the twentieth century, and its effects on the situation of women.

⁶⁴ van Schaik, *Spatial Intelligence*, p. 46.

Transformation of built places (the Iranian case)

During the twentieth century, Iranian architecture (including religious and domestic architecture, and the cone place) underwent drastic changes in the course of various “modernising” and westernising efforts by the state, foreign actors and intellectual and commercial elites. Accordingly, the nationalist ideology and private commercial interests increasingly shaped both the ancient architectural heritage and the new building projects (whether private or governmental) in the country. The modern architecture of Iran projects certain *new* social norms and, thereby, has an influence on people, their spatial intelligence, mental space and the way they *dwell* in those places. This study includes the cone place in such an analysis of architecture and argues that the transformation of the cone place/*chādor* (its replacement with more secular clothes) in Iran should not be seen in isolation but in connection with the transformation of the other architectural places.

In the following discussion the factors which drove these changes will be discussed. These factors transformed the function of traditional Iranian-Islamic architecture and gradually stripped it of its metaphysical spatial connotations, thus disrupting the continuity in its design, form and enclosures.

a. The phenomenon of the open house

In 1909 in the city of Abadan in southwest Iran, the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (APOC), later the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC), was founded.⁶⁵ The refinement of Persian oil started in 1912/13, and as early as 1910 the APOC assisted in repairing the

⁶⁵ Mark Crinson, *Modern Architecture and the End of Empire* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), p. 53.

city's infrastructure in order to attract British expertise in the field.⁶⁶ By the 1920s the neighbourhood of Braim and Bawarda, located to the southwest of the refinery, had become an urbanised zone for British and Iranian experts and workers.⁶⁷ Despite the arid climate of southern Iran, these neighbourhoods were inspired by ideas of the 'garden city' and the 'city beautiful' movements seen in many European cities and in New Delhi.⁶⁸ The surface of the "garden cities of Abadan", unlike the traditional urban planning and architecture, did not grow organically and jointly like skin both covering and revealing what is underneath (as described earlier in this chapter). Figure 4.13 illustrates how the new architecture of these cities openly displayed its Western ideal and revealed individual houses, replacing the traditional houses (compare figure 4.13 with 4.14).⁶⁹ As such houses were located on lawns and not surrounded by walls, their openness clearly contrasted with the previous 'cut out' structure and the continuity of space in different architectural environments.

They also interrupted the shared unified mental space. Moreover, they emphasised the importance of the outward composition, rather than that on the inside – as previously had been the case. In this they are reminiscent of the American open lawn houses that attract 'attention to [their] existence', and to which Bloomer and Moore have referred.⁷⁰ This has led to a softening of the dichotomy between the *inside* and the *outside world* and between the *public* and the *private*, and to an opening of the boundaries of the house

⁶⁶ Mark Crinson argues that by the late 1940s the refinery had become 'the largest refinery in the world,' and, along with certain residential areas around it, the region became the most significant location of British overseas investment. Mark Crinson, 'Abadan: Planning and Architecture Under the Anglo Iranian Oil Company', *Planning Perspectives*, No. 3, 12(1977): 341–359.

⁶⁷ 'mahaleh hāye maskuni-e shahr-e Abādan' ('The Residential Neighborhoods of Abadan'), from: <http://www.obodan.com/mahallat/> last accessed: 7 May 2014

⁶⁸ Mark Crinson, 'Abadan: Planning', pp. 341–359.

⁶⁹ The establishment of Abadan refinery and its contribution to the emergence of 'suburban looking' spaces is also analysed by Karimi. For more refer to: Karimi, 'Transitions in Domestic Architecture', pp. 85–86.

⁷⁰ Bloomer and Moore, *Body, Memory*, p. 3.

beyond the closed circle of family members. In other words, the new architecture expanded the expectation of trust beyond the family members and beyond the normal and accepted norms of the society. These houses ceased to follow the design and spatial arrangements (unity of space and symbolism) of mosques and sacred architecture. Therefore, the domestic architecture's aura as a metaphysical space, a sacred enclave and "self-sufficient" cosmos, was disturbed. This violated the link with those architectural places that still represented those qualities (the cone place and the religious architecture).

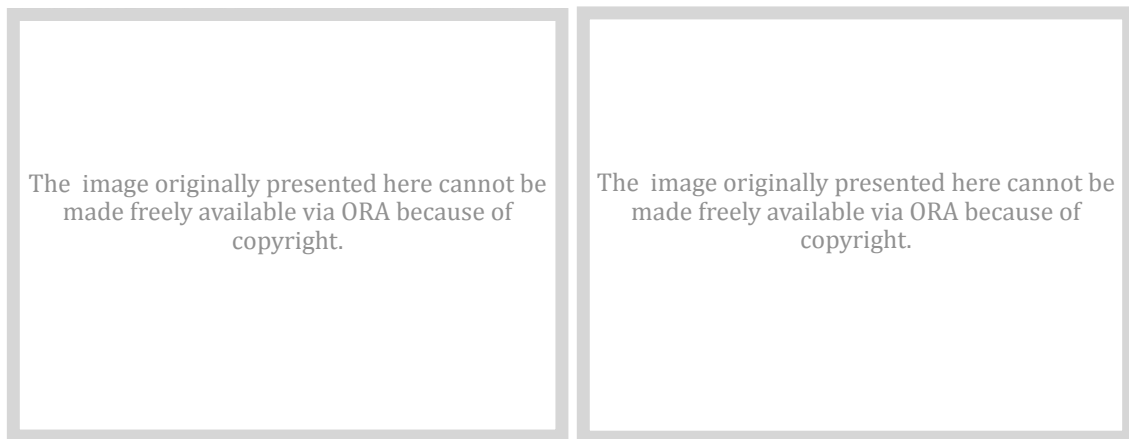


Figure 4.13: Left to right: open lawn houses in the neighbourhood of Braim. Staff quarters, Abadan, Iran, 1944. Picture from: <http://iranian.com/Abadan/2001/May/Abadan/6a.html>, last accessed: 18 August 2014.

Figure 4.14: A traditional arrangement of houses creating a unified space. Yazd, Iran. Picture from: Soltanzadeh, *shahr va shahr neshini dar Iran (the City and Urbanization in Iran)*, p. 203.

Another marked difference between the new architecture of neighbourhoods such as Braim in Abadan and the traditional Iranian architecture was the size of the houses (normally one-bedroom houses or flats, with high-ranked engineers being given larger accommodation), which for most of their new inhabitants meant a reduction in their living space. Where people had usually lived in extended families, the new small houses now allowed for the housing only of what would today be called the nuclear-family.⁷¹

This new type of housing allowed families neither to reside nor to expand in a traditional

⁷¹ 'mahaleh hāye maskuni-e shahr-e Abādan' ('The Residential Neighborhoods of Abadan').

way, nor did it provide working space for the female members of the family (for indoor activities such as weaving, which previously had often been a financial help to the family). As a result, women were increasingly expected to go to work (outside the house), on top of their daily housework.

The ‘garden cities’ of Abadan, built during the Pahlavi dynasty (1925–1979), were ‘glorified in the popular press and idealized in the popular imagination.’⁷² The British neighbourhoods, such as Braim, became the most popular residential neighbourhoods in Iran, with Rezā Shāh Pahlavi, who visited the region in the early 1920s, admiring in his book *safar nāmeḥ khuzestān* (Travelling through Khuzestān) its level of luxury and comfort.⁷³ The residential houses of Abadan influenced the country’s domestic architecture tremendously. Soon, this kind of architecture was regarded as the prototype of good housing and was imitated by the middle and the working classes of cities such as Tehran, Isfahan and Tabriz.⁷⁴ From the early 1920s onwards Rezā Shāh started demolishing the old parts of Tehran, including its city walls – without, however, providing crucial infrastructure. The old gates of the city were demolished and Tehran started to expand very quickly. The city’s sudden growth led to an increasing lack of housing and a sharp rise in rents and ground prices. As early as 1946 complaints started to appear in journals such as *Taraqqi (progress)*, accusing the government of ignoring the

⁷² Karimi, ‘Transitions in Domestic Architecture’, p. 86.

⁷³ Ibid. p. 87.

⁷⁴ However, these houses were not the only prototype of Western-style housing in Iran at the beginning of the twentieth century. In her dissertation ‘Transition in Domestic Architecture and Home Culture in Twentieth Century Iran’, Karimi in the section entitled ‘Home in Public’ describes how the interaction of missionaries with Iranians (in terms of ‘exchanging cultural habits, tastes, and modes of home life’), changed the ‘modes of home life’ in Iran. This change happened mainly through the appearance as early as the 1920s of missionaries’ houses in cities such as Mashhad and Rasht, which introduced a new mode of housing. These houses, similar to the houses of Abadan described above, were located at the centre of a garden, offering their façades to the outside. Also, with their numerous windows they offered views of their interiors to the outside world. In many cases these types of houses became a pattern to follow for the houses of emerging upper-class Iranian families. Ibid. pp. 73–81.

‘housing problem’ and the ‘high costs of rent’ in cities such as Tehran.⁷⁵ The *chāhārsad dastgah* (four-hundred units/apartments) project (started in 1946) was one of the earliest projects designed to solve the problem.⁷⁶ The features that were incorporated into this housing complex ‘suggested the possibilities [e.g. losing structural quality] for numerous projects [which were built] in the following two decades.’⁷⁷ The *Ekbātān* residential complex (started 1945) was another such project, which was designed in the west of Tehran for 60,000 residents.⁷⁸ By the 1960s the lack of apartments was by no means affecting only the city’s slums but affected the working classes too.⁷⁹ As a result, houses were built for families on a low income, constructed very poorly, and were planned in a way that allowed the residents an absolute bare minimum of privacy: with people looking into each other’s windows.⁸⁰ The transformation of the lifestyle and architecture, which earlier had affected the houses and estates of aristocrats, some experts and workers in cities such as Abadan, therefore gradually started to involve the rest of the population. Although projects such as *chāhārsad dastgah* alleviated the housing problem to some extent, this alleviation was only temporary, as the land reforms of 1962 subjected big cities like Tehran to massive immigration from the countryside.⁸¹ This, together with the increase in unemployment because of the mechanisation of agriculture, caused a huge

⁷⁵ Karimi, ‘Transitions in Domestic Architecture’, p. 140.

⁷⁶ Ibid. p. 141.

⁷⁷ Mina Marefat, ‘Building to Power: Architecture of Tehran 1921–1941’ (PhD diss., Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1988), p. 140.

⁷⁸ S. M. Ali Kamrava, *Shahrsazi-e Mo’aser-e Iran (Contemporary Town Planning in Iran)* (Tehran: Entesharat-e daneshgah-e Tehran [Tehran University press], 1388–2009), p. 67.

⁷⁹ Karimi, ‘Transitions in Domestic Architecture’, p. 145.

⁸⁰ Ibid. pp. 142.

⁸¹ Although the reform was based on the idea of allocating lands to peasants, its final result saw landowners benefit (as they preserved the bigger and better irrigated lands while peasants were left with the rest). According to estimates, forty two percent of the peasants in total owned less than five percent of the total available agricultural lands in the country. Soltanzadeh, *shahr va shahr neshini dar Iran (City and Urbanization in Iran)*, pp. 154–155.

influx of peasants into cities and especially into Tehran.⁸² Soon the opportunity to profit from this misery was seized, and private agencies of non-professional builders sprang up with the aim of providing cheap housing in a short period of time – a phenomenon which became infamously known in Iran as *besāz-o beforush* (build 'n sell).⁸³

Soon after the successes of the revolution of 1979 the government had consolidated to some extent, and the issue of housing for the poor became one of its prime concerns and legitimising factors. By 1982, the establishment *jahād-e sāzāndegi* (the construction crusade [jihad]) was organised to boost construction.⁸⁴ However, during the years of the Iraq–Iran war (1980–1988) with the influx of refugees from the border regions to cities such as Shiraz, Isfahan and Tehran the problem of housing became even more severe. There was no remedy in sight and housing was by now really one problem in many, including issues of food, petrol and goods shortages. In an entirely unplanned and makeshift way the needy started to settle down on the margins of the big cities (a phenomenon known as *zāgheneshini/hāshiyeneshini*)⁸⁵ and in some urban spaces that had been set aside by the former Shah for future infrastructure projects. This, together with the phenomenon of *besāz-o beforush* mentioned above, created an even more dense and chaotic urban space, which had nothing in common with the traditional domestic architecture. The following discussion will explain some of the factors that led to the emergence of houses and apartments in contemporary Iran which put family life on

⁸² Ibid. p. 155.

⁸³ The housing shortage remained a problem until the Islamic revolution of 1979. Asef Bayat argues that many people immediately after the revolution 'took advantage of the situation and the collapse of government to take over hundreds of vacant homes and half finished apartment blocks, refurbishing them as their own properties.' He states that, according to one report, over 4,500 houses had been taken over only a month after the revolution. Asef Bayat, *Street Politics: Poor People's Movement in Iran* (New York and Chichester: Columbia University Press, 1997), pp. 2 and 61–62.

⁸⁴ Ibid. p. 72.

⁸⁵ Bayat argues that by 1980 the population of shanty dwellers reached 100,000 households. Ibid. p. 77.

display more than other earlier houses (including ones in cities such as Abadan) had ever done before.

The pricing of houses in Iran depends on the number of square metres of usable floor area (the total area available for private use), excluding areas for communal use, such as corridors, lobbies, etc. This has encouraged construction companies (in particular those engaged in *besāz-o beforush*) to maximise the area for private use in order to maximise profits. This has increased the already high density and compactness of most Tehran neighbourhoods, which are characterised by houses that are built very close to each other, by narrow streets and tiny flats, penned up in blocks with minuscule communal areas. In the case of most of these houses, odd floor-plans, the arrangement of the windows (which are sometimes placed directly in front of each other), and the thin walls and lack of space make them visually and verbally accessible from neighbouring houses and from the street, undermining the privacy of their inhabitants.⁸⁶ Windows had previously often been more or less richly ornamented and had been more a spiritual and decorative aspect than a practical feature (not least because, due to the often hot weather, it was often undesirable to let in too much light), but in later block apartments they had no such function (compare figure 4.16 with figure 4.17). The extensive use of glass, especially in post-revolution architecture (both for windows and for entire façades), has resulted in many ordinary Iranians seeing in their window, as Karimi has expressed it, ‘nothing more than a reflection of the neighbour’s life.’⁸⁷

⁸⁶ In this regard Ali Madanipour argues that in Tehran there is a lack of green spaces and other public spaces because of the density of built places. Ali Madanipour, *Tehran: The Making of a Metropolis* (Chichester, New York and Toronto: John Wiley and Sons, 1998), p. 137.

⁸⁷ Karimi, ‘Transitions in Domestic Architecture’, p. 150.

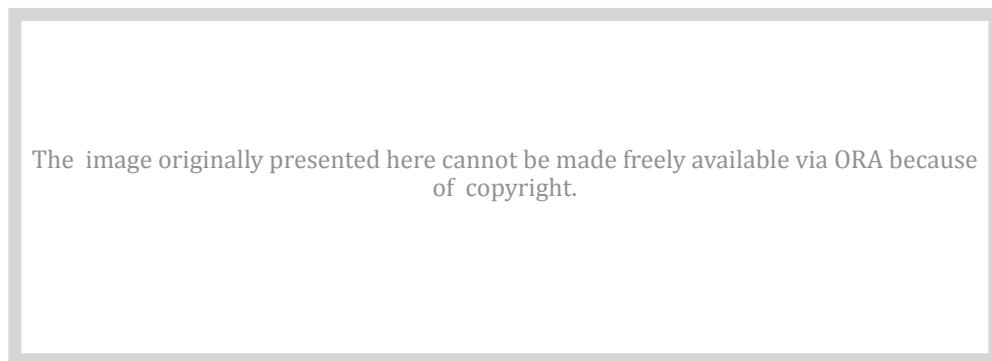


Figure 4.15: Left to right: a traditional window opening to the courtyard in *Imam Jom'eh* house. Tehran, Iran. Photo by the author. 2011.

Figure 4.16: Windows opening to the street in an alley in Tabriz. Tabriz, Iran. Photo by the author. 2012.

In addition to windows that open onto the street and onto neighbouring houses, many cheap post-revolution block apartments, particularly those in Tehran, are equipped with an internal *pasiyow* (patio) – an enclosed room with a glass ceiling that is mostly situated in living rooms (see figure 4.17). Many patios in Tehran are, however, the only source of light and air in apartments. Unsurprisingly, such apartments are normally cheaper than those with windows and balconies that open onto the street. Two families usually share these enclosed glass boxes. Where the patios are the only space for letting air and light into the apartment, residents can hardly be expected to cover the windows with matt glass or curtains (particularly those on the lower floors). As a result, residents have a permanent view into the neighbouring apartment, which can be quite uncomfortable and challenging, especially for women and for people who had previously lived in courtyard houses. Unsurprisingly, this often provokes arguments that are sometimes fought out right across the patio. Furthermore, balconies that open onto the streets, in contrast to those in the traditional domestic architecture that had faced the courtyard, were (and, to some extent, remain) another challenge for some female residents of such houses. Their

audio-visual accessibility from the street, and also from neighbours, poses a challenge to the idea of seclusion. However, because of the widespread lack of space inside apartments and outside of them (where there are no gardens or green spaces), balconies are actually crucial living spaces for sleeping (especially in hot weather), cooking or barbecuing, reading, and even for sunbathing.



a.



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Figure 4.17: Above: **a.** pictures of patios. Pictures from: Pei.pcn.ir, <http://pei.pcn.ir/Product/21623>, last accessed: 24 August 2014.

Figure 4.18: Left to right: a woman on the balcony without any veiling. Tehran, Iran. Photo by the author, 2013.

Figure 4.19: Women on the balcony without any veiling. Tehran, Iran, 2013. Picture from 'An Iranian Journey Collection' by Hossein Fatemi, <http://www.panos.co.uk/stories/2-13-1629-2123/Hossein-Fatemi/An-Iranian-Journey/#>, last accessed: 2 August 2014.

The new architecture not only breached privacy in terms of visual accessibility, it did so equally in terms of acoustic accessibility because of factors such as thin walls, high residential density, patios and air conditioners. For example, air conditioners known as

kuler channel not only cool air but also bring the sounds of neighbouring apartments into one's home (see figure 4.20).⁸⁸ The phenomenon is so widespread in Iranian everyday life that many filmmakers have referenced the subject in their films. For example, Dariush Mehrjui's celebrated film *ejāreh neshinhā* (*The Tenants*, 1986) criticises the bad conditions of *besāz-o beforush* houses (see figure 4.21).



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Figure 4.20: Left to right: the opening of a *kuler*-channel inside an apartment. Tehran, Iran. Photo by the author. 2013.

Figure 4.21: Still from Daryush Mehrjuee's *ejāreh neshinhā* (*The Tenants*) (1986). One of the characters is spying on their neighbours through the *kuler*-channel.

This criticism has, however, not changed the fact that in today's Iran it is considered a normal aspect of living in an apartment to hear one's neighbours through the thin walls, patios and air conditioners. In addition to compromising actual privacy, this also redefines and weakens privacy as a concept, so that privacy has almost come to include one's neighbours and the grey-spaces (liminal spaces) of the patios and balconies. Such an understanding of privacy exceeds the walls of any one apartment. In other words, on the one hand, privacy has expanded with the inclusion of the privacy of neighbouring

⁸⁸ Because of the usage of new building-materials such as cement, iron and glass, where traditionally thatch and clay had been used, the ventilation of houses became reliant upon electric air conditioners.

houses into one's own private sphere; on the other hand, privacy in houses that resemble a fish tank that is visible from every angle is crucially undermined.

The new architectural forms illustrate a hitherto unimaginable breach of the dichotomy between the private and the public. In this regard Victor Turner, in his book *The Ritual Process, Structure and Anti-Structure*, has talked of a 'liminal state', which is in practice in some primitive cultures.⁸⁹ For him, liminal spaces are 'neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between.'⁹⁰ Similarly, most Iranian houses exist in an ambiguous grey area between the private and public. This study therefore uses Turner's model for contemporary Iranian domestic spaces. Inhabitants of such houses are neither fully hidden, in the sense of being in a private space, nor fully exposed.⁹¹ Changes in Iranian architecture have created liminal spaces for women who experience them as new physical and mental spaces.

The fusion of the cone place with new architecture

Pallasmaa claims that the most fundamental encounter humans have with the world is via architecture.⁹² For Pallasmaa it is obvious that 'architecture articulates primary human experiences of being-in-the-world, such as gravity and mass, horizontality and verticality, earth and sky, centre and periphery, nature and culture,

⁸⁹ Victor W. Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969), p. 95.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Sue Birdwell Beckham describes how the American porch was neither a public nor a private space. She uses Victor Turner's model in order to categorise the American porch as a liminal space. Sue Birdwell Beckham, 'Front Porch: Women's liminal Space', *Housing and Dwelling: Perspectives on Modern Domestic Architecture*, ed. Barbara Miller Lane (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), pp. 87–88.

⁹² Pallasmaa, *The Embodied Image*, p. 59.

landscape and artifice, individuality and collectivity, past and present.’⁹³ In other words, for him, and for many of us, the experience of the self and the world takes place through different forms of built places, as these places prepare the grounds for a person to position themselves in the ‘continuum of culture’, and to construct one’s body awareness and identity.⁹⁴ These processes – for instance, the violation of the unified space, the disappearance of the walls of the courtyard house and of the ‘cut out’ form of architecture (as seen in the houses of Abadan, and later in Tehran and in other big cities in Iran) – alter people’s experiences of the world and of their selves.

The novel *The Cypress Tree* by Kamin Mohammadi, whose family was among those living in Abadan during the 1950s, tells the story of how these new houses imported ‘openness’ from the West, so that ‘anyone strolling casually by had an unimpeded view of the garden and the front door and even into the windows of the house itself.’⁹⁵ These ‘transparent spaces in which everything was out on show’ were indeed a very powerful force for changing Iranian architecture, urban planning and domestic habits.⁹⁶ They diminished the privacy inside the house and changed the meaning of the concept of *harim-e shakhsi* (private property/sphere), which became less strict and did not include visual and verbal seclusion. This brought major changes, particularly for women.⁹⁷ In this regard, Mohammadi argues that:

[t]housands of years of culture and personal impulse were swept unceremoniously away by these houses and the *New Iranian* [Italics by the author] that occupied them, those men and, more importantly, their women, who

⁹³ Ibid. pp. 58–59.

⁹⁴ Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses* (London: Academy Editions, 1996), p. 50.

⁹⁵ Kamin Mohammadi, *The Cypress Tree: A Love Letter to Iran* (London, Berlin, New York and Sydney: Bloomsbury, 2011), p. 65.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

were not afraid to show their faces – literally – to the world. Less than thirty years after their grandmothers had refused to leave their homes uncovered or died from the shame when forcibly unveiled in the street [referencing the forced unveiling of 1936], this generation, this enclave of *New Iranian women* [Italics by the author] had not only uncovered themselves – their hair, their arms, their legs, as they strutted around in the latest fashion [...] but their houses and by extension their lives too.⁹⁸

In Mohammadi's description, the link between architecture and women's clothing (the cone place) is highlighted to the extent that she speaks – of course, with some dramatic licence – of *New Iranians*. *Chapter II* argued that the places we inhabit influence and construct our identity (as dwellers). According to Edward Casey, our knowledge of who and what we are is very closely aligned with our awareness of where we are.⁹⁹ In other words, our spatial awareness affects our personal and collective identity.¹⁰⁰ Casey refers to place-alienation, which occurs, for instance, when human beings are forced to leave a place, as one of the extreme forms of losing both collective and personal identity.¹⁰¹ For Native Americans, such as the Navajo people, he explains that losing their place not only meant the loss of their personal identity but also of 'the Great Self' that provides a collective identity.¹⁰² In the Iranian case, which was of course much less drastic, many families also experienced a sort of shock when they had to adapt to an entirely new environment. One might even say that they felt like immigrants in a foreign country. Migrants often initially have little access to the embedded concepts in the structure of each culture and society, which give meaning to all the components of that environment.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Edward S. Casey, *Getting Back into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993), p. 307.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid. pp. 307–309.

¹⁰² Ibid.

Therefore, ‘for a migrant everything is flattened.’¹⁰³ She/he must redefine her/his perceptual understanding according to the new modes of life, environment and structures.

This returns us to Heidegger’s and Casey’s theories of dwelling, in which dwelling is defined as the process of developing a sense of belonging to a place. Of course, in this situation the person who is living in a new place is not a *new person* (‘New Iranians’, as defined by Mohammadi) but the changes in the organisation and the structure of space and environment in Iran required people to align themselves with the new environment, in order to be able to belong, to dwell and to exist in that world. The new forms of architecture changed the domestic architecture from an enclosed one-space structure to a porous/penetrable and divided space, creating a new form of dwelling that was less intense and less family-centred. In doing so it provided a greater fusion with the wider environment and with non-family members (neighbouring houses).¹⁰⁴ Furthermore, in these new forms of dwelling the house did not embody a protective enclave with its direct association with control over women’s chastity. It also downplayed the perceived “perfection” of the male body and its links with architecture as a perfect container. For women, dwelling no longer meant confinement to and conflation with the house. Consequently, practices such as calling the wife *āshpazkhaneh!* / Kitchen! Or, *manzel!* / residence! were forgotten.

Both this and the previous chapter have shown how individuals position

¹⁰³ van Schaik, *Spatial Intelligence*, p. 49.

¹⁰⁴ Similarly Sharon Marcus in her study ‘Seeing through Paris, 1820–1848’ describes how the apartment houses of that era, with their specific design (e.g. big windows), altered the definition of public and private and how that has affected women – ‘bringing the city to women.’ Sharon Marcus, ‘Seeing through Paris, 1820–1848’, *Housing and Dwelling: Perspectives on Modern Domestic Architecture*, ed. Barbara Miller Lane (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), p. 125.

¹⁰⁴ Bloomer and Moore, *Body, Memory*, p. 37.

themselves in a ‘three-dimensional boundary’ containing the actual body.¹⁰⁵ One’s ‘body image’ depends on one’s perception of her/his ‘body boundary’ and, accordingly, the ‘body image’ can be improved by altering the ‘body boundary’.¹⁰⁶ By reference to examples (such as that of the disabled girl in McNair Wright’s story¹⁰⁷ or that of the question ‘is this me?’ – asked by women trying on clothes¹⁰⁸), we have tried to highlight the correlation between a person’s bodily awareness and the boundaries of clothing and of the house. Arguably, if these boundaries change, so does a person’s bodily awareness – particularly if the change is as drastic as was the case in Abadan in Iran. If a relatively minor alteration, such as the advent of a cleaned and nicely decorated house, improved and altered the disabled girl’s ‘body image’, can we not expect the substitution of walls with glass to equally alter the ‘body boundary’ and consequently affect the ‘body image’ of those affected by such a change? Bloomer and Moore, analysing the relationship between the boundaries of the house and the body, have argued that certain feelings which are ‘originally associated with body transactions may be evoked by activities within a house.’¹⁰⁹ For instance, the ‘pulling down [of] window shades and [the] locking [of] the front door may replicate the stiffening of a body boundary.’¹¹⁰ If we assume that there is a correlation between the boundary of the body and of the house, then the body boundary of a woman who dwells in an open house becomes more transparent and softer since it includes the environment beyond the widows. Therefore, her body image, too, is affected by this change. Seymour Fisher and Sidney E. Cleveland argue that ‘there is a

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ McNair Wright, *The Complete Home*, pp. 168–169.

¹⁰⁸ Woodward, *Why Women Wear*, p. 11.

¹⁰⁹ Bloomer Moore, *Body, Memory*, p. 46.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

basic tendency for body feelings to be translated into body size terms. The individual seems to register the many alternations in his body feelings as shifts up and down a scale of smallness-bigness.¹¹¹ Therefore, it seems that the body image of a woman who is in an open house will be different from that of a woman in a completely enclosed dwelling. The former tends to be more confident about her body being seen outside the setting of her house, since she is less secluded and she has grown more accustomed to being registered: she is more familiar with the world outside her house, since parts of that world have long entered it. For such a woman it is less awkward to partake in the life that takes place in her wider environment, because she herself already takes part in and is placed in it (she is seen). A woman that has experienced new forms of architecture feels more trustful, since she has had no choice but to allow other people to enter spaces that hitherto were considered private and vice versa. Therefore, her body boundary has *expanded* in relation to the extent that the 'house boundary' has. There is greater fusion between her body and the surrounding environment.

Like other built places, the cone place was (is) a powerful mediator through which women experience themselves and their environment. However, just as is the case with other built places, it relates to other architectural places in a complementary way, if – and only if – all these places share certain commonalties and reflect the norms of unified mental space. However, as was shown above, this complementary relationship has long been interrupted in the Iranian case: most importantly because of the rise of non-traditional architecture and practices connected to it. The breakdown of the unified spaces and religious connotations of privacy in relation to the female body eroded the traditional

¹¹¹ Seymour Fisher and Sidney E. Cleveland, 'Personality, Body Perception, and Body Image Boundary', *The Body Percept*, eds. Seymour Wapner and Heinz Warner (New York: Random House, 1965), p. 51.

complementary relationship between the cone place and other architectural places, which had carefully sustained an aura of privacy surrounding women. After the revolution of 1979 the wearing of the *hejāb* (hijab) became mandatory. Inside their homes, however, women were not obliged to cover and did not do so. Despite sharia law, which the government was propagating,¹¹² the lack of space and housing in Tehran and other big cities and the high density of residential neighbourhoods meant that the situation was somewhat paradoxical: women were exposed to unrelated men when they were at home. Ironically this situation gave women, in a way, more privacy in the cone place (either in the *chādor* or in long *māntow* [tunic] and *rusari* [scarf]) in public than they possessed without that cone place at home. Therefore, the cone place (in the form of the *chādor*), as the extension of the privacy of domestic architecture and of the values and beliefs connected to it, appears rather *artificial* and even false for women who are obliged to wear it.

Notions such as that of Morteza Motahari's, which describe a woman as a vulnerable house (*'owrat*),¹¹³ or that of Mehdi Hojjat, which compares the female body to a courtyard house, were popular at the beginning of the revolution. Initially they were not taken literally; however, the changes in the forms of houses and their influence on women's clothing have proven how prophetic they were. As a result, the subject is regularly given much attention, in the form of attempts by the government to propagate the wearing of the *chādor* – either through rules stipulating the mandatory wearing of the *chādor* (by creating Islamic dress codes for employees of governmental organisations,

¹¹² Which required women to be veiled in front of people who are regarded in religious terms as strangers (non-family members).

¹¹³ Motahari, *Mas'aleh-e Hejāb (the problem of Hijab)*, p. 232.

e.g. courts) or through advertisements. Recently, religious figures have argued that houses with views on neighbouring houses or which are accessible to view from the street are not Islamic. For example, Ayatollah Abdollah Javadi-Amoli, one of the most prominent Islamic scholars in Iran, has argued that places that can be looked into from the outside should be considered public spaces, as they are not Islamic.¹¹⁴ For this reason, in recent years some attempts have been made to counter the visual opening of houses, and therefore of private space, to the public. The municipality of Tabriz, for example, has obliged construction companies and house owners to cover half of the windows with matt glass (see figures 4.22 and 4.23).¹¹⁵



Figure 4.22: Left to right: a residential building with a half matt glass in front of the main windows. Tabriz, Iran. Photo by the author, 2013.

Figure 4.23: View from the inside of a residential house in Tabriz. A half matt glass window in front of the main window is blocking the view from the inside and the outside. Tabriz, Iran. Photo by the author. 2013.

Nevertheless, most of these measures have a limited impact on how the houses are built in Iran and how the inhabitants of such houses live. Firstly, the density of the residential

¹¹⁴ Ayatollah Abdollah Javadi-Amoli, from: 'The Open Kitchen is not Islamic, *Mashregh News*, June/2011, <http://www.mashreghnews.ir/fa/news/48499/آشپزخانه-آملی-جوادی>, last accessed: 18 August 2014.

¹¹⁵ The rule is only limited to Tabriz and only applies to newly built houses. It is applied if the windows open onto the private space of other houses, or if the private space of the house can be viewed from the street.

neighbourhoods in big cities in Iran is so high that even such treatments do not solve the problem; secondly, because of the lack of supervision of *besāz-o beforush* builders and the low budget of such builders for construction, the rules are not executed consistently or accurately. As a result, many women in contemporary Tehran and other big Iranian cities shun the *chādor* and wear a very loose headscarf and more fitted clothing (see figures 4.24 and 4.26).



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Figure 4.24: Left to right: picture of women with more fitted clothing. Tabriz, Iran. Photo by the author. 2011.

Figure 4.25: Accepted (suggested) forms of *hejāb* (hijab). The poster suggests how the students of a university should dress in order to obtain authorisation to enter the university: *with a chādor* or a long *māntow* (tunic) and a *magna'e* (a fitted scarf). Picture from: 'Muhajabat', <https://muhajabat.wordpress.com/category/iranianpersian-fashion/page/14/>, last accessed: 19 August 2014.

Figure 4.26: Picture of a woman with more fitted clothing. Tehran, Iran. 2014. Picture from: 'The Tehran Times', <http://thetehrantimes.tumblr.com/tagged/streetstyle>, last accessed: 25 August 2014.

Iran's changing architectural landscape, especially in the domestic sphere, has been a major factor in bringing about this transformation. Many who wear the officially accepted

forms of hijab (as illustrated in figure 4.25), particularly if they do so only during working hours, do so often as an act of compliance rather than of conviction. Those who disobey the moral laws in regard to the dress codes set by the government fear legal persecution (e.g. losing their jobs) or detention and harassment by the authorities. Nevertheless, despite the propaganda promoting the necessity of covering the female body and pressure from the authorities to induce women to emplace themselves within the cone place, women often shun the *chādor* or the long *māntow* (tunic) and *magna'eh*/ or *rusari* (a fitted scarf), as it is illustrated in figure 4.25, and prefer to wear very loose headscarves with the open front tunics/coats and fitted trousers and tops while in public, as is shown in figure 4.24 and 4.26. For many women, wearing the *chādor* has become increasingly like guarding a secret that is widely known.

Chapter V: Conclusion

Only if we are capable of dwelling, only then can we build.¹

Recapitulation

This study has argued that the cone place is a built place and a mobile form of architecture which is in a complementary relationship with static architecture. In other words, the cone place as a mobile built place is part of the architectural cityscape, with which it stands in a permanent dialogue of symbols (religious and secular, private and public, old and new – to name only a few important ones). It is also a *dwelling place* in the sense that it provides an enclosure or a room-like space for a woman's body and in that it awakens a prenatal feeling of protectedness and security. Furthermore, we have discussed how the cone place as a built place imposes certain restraints on the body of a woman: it limits her perceptual systems and shapes her spatial awareness and movements. Therefore, a woman within the cone place is more dependent on her visual system than one who is not within the cone place. We concluded that the cone place's capacity to shape the behaviour and awareness of women makes it akin to Pierre Bourdieu's concept of habitus. Like the latter it is both socially constructed and socially constructive. Furthermore, this study employed the concepts of 'body image' and 'body boundary', following the theories of Kent C. Bloomer, Charles W. Moore and Seymour Fisher, in order to illustrate how women conflate (or are expected to conflate) their body boundary with that of the cone place or their house, so as to improve their body image.

¹ Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York and London: Harper and Row Publishers, 1971), p. 160.

This conflation was previously more endemic, particularly during the industrial age.² Obviously, numerous women in contemporary societies have transcended the norms of traditional societies that have conflated the female body with domestic architecture and with the cone place. Nevertheless, Beverly Gordon and Sophie Woodward have rightly argued that the conflation of women with clothing and with the home is still widespread. This is clearly reflected in certain advertisements, in the so-called women's pages in magazines and newspapers, in the sections of such magazines relating to living and the home³ and, for that matter, in women's practice of making statements such as 'is this me?' when trying on new clothes.⁴ Moreover, we have analysed the cone place's transformation in Iran,⁵ not in isolation from but in relation to the country's changing urban (and specifically domestic) architecture. Jamal Akbar argued that 'the built environment is not static'⁶ but that it changes in accordance to the altering needs and habits of a society. This study adds to this perspective the idea that the built environment itself alters social habits and particularly dress codes. And it does so not only because fashion and architecture are often influenced by the same currents but, more importantly, because people's (especially women's) awareness of space and interaction with space is crucially mediated through *what* they wear and *where* they dwell, with wide-ranging consequences for social behaviour.

With the demise of traditional Iranian domestic architecture, the cone place/*chādor* no longer complements and upholds the privacy and seclusion of the home

² Beverly Gordon, 'Women's Domestic Body, The Conceptual Conflation of Women and Interiors in the Industrial Age', *Winterthur Portfolio* (Gendered Spaces and Aesthetics), No.4, 31(1996): pp. 281–301.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Sophie Woodward, *Why Women Wear What They Wear* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2007), pp. 11–12.

⁵ It used to be in the form of a *chādor* but is now more common in the form of a *māntow* (tunic) plus scarf.

⁶ Jamal Akbar, *Crisis In The Built Environment: The Case of The Muslim City* (Singapore: A Mimar Book-Concept Media, 1988), p. 11.

by keeping women within its realm. In other words, the complementary relationship between the cone place and the courtyard house has been affected by the replacement of the latter with open houses (and by the breach of the privacy and seclusion of domestic architecture). Therefore, in today's Iran the cone place is no longer an extension of domestic (private) architecture into the street, which relates to its surrounding *static* architecture. This study has tried to illuminate how Iran's architectural environment influences the choices that people make concerning *how* they wear their clothing – increasingly with very loose headscarves and tight clothing, instead of emplacing themselves within the cone place. Admittedly, the links between the cone place and urban architecture are by no means the sole explanation for the former's transformation, but they are a significant factor.

Built place: an emblem of power

Architecture has always served as a symbol to express cultural invigoration, political rebirth or sheer power, and to mark a break with earlier ideologies. French political culture, for instance, from Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) through to the Revolution, expressed a desire for transparency and decried obscurity as antithetical to democracy. Sharon Marcus, in 'Seeing through Paris, 1820–1848', describes how, in line with that current, from the 1820s to the 1840s Paris saw the creation of more transparent architectural places.⁷ Furthermore, she describes how, in the process, apartment buildings ('*maisons*'⁸) became 'the dominant architectural element in the Parisian landscape',

⁷ Sharon Marcus, 'Seeing through Paris, 1820–1848', *Housing and Dwelling: Perspectives on Modern Domestic Architecture*, ed. Barbara Miller Lane (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), pp. 120–121.

⁸ This means both 'house' and 'home'.

whose specific interior spatial division and big windows amalgamated public and private space.⁹ Another example is given by William Curtis in his dazzling book *Modern Architecture since 1900*, which argues that architecture evolved at the turn of the century in an attempt to reconcile a finely attuned ‘idealized vision of society with the forces of the Industrial Revolution.’¹⁰ Curtis argues that although the ‘critical synthesis’ of modern architecture began during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the idea of a ‘modern architecture [...] had been in existence for more than half a century.’¹¹ The most important traits of modern architecture were light, open space, hygiene and transparency. Buildings such as the Crystal Palace of Joseph Paxton, built in 1851, and Gustave Eiffel’s Eiffel Tower, erected in 1889, evidently illustrate the first attempts to introduce a new architecture that made extensive use of glass, transparency, light and visible metal structures.¹² However, this current in modern architecture was not all persuasive, as is best exemplified by Fascist architecture, which is an illustration of the Nazis’ anti-modernism in art and architecture.¹³ The closing of the Bauhaus school of architecture on April 1933, which was an ‘internationally famous centre of avant-garde art and architecture, was one of the first steps in a campaign to eliminate many modern tendencies in German art.’¹⁴ The architecture of this period fused the classical grandeur of ancient Rome and Greece with monumental modernism and created highly opaque,

⁹ Ibid. pp. 120–121. Furthermore, Sharon Marcus argues that on the one hand in these houses ‘incorporation of vestibules, lobbies, and elaborate stairways, meant that these edifices brought more strangers into contact in more places than earlier ones had.’ On the other hand, with their big windows the space inside the house ‘mingled with space outside.’ Ibid. p. 122.

¹⁰ William I. R. Curtis, *Modern Architecture Since 1900* (London: Phaidon Press Limited, 1996), p. 7.

¹¹ Ibid. p. 21.

¹² Ibid. pp. 35–39.

¹³ Barbara Miller Lane, *Architecture and Politics in Germany 1918–1945* (Cambridge and Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1985), p. 1.

¹⁴ Ibid. p. 1. Furthermore, Miller argues that the Nazi government compelled the leading modern architects and artists such as Walter Gropius, Erich Mendelsohn, Paul Klee and Wassily Kandinsky to leave the country.

impenetrable and heavy surfaces, to represent the power of a totalitarian regime.¹⁵ Similarly, in Iran during the reign of the monarchs Rezā Shāh Pahlavi (reigned: 1925–1941) and Mohammad-Rezā Shāh Pahlavi (reigned: 1941–1979), attempts were made to modernise (essentially Westernise) Iranian culture and society and to boost the authority and stability of the central government. A major aspect of this process was reflected in a new architectural style, which combined monumental modernism with elements of pre-Islamic and Islamic Persian architecture. This style was meant to utilise the country’s pre-Islamic and Islamic heritage and to channel it into a secular nationalism. The cone place, however, was entirely incompatible with the Pahlavi’s idea of a modern cityscape. Nothing seemed more capable of polluting a modern (urban) environment than *chādor*-clad women. Because it is regarded as diametrically opposed, or even detrimental, to the aura of modernising and public (governmental) architectural projects, the *chādor* has often been (and to some extent continues to be) a nuisance for modernising elites. Unsurprisingly, Rezā Shāh banned the *chādor* as a symbol of backwardness, since he believed that it undermined the power of modern architecture in a modern city.¹⁶ Again, the cone place’s interference with its architectural environment, of which it is an inseparable part (since it has inherent architectural qualities itself), was not the only reason why a secularising regime wanted to get rid of it, but the monarchy’s dominance of the public sphere and over its subjects would have remained incomplete had the *chādor* been left in place.

Since the 1920s Iran has experienced a severe housing shortage. This problem,

¹⁵ Hitler stated that the architecture of the new regime must be “heroic” (to have monumental scale). Ibid. p. 189. This style is vividly illustrated in Paul Ludwig Troost’s House of German Art in Munich.

¹⁶ Like many late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century architects he believed that architecture ought to be as modern as one’s dress. See *Chapter II*, footnote 56.

which has been fuelled by the growth of the population and by migration from villages to cities, changed the unified architecture of Iran to an inharmonious combination of architectural styles produced by non-professional builders known as *besāz-o beforush* (build 'n sell). The houses that have been built in the *besāz-o beforush* style, and which are characterised by a minimum in quality, design, comfort and, consequently, privacy, have been part remedy, part problem. The Islamic revolution of 1979 and the subsequent Iran–Iraq war only worsened this situation. Some scholars have, therefore, argued that contemporary Iranian architecture ‘has failed to genuinely establish and use its own theory and technique.’¹⁷ Iranian domestic architecture today has lost almost all its links (designing traditions) with earlier buildings, such as the courtyard house. The revolutionary regime under the leadership of Ayatollah Imam Khomeini (ruled: 1979–1989) tried to distance itself from the previous monarchy’s flamboyant architectural projects, and in line with its commitment to the image of a humble and pious government and society¹⁸ undertook few if any architectural projects on a grand scale.¹⁹ This only increased the importance of the cone place as a symbol of the ascendancy of the Islamic republic in the country’s urban architectural environment. It was, however, in many ways both a more powerful and a more humble symbol of authority. Firstly, the tent-like structure of the cone place did not claim ownership of land in the way a built and a static

¹⁷ Farshad Farahi, ‘World of Similitude: The Metamorphosis of Iranian Architecture’, *Architectural Design Journal*, Special Issue: Iran: Past, Present and Future, No.3, 82 (2012): pp. 52–62.

¹⁸ The media and the journals of the time such as *Maskan va Enghelab (Housing and the Revolution)* propagated a modest lifestyle based on Islamic guidance, and portrayed the humble lifestyle of Khomeini as the best pattern to follow. Z. Pamela Karimi, ‘Transition in Domestic Architecture and Home Culture in Twentieth Century Iran’ (PhD diss. Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2009), p. 282. The pictures of the humble life of Khomeini that stood in contrast to the arrogant and flamboyant life of the previous kings of Iran (particularly Mohammad–Rezā Shāh Pahlavi, whose palaces including their interiors remained untouched and were opened to the public as “museums”) gave the new regime greater legitimacy in the eyes of the underprivileged segments of the society.

¹⁹ The project of *Mossala-e Tehran* Mosque, the building of which started after Imam Khomeini’s death (1989), and is not yet finished.

architecture had done (such as the palaces and monumental buildings of the previous regimes). Secondly, this structure's simplicity – an enclosure made from fabric that is hoisted in the air by the woman's body as a pole – and its cheapness and accessibility rendered the cone place an ideal revolutionary architectural manifesto. It expressed the revolution's ideals of piousness, humility and abstinence from worldly luxury. As a result (and regardless of the opposition and protests of various groups), Iran went from banning the veil (particularly the *chādor*) in 1936 to its mandatorily imposing it after the revolution of 1979.²⁰ Half the population was obliged to wear the *chādor* – what kind of monumental architecture could have been a more visible pervasive and successful emblem of the new regime and its authority?

The plight of dwelling

A dwelling place is commonly associated with security, intimacy and a level of seclusion – as opposed to openness, freedom and the threat of its surrounding environment. Few structures are as effective in immediately conveying a sense of dwelling as tents and yurts, which create a simple and tangible border between the inside and outside. Gaston Bachelard has argued that literature has long discovered that quality and therefore has repeatedly described dwelling places as covered or surrounded by a snowscape, in order to better transfer the sense of dwelling to the reader. The harsh environment reduces the outside world to a cold, dangerous and threatening environment and creates an impenetrable border between inside and outside: the warm house in contrast to the cold world, the safe world of “us” against the “unreliable” and “unknown”

²⁰ Eliz Sanasarian, *The Women's Rights Movements in Iran* (New York: Praeger, 1982), pp. 124–129.

world of “them”. The structure of a tent with its simple division of “in” vs. “out” has evolved into one of the most sophisticated buildings on earth: the courtyard house. As a prominent example of traditional Iranian architecture the courtyard house conveys a similarly intense form of dwelling. The unified space within its high walls explicitly separates and defines the “in”, the pleasant environment and mild temperature, distinct from the arid “outside” with its unpleasantly dry and hot weather. However, contemporary Iranian architecture lacks these characteristics. Ironically, although a culture of transparency is not exactly an ideological objective for the contemporary regime in Iran, such a culture has become an irreversible attribute of most urban domestic architecture (particularly the post-revolution architecture), in that most domestic architecture is visually and verbally accessible. The phenomenon of open houses blurred the border between public and private spaces, forcing their residents – both religious and non-religious – to live in close proximity. The new apartment blocks enforced a completely novel conceptualisation and segregation of family-space within the house, altering the understanding of the private, of intimacy, and of the seclusion of the family and the house as the sacred extension of religious spaces. The appearance of poster advertisements, such as those reading *shāhr-e mā khāneh mā* (our city as our home), which were designed and used by municipalities to increase people’s awareness of the need to keep the city clean, cannot, of course, be taken literally; however, the usage of the word and concept of *khāne* (house/home) in such a profane context would not have been thinkable in an earlier Iran. The notion of the private space equalling the domestic space has been somewhat weakened by the realities of living in much less seclusion, blurring the lines of the public and the private. However, this level of transparency within the

physical spaces of Iran's cityscapes, and in particular within the country's domestic architecture, did not lead to an increase in trust between residents. As a result, behaviour that is considered to be non-Islamic or anti-governmental/counter-revolutionary by some (most importantly parties attended by young and unmarried men and women) provokes frequent disputes between neighbours. Those who disobey the country's moral laws fear legal persecution as a result of denunciations by neighbours to the authorities. The phenomenon of the 'urban gaze'²¹ is at most a nuisance in Iran; much more severe are the pressures and limitations that come with dwelling in many contemporary houses.

A major question regarding the state of contemporary Iranian architecture is the extent to which that architecture has changed forms of dwelling. Martin Heidegger, in his fascinating essay 'Building, Dwelling, Thinking', argues that 'the real plight of dwelling' does not lie in the shortage of housing (although he does not ignore this factor) but in the fact that humans have to permanently learn how to dwell but do not see that as a plight.²² This seems to be true in the Iranian case, too. Do Iranians dwell in their contemporary houses in a manner in which, for instance, the author did in that closet of her childhood house described in *Chapter II*, or in the way Edward Casey dwelt in his study room and in the Jayhawk arcade? All those dwelling places described and analysed in *Chapter II* of this study evoke protectedness, since they resemble a room-like shield or surrounding or, indeed, an imaginary tent. The open houses in Iran are not indicators of a tent-like protective surrounding. In the Jayhawk arcade Casey perceived the whole space as one

²¹ Marcus describes how during the 1830s some books about Paris presented apartments as an 'ideal framework for visual observation' of the city and of other houses (and their interiors) and as a continuum of the Parisian landscape. Therefore, the houses were described not as opaque objects but as transparent spaces, which created one unified urban space and subject of urban gaze. Marcus, 'Seeing through Paris', p. 124–125.

²² Heidegger, *Poetry, Language*, p. 161.

unified and enclosed protective place (albeit vast in its dimensions) – a tent-like environment, in which he felt safe and secure as a child. A dwelling place, regardless of its dimensions, must convey certain feelings of tranquillity and security. However, contemporary Iranian urban domestic architecture does not do so to a sufficient extent. Instead it is characterised by a sense of permanent supervision and breach of privacy. This is based, on the one hand, on the shortcomings of domestic architecture itself and, on the other hand, on the existing social/cultural divisions within society and among residents, as well as on the government’s perceived right to exploit these differences and to interfere in people’s private lives (through the encouragement of a culture of denunciation). But – Heidegger might have asked – if a society does not recognise the need to dwell and is not offered the opportunity to dwell, how can it build dwelling places? And what does that mean for the future of Iranian domestic architecture? Much Iranian domestic architecture today has lost almost *all* its links with earlier traditions of building and designing, even if in recent years more buildings with good design and a footing in a thorough knowledge of historical architecture have appeared.²³ Nonetheless, such buildings are very much exceptions: they are quite distinct from the housing that the government and *besāz-o beforush* builders (described in *Chapter IV*) have provided. Therefore, it seems that the main problem of contemporary housing in Iran is not its shortage or the high residential density in most urban neighbourhoods. Rather the ‘real plight’ is that most people in Iran do not dwell in their homes and belong to them (although their houses have ‘dimensions of lived experience’²⁴) – they merely *reside* in

²³ Darab Diba and Mozayan Dehbashi, ‘Trends in Modern Iranian Architecture’, *Iran: Architecture For Changing Societies*, ed. Philip Jodidio (Turin: U. Allemandi for Aga Khan Award for Architecture, 2004), pp. 31–39.

²⁴ Heidegger, *Poetry, Language*, p.115.

them.

Ironically, however, Iranian women do still dwell, even if they do so not within the supposed privacy of their homes but outside in public and in their cone places. The somewhat paradoxical situation – that women are relatively exposed in the “privacy” of their house and relatively covered in the cone place in public – has resulted in them having more privacy and security in public when in the cone place (either in the *chādor* or the long *māntow* [tunic] and *magna’eh* [a fitted scarf]) than when they are at home and not emplaced within the cone place. The cone place provides the sort of a tent-like secure and protective enclosure for a woman’s body that most contemporary houses in Iran lack. At the same time, the cone place as an architectural symbol of the government’s power and legitimacy illustrates certain political values and safeguards norms concerning the female body that preserve it as a dwelling place. However, the new forms of veiling, which have been described at the end of *Chapter IV*, do not resemble the room-like enclosures that restrain a woman’s body. Moreover, the fact that a woman in a loose headscarf and open front tunic/coat potentially has to face negative consequences for this sort of dress (such as detention and harassment by the authorities) makes it virtually impossible to develop a sense of dwelling. Women in Iran dwell within the cone place in public, regardless of the fact that its religious aura and cultural capital have been severely undermined and that it is largely seen not as a symbol of piety but one of political conformity and compliance. To some women the cone place seems to represent a bastion of seclusion and privacy; for them, the *chādor* is quite literally a protective tent. For others, it is at best a relic of an obsolete tradition or at worst a symbol of paternalism and even oppression by the state and by men. For such women, it resembles not so much a

tent but rather a temporary refuge or a lesser evil, which ensures a woman avoids unnecessary contact with the moral police or religious devotees and gives her the opportunity *to exist* in the society and in the political system, as well as to keep her job. Given Iran's current political situation and the state of its urban architecture, then, it undoubtedly offers some level of protection and seclusion, and thus a form of dwelling, to both groups of women.

My study might have expanded the definition of dwelling but the actual space and opportunity to dwell seems to have contracted, especially (but not exclusively) in Iran. Where houses are built not with people's need to dwell but with profit alone in mind, there is no 'building in a genuinely cultivational manner' – to use Casey's words – and thus also no link between building and dwelling. What is more, the traditional form of dwelling that the *chādor* stands for has long become obsolete in most of Iran's urban environments. With the disruption of the complementary relationship between the privacy and seclusion of domestic space and the *chādor*, the sort of *dwelling experience* that the latter can convey must seem rather incomplete to the advocates of more traditional forms of dwelling, and somewhat pointless for those who take rather less pleasure in traditional ways of dressing and dwelling. Whatever a person's ideological, political or religious convictions, she or he will find it hard to ignore the enormous discrepancy between the ideal of dwelling, promoted by the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the actual state of dwelling in most of urban Iran. The government refuses to abandon this architectural emblem of its authority (the *chādor*) yet is at the same time unable and/or unwilling to change Iran's cityscapes. This only perpetuates a situation in which millions of people come in a way closest to what it means to dwell not in the very limited privacy

of their four walls but in the seclusion of their cone place, regardless of whether they relish the *chādor* as part of their religious or political or social identity or despise it as an obligatory foreign imposition. This is not to say that outside of the *chādor* there can be no dwelling whatsoever in today's Iran. But the form of dwelling the *chādor* stands for (and to some extent still enables), and the dwelling facilitated in most domestic architectural environments, is so contradictory that women's overall capacity to dwell is limited. In other words, the close – but in Iran's case contradictory – relationship between women's dress (the cone place) and other static architecture impedes the process that Heidegger has described as the permanent need to learn how to dwell. Before even attempting to solve that predicament, however, one needs to first recognise that there is a connection between the way women dwell and they way they dress – between architecture and clothing. This is what I have tried to do.

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Selected exhibitions

To at least some extent every real place can be remembered, partly because it is unique, but partly because it has affected our bodies and generated enough association to hold it in our personal worlds.

Kent C. Bloomer and Charles W. Moore, *Body, Memory, and Architecture*



Somatic Memories, 2014

Group exhibition: 'A House Is Not A Hotel', Pi Artworks Gallery, London, United Kingdom, 2014

Two channel video installation, (duration of each video: 70:00 min)



A house that has been experienced is not an inert box. Inhabited space transcends geometrical space.

Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*



1912, 2013

Group exhibition (work produced during the art residency): 'The Wall of Europe,' Paese Museo, San Sperate, Sardinia, Italy, 2013

site specific installation
mixed media (industrial lace and nails)

[T]he fate of the here is tied entirely and exclusively to that of the body. If there are experiences in which my body does not figure, then these experiences will lack a here, or will possess only a quasi or pseudo here. Hence herelessness inheres in certain intellectual and mystical experiences in which we rejoin a conceptual or religious “there,” an “on the other side” [jenseits in German] that has no proper here.

Edward S. Casey, *Getting Back Into Place*





jenseits, 2013

Group exhibition (art residency): 'The Wall of Europe', Paese Museo, San Sperate, Sardinia, Italy, 2013

video (duration: 04:23 min)

a black dress, a red dress ([Ge]wand III), 2013

Solo exhibition: 're-enveloped', King Way's Corridor, Goldsmiths College, London, United Kingdom, 2013

site specific installation for King Way's Corridor of Goldsmiths
mixed media (wallpaper, glass, ink, wooden frames, digital print, ...)
sound

One of the intriguing things for me in this piece is that the borders or boundaries of the word are purposely extended: you have stretched the word Gewand on, over and through the glass screen...

Mariam Motamedi Fraiser and Farniyaz Zaker, 'Words and Walls, Texts and Textiles: A Conversation'





Wand (German): Wall (English)

Wall:

1. An upright side of a room inside a building: *On the opposite wall hung a valuable old painting. She felt along the wall for the light switch.*

1a. An upright outer surface of a building: *The walls of the factory had been covered with graffiti.*

2. A very tall strong structure that is built to defend a place or to keep people inside a place, for example a prison, castle, or city.

2a. An upright structure made of stone or brick that surrounds or divides someone's land or garden

2b. A strong upright structure that protects an area from the sea or from flooding: *a sea wall.*

Gewand (German): Dress (English)

Dress:

1. A piece of clothing that covers a woman's body and part of her legs: *a blue cotton dress. I'd never seen her in a dress before.*

2. The clothes that are typical of a particular place, time in history, or occasion: *The children were wearing traditional Norwegian dress. They performed the play in Victorian dress.*

2a. *The clothes that someone usually wears: He has an unusual style of dress.*

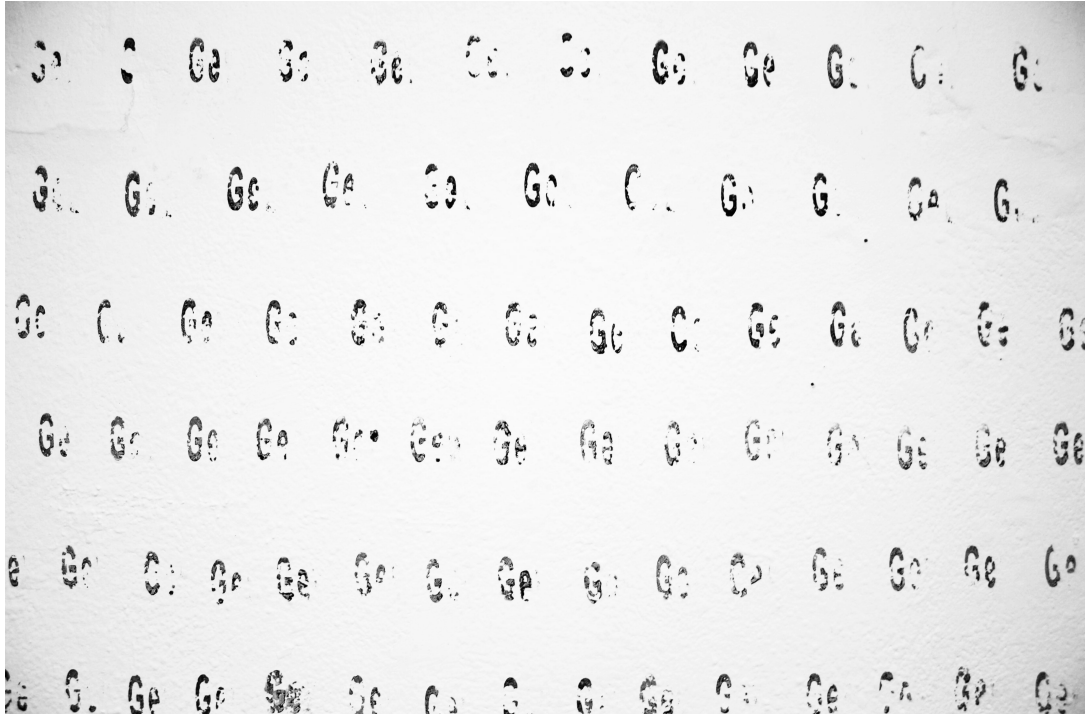
(Macmillan English Dictionary, 2007)



Wand (German): Wall (English)

Wall:

- 1.** An upright side of a room inside a building: *On the opposite wall hung a valuable old painting. She felt along the wall for the light switch.***1a.** An upright outer surface of a building: *The walls of the factory had been covered with graffiti.*
- 2.** A very tall strong structure that is built to defend a place or to keep people inside a place, for example a prison, castle, or city.
- 2a.** An upright structure made of stone or brick that surrounds or divides someone's land or garden
- 2b.** A strong upright structure that protects an area from the sea or from flooding : *a sea wall.*



Gewand (German): Dress (English)

Dress:

1. A piece of clothing that covers a woman's body and part of her legs: *a blue cotton dress. I'd never seen her in a dress before.*
2. the clothes that are typical of a particular place, time in history, or occasion: *The children were wearing traditional Norwegian dress. They performed the play in Victorian dress. 2a. The clothes that someone usually wears: He has an unusual style of dress.*

(Macmillan English Dictionary, 2007)

[Ge]wand II, 2013

Finalist at Arte Laguna Prize, Venice, Italy, 2014

Group exhibition: 'Arte Laguna Prize,' Arsenale Venice, Venice, Italy, 2014

Solo exhibition: 'Repeated Return', The Dolphin Gallery, Oxford, United Kingdom, 2013

installation

mixed media (ink on wall)



Wand (German): Wall (English)

Wall:

1. An upright side of a room inside a building: *On the opposite wall hung a valuable old painting. She felt along the wall for the light switch.*

1a. An upright outer surface of a building: *The walls of the factory had been covered with graffiti.*

2. A very tall strong structure that is built to defend a place or to keep people inside a place, for example a prison, castle, or city.

2a. An upright structure made of stone or brick that surrounds or divides someone's land or garden

2b. A strong upright structure that protects an area from the sea or from flooding: *a sea wall.*

Gewand (German): Dress (English)

Dress:

1. A piece of clothing that covers a woman's body and part of her legs: *a blue cotton dress. I'd never seen her in a dress before.*

2. The clothes that are typical of a particular place, time in history, or occasion: *The children were wearing traditional Norwegian dress. They performed the play in Victorian dress.*

2a. *The clothes that someone usually wears: He has an unusual style of dress.*

(Macmillan English Dictionary, 2007)



[Ge]wand I, 2012

Group exhibition: 'A House is Not A Hotel', Pi Artworks Gallery, London, United Kingdom, 2014

Two-person exhibition: '[HYPHENATED]', The North Wall Gallery, Oxford, United Kingdom, 2012

installation

mixed media (ink on cotton, ink on wall)

Puppet behind the curtain, Puppet behind the window, 2012

Four editions are in private and public collections: including The Arter – Space for Art, an initiative of The Vehbi Koç Foundation, Istanbul, Turkey, and the Art and Video Insight Foundation Collection, Bologna, Italy.

Solo exhibition: ‘Islamic Arts Festival’, Sharjah Art Museum-Eastern Section, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates, 2014

Group exhibition: ‘Rewind Pause, Fast Forward: Mirrors on Iran,’ Pi Artworks, Istanbul, Turkey, 2012

Group exhibition: ‘mise-en-scène,’ Etemad Gallery, Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 2012

Group screening: ‘Ruskin Shorts,’ Phoenix Cinema, Oxford, United Kingdom, 2012

two channel video installation (duration: 8:18 min)



It was not a statue, it was a real a woman, or even better than a real woman, and it was smiling at him.

Sadegh Hedayat, 'Aroosake Poshte Pardeh', *Sayeh Roshan*



Pause in Movement, 2012

Group exhibition: 'Mapleton Bree Prize', Kendrew Barn Gallery, St John's College, United Kingdom, 2013

Group exhibition: 'In Site', The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, United Kingdom, 2012

installation

mixed media (cotton, silk, wooden dummy, ink on silk, ...)

The nature of dwelling is not limited to a built environment, but that several environments can be regarded by their inhabitants as dwellings, due to the fact that place is commonly associated with security and stability as opposed to the openness, freedom and threat of the space surrounding it. In this respect woman's clothing becomes a microcosmic dwelling place.

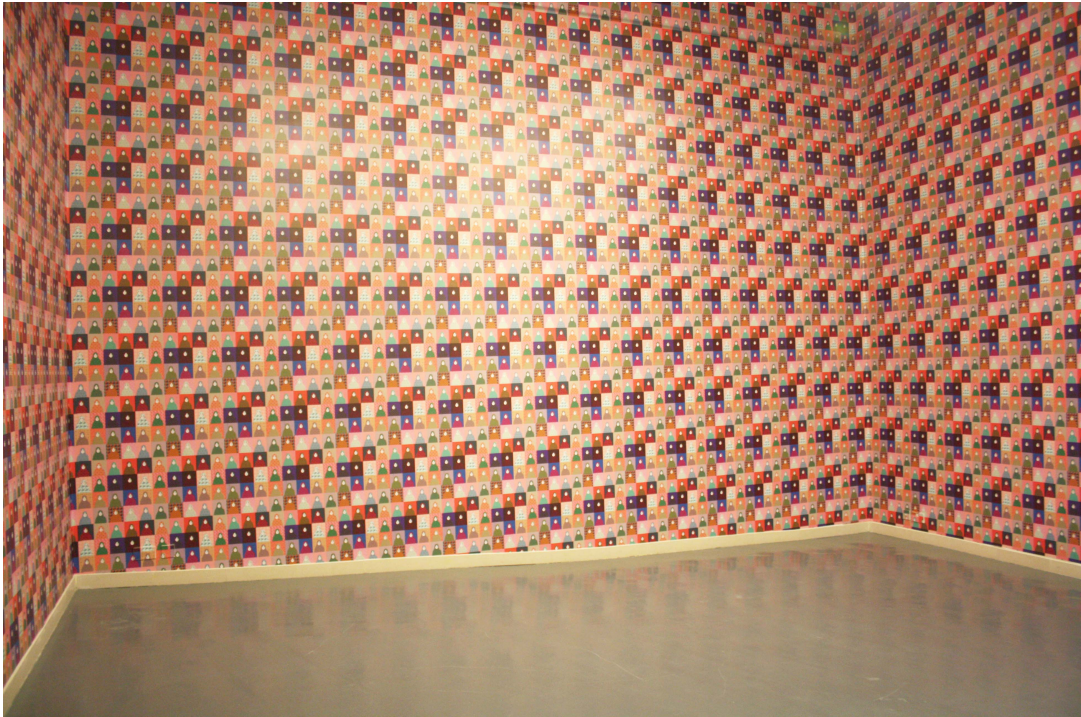


Untitled-2012

Solo Exhibition: 'Islamic Arts Festival', Sharjah Art Museum-Eastern Section, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates, 2014

Group exhibition: 'WEYA', United Kingdom Young Artists, Bonington Gallery, Nottingham, United Kingdom, 2012

installation
digital print





Untitled-2011

Group exhibition: 'Power House', Old Power Station-Osney, Oxford, United Kingdom, 2011

site specific installation

mixed media (print on wall, ink on window, ...)



If the window is the opening in the wall constitutive of the distinction between public and private, it is also the breaching of that distinction itself.

Thomas Keenan, 'Windows: Of Vulnerability'



Pardeh, 2011

Solo exhibition: 'Pardeh', Old Masters Room, Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Arts, Oxford, United Kingdom, 2011

installation,
mixed media (silk, ink on silk)



List of exhibitions: 2010 - September 2014

Solo Shows

- ‘I.A.F.’, Sharjah Art Museum, Sharjah, United Arab Emirates, 2014
- ‘Re-enveloped’, King Way’s Corridor, Goldsmiths College, University of London, London, United Kingdom, 2013
- ‘Repeated Return’, Dolphin Gallery, St John’s College, Oxford, United Kingdom, 2013
- ‘Pardeh’, Old Masters Study Room, The Ruskin School of Art, University of Oxford, Oxford, United Kingdom, 2011

Two Person Shows

- ‘[HYPHENATED]’, The North Wall Gallery, Oxford, United Kingdom, 2012

Selected Group Shows

- ‘A House Is Not A Hotel’, Pi Artworks Gallery, London, United Kingdom, 2014
- *[Ge]wand I*
- *Puppet behind the curtain, Puppet behind the window*
- ‘Arte Laguna Prize 2014’, Arsenale Venice, Venice, Italy, 2014
- *[Ge]wand II*
- ‘The Wall of Europe’, Paese Museo, San Sperate, Sardinia, Italy, 2013
- *jenseits*
- *1912*
- ‘Mapleton Bree Prize’, Kendrew Barn, St John’s College, United Kingdom, 2013
- *Pause in Movement*
- ‘WEYA: United Kingdom Young Artists’, Bonington Gallery Nottingham Trent University, Nottingham, United Kingdom, 2012
- *Untitled*
- ‘Rewind Pause, Fast Forward: Mirrors on Iran’, Pi Artworks, Istanbul, Turkey, 2012
- *Puppet behind the curtain, Puppet behind the window*
- ‘mise-en-scène’, Etemad Gallery, Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 2012
- *Puppet behind the curtain, Puppet*

behind the window

- ‘In site’, The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, United Kingdom,
2012
- *Pause in Movement*

- ‘Ruskin Shorts’, Phoenix Cinema, Oxford, United Kingdom, 2012
- *Puppet behind the curtain, Puppet behind the window*

- ‘International Print Biennale, 2011’, Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle, United Kingdom,
2011
- *Earthy Paradise Series*

- ‘Power House,’ Old Power Station-Osney, Oxford, United Kingdom,
2011
- *Untitled*

- ‘Surplus to requirements?’, Slade Research Centre and Gallery, The Slade School of Fine Art,
University College London (UCL), London , United Kingdom,
2011
- *Untitled*

- ‘The Art of Nurture’, Lloyds TSB, Watershed Gallery, Bristol, United Kingdom,
2010
- *Untitled*

CD I

0-Somatic Memories (video)

1-1912

2-jensites (video)

3-a balck dress, a red dress

4-[Ge]wand II

5-[Ge]wand I

CD II

6-Puase in Movement

7-Puppet behind the curtain, Puppet behind the window (video)

8-Untitled 2012

9-Untitled 2011

10-Pardeh

11-Untitled 2010/2011

12-Earthly Paradise

