

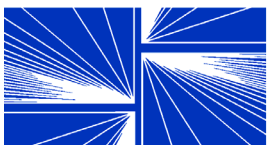
Urban Representation of Multiculturalism in a Global City: Toronto's Iranian Community

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Shahrzad Faryadi
University of Tehran



Institute on Globalization
and the Human Condition
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Preface

Professor Shahrzad Faryadi was a visiting professor at the Institute on Globalization and the Human Condition in 2006-2007. She came to McMaster from the Faculty of Environmental Studies at the University of Tehran and spent her time at the Institute examining multiculturalism from an urban planning perspective. This working paper grows out of her research at the Institute. Since 1988, Canada has had an official multiculturalism policy backed up by a *Canadian Multiculturalism Act*. This legislation provides a framework for the Government of Canada to adopt policies and practices to recognize and promote multiculturalism in Canada. The Act has no direct legal bearing upon other governments in Canada, notably provincial or municipal ones.

In light of this legislative situation, Professor Faryadi asks whether urban planning in the Greater Toronto Area shows any recognition of multiculturalism in the ways in which it is carried out. In posing this question, she is most interested in whether the policies of the governments of the GTA are based on multicultural principles. She adopts a case study approach to this question and looks at urban planning decisions related to the areas of the GTA where Iranian immigrants have tended to settle in significant numbers. In doing so, she defines carefully the criteria for assessing the multicultural character of planning in an area and then applies these criteria carefully to the neighbourhoods in North York and Richmond Hill, where several thousand Iranians have settled. In finding relatively little culturally sensitive planning in these areas, Professor Faryadi's research raises the question: is the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* a largely symbolic gesture by the Government of Canada and one ignored by provincial and municipal governments?

William D. Coleman
Director, Institute on Globalization and the Human Condition

Urban Representation of Multiculturalism in a Global City: Toronto's Iranian Community

Shahrzad Faryadi

University of Tehran, Iran

Introduction

Globalization is known as a set of interrelated processes that are increasing economic, political, social, and cultural interconnections in the whole world (O'Byrne 1997). There is a direct connection between globalization and the city as "Globalization takes place in cities and cities embody and reflect globalization. Global processes lead to changes in the city and cities rework and situate globalization" (Short and Kim 1999, 9). A global city is conceived as a strategic site not only for global capital, but also for the transnationalization of labour and the formation of translocal communities and identities. In this regard, global cities are a site for new types of political operations and for a whole range of new cultural and subjective operations (Sassen 2005). As a consequence of globalization and the development of global cities and networks, the level of international immigration has been increasing, too, in the last decades. The growing number of world immigrants has raised the plurality of different cultures in global cities (as well as in the global city of Toronto), inspiring in such cities a "multicultural nature" (Hawkins 2006).

"Multiculturalism," "cultural diversity," or a plurality of different identities are ongoing parts of globalization. Cultural diversity will increase the potential of global cities to attract global capital, tourism, and international firms. It also ensures the sustainability of immigrants' home cultures; they have a chance to build their local communities in new places—a process which might be called reterritorialization (Short and Kim 1999). In this regard, a global city may also be called a "cosmopolitan city" (Sandercock 1998; Bloomfield and Bianchini 2004). Different cultural groups of immigrants are likely to benefit from the multicultural nature of global cities. One of their most critical needs is to feel at home or have a "sense of place." Indeed, the art of a cosmopolitan city is to make newcomers feel at home as citizens (Bloomfield and Bianchini 2004). If global cities do not permit distinct cultural groups to develop desired urban forms, functions, and spaces adapted to their different cultural needs, it may lead to the alienation of these groups and the eventual loss of their culture. This outcome would also intensify the destruction of communities and create more isolated, unnatural urban spaces, a particular problem in most North American and other giant cities (Jacobs 1993). Therefore, urban planning and the management of the coexistence of people in the shared spaces of neighbourhoods, cities, and regions, is considered to be a critical capacity for the collective growth of an ideal multicultural society (Sandercock 2004a; Hawkins 2006; Wood 2004; Qadeer 1997; Bloomfield and Bianchini 2004).

The most striking impact of multiculturalism on urban planning comes from the presence of ethnic neighbourhoods and ethnic business enclaves. Qadeer (1997) researched how multiculturalism has affected planning policies and strategies in Canada. He argued that planning and design guidelines for example in Metropolitan Toronto pre-empted distinctive design even in large and established immigrant communities such as the Chinese neighbourhoods of Toronto and Vancouver (Qadeer 1997). Some subsequent research, however, suggests that ethno-racial minorities are achieving built forms that are distinctive and doing so using the formal regulations (Milroy and Wallace 2000). One of the main research questions addressed in this paper is, thus, in what ways do global cities have the potential to nurture ethnic cultural identities, their sense of place, and the ideal of multiculturalism?

Assuming that not only the larger cultural communities will be the focus of multicultural policies, but also the smaller ones, what steps might a global city take to nurture the identities and a sense of place of such smaller communities?

In addressing these two questions, I carry out a case study of the global city of Toronto, Ontario, Canada—specifically, the Toronto Census Metropolitan Area (TCMA). In particular, I focus on the Iranian community, one of the smallest cultural communities in the TCMA. I argue that one of the strongest tests that a global city faces is how well it nurtures the smaller, more vulnerable ethnocultural communities in its midst. I will try to answer these questions by analyzing the physical and spatial representation of multiculturalism in the TCMA as a collective product of its planning system and the people involved in it who acknowledge that the city constitutes a multicultural society.

Before exploring and evaluating the actual representation of multiculturalism in global cities, we need to ask theoretically how global cities should manifest their multicultural nature. And what kind of physical and planning characteristics might be considered as the urban manifestation of an ideal multiculturalism? In my view, a global city should consist of heterogeneous ethnic neighbourhoods that are concentrated and distinct as evidenced by their *urban forms and functions*. Such arrangements may have more potential to preserve and strengthen even small ethnic cultural identities, a related sense of place, and the ideal of multiculturalism.

The first part of the research for this paper is focused on providing a conceptual framework to support this view. After that step, I determine and locate significant geo-concentrations of the Iranian ethnic group in the global city of Toronto. This analysis is carried out through a comparative statistical analysis of Iranians' demographic characteristics, based on the Census of Canada for 2001. Finally, I investigate the extent to which some urban manifestations (urban forms and functions) of a multicultural city can be understood by all citizens easily, and visually, how they are found. This analysis is carried out primarily by visual observations and then supported by reviewing Iranian local publications and conducting some informal interviews in Toronto.

Conceptual Framework for Understanding Expected Spatial Structures of Global Cities Seeking to Reflect Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism refers to the increasing cultural diversity of societies in late modernity. It is defined as one nation-state in which the public domain is guided based upon the equality between groups, while the private domain permits diversity between groups. Religion, moral education, and primary socialization are considered to be part of the private domain, and the structure of the private domain among immigrant communities also includes kinship that extends back into a homeland (Hawkins 2006). In short, a multicultural society is understood to be one composed of a diversity of ethnic groups. Politics can react to that diversity by cultivating mutual respect, mutual obligations, and mutual benefits among the ethno-cultural communities involved (Wood 2004), or by encouraging the groups to assimilate to a dominant group.

Many societies and cities today could be empirically described as multicultural, but very few countries have embraced and institutionalized a policy of multiculturalism. Australia and Canada have done so since the late 1960s, as have Singapore and Malaysia. Accordingly, each country has a definition of multiculturalism, different sets of public policies to deal with and respond to cultural difference, and correspondingly different definitions of citizenship (Wood 2004). As the first country in the world to pass a national multiculturalism law, let us consider Canadian multiculturalism which was adopted in 1971 as an official policy. Canadian multiculturalism policy argues that all citizens are equal, can keep their identities, can take pride in their ancestry, and can have a sense of belonging

both to their cultural community and to Canada as a whole. It is designed to give Canadians a feeling of security and self-confidence, making them more open to, and accepting of, diverse cultures. The Canadian experience has shown that multiculturalism encourages racial and ethnic harmony and cross-cultural understanding, and discourages ghettoization, hatred, discrimination, and violence (Leman 1999). Multiculturalism policy in Canada is designed to recognize the potential of all Canadians, encouraging them to integrate into their society and take an active part in its social, cultural, economic, and political affairs (Canadian Heritage website).

When the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act of 1988* was passed by Parliament, it defined multiculturalism as a policy “designed to preserve and enhance the multicultural heritage of Canadians while working to achieve the equality of all” (quoted in Qadeer 1997, 482). This policy acknowledged multiculturalism as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society that it should have an integral role in the decision-making process of the federal government. In these respects, “multiculturalism” in Canada refers to *the presence and persistence of diverse racial and ethnic minorities who define themselves as different and who wish to remain so*. Ideologically and in policy, multiculturalism consists of a relatively coherent set of ideas and ideals pertaining to the celebration of Canada’s cultural mosaic. Finally, multiculturalism is defined as the process by which racial and ethnic minorities compete with central authorities for the achievement of certain goals and aspirations (Leman 1999).

Based on these definitions, multiculturalism policy in Canada expresses appreciation for the *differences* between cultural groups. In an urban planning sense, Sandercock has clarified this notion as involving two rights: *the right to difference* and *the right to the city*. The right to difference means recognizing the legitimacy and specific needs of minority or subaltern cultures. The right to the city is the right to a presence, to occupy public spaces, and to participate as an equal in public affairs (Sandercock 2004b). Considering these rights, multiculturalism in Canada might be characterized as involving the *heterogenization of cultures* which encourage the active and equal presence of different, indigenous, and traditional cultural traits in its cities. Thus, multiculturalism might be better understood by referring to the heterogeneity of cultures as its main characteristic and the heart of cultural diversity. Based on these basic points, I turn now to examine the relationship between multiculturalism and the city and to ask what might be the role of the city in fostering and improving multiculturalism.

Multiculturalism and the City

The *city* is considered *a physical manifestation of culture*, or as a mirror that represents the nature of culture. Consequently, multiculturalism as a new kind of cultural order is related to the city, and its physical pattern may reveal what multiculturalism means for those outside the culture of that city. In turn, as Sandercock says, “becoming a multicultural society/city is more than a matter of bureaucratic management, or of citizenship legislation. It also requires the active construction of new ways of living together, new forms of spatial and social belonging” (2003, 14).

Urban forms, functions, and their organized combination as a spatial structure of the city can create new mechanisms to organize minority ethnic communities and immigrants in ways that give them a collective presence and a voice in global cities. Considering the core nature of multiculturalism, city forms and functions might represent the heterogeneity of cultures too. Cities in this sense are strictly connected to multiculturalism and might seek to cultivate identities as “multicultural cities.” In response, city authorities also can foster an equal basis of engagement among ethnic minorities and allow them to dialogue and air differences in ways that can reduce or resolve disputes (Bloomfield and Bianchini 2004). Clearly, a city might publicly manifest the significance of cultural diversity (Sandercock 2004b). Are there benefits to be gained by acknowledging and acting

explicitly upon this multiculturalism?

Immigrants and Ethnic Identity

Ethnic areas in large cities can function as transnational business centres, anchor points firmly embedded in international flows of people, ideas, and capital, and as attractive tourist sites. Thus ethnic identity is not a fixed and stable category. It has always been partly adopted, partly imposed, always in the process of re-creation (Short and Kim 1999). But it seems reasonable to recognize and identify ethnic groups based on their main common characteristics instead of emphasizing their sub-differences that might isolate them from their own community. Based on Dan Arreola's (2004) experience in seeking to define the pan-ethnic Latino identity in the United States today, it seems that any immigrant who has the same language, is born in the same land or nation-state, and shares in living in the same new land might simply be considered a member of a given ethnic group or different subculture in a city. Applying these factors for the case study of this research paper, I include any immigrant living in Toronto Census Metropolitan Area (TCMA) who refers to her or his nation-state as Iran, "or" her/his mother language as Persian (Farsi), or Iranian. This person is considered to be part of the Iranian ethnic group—subculture—in the TCMA. So it is apparent that any immigrant who is either born in Iran or whose mother language is Persian, or who meets both criteria, is considered to have Iranian ethnic identity.

Contemporary Immigrants

Contemporary immigrants are more tightly bound to their homelands than ever before. Short and Kim (1999) argue that modern immigrants are different from their predecessors (USA) who abandoned their motherlands forever and never looked back. He suggests at least three factors that help explain these new immigrants' experience:

- Their wealth that allows them to visit relatives in their homeland;
- Advances in technology which have created new and cheap ways to communicate, such as email and videophone.

The growing intensity of their business ties to their old countries, as a result of international economic flows (Short and Kim 1999).

These new characteristics mean that multiculturalism is no longer confined to the poor immigrants (of the first decades of the century) and to downtown core areas. It has spread to suburbs and is creating bourgeois ethnic enclaves and has spawned new spatial and architectural forms (Qadeer 1997). Thus, urban planning in a multicultural city has to pay greater attention to the new and different levels of immigrants' needs. Knowing the new immigrants and their characteristics will lead to a better understanding of these needs. Considering the urban aspects of multiculturalism in global cities, I focus specifically on immigrants' sense of place or feeling at home. Such attachments might be considered as evidence of the presence of *the right to the city*.

Immigrants' Needs for a Sense of Place

Based on my conceptual analysis, the most important need of immigrants is to feel at home or have a sense of place. Well-developed global cities, even with a high appreciation of multiculturalism both as a governmental policy and as an ideology for moving toward a more mature, open public culture, do not seem to be very successful in making immigrants feel at home. Other common human needs such as clean water and food, housing that provides shelter and privacy, study and education, the need for transport and access to destinations, safety and security, and economic needs

consequently are usually provided in varying degrees in the many cities and villages as well as in global cities. Such provision may be part of the main motivations for people to immigrate to other countries. But to feel at home or to belong to a community is a mental and cognitive need which is much more difficult to meet outside one's homeland.

A sense of place might emerge by occupying places which grant people meaning and value, and also make them distinctive from those of others. Living in distinctive places creates a sense of identity and makes people sensitive to their environment (Madanipour 1996). These kinds of feelings improve the psychological conditions of members of such communities and increase their desire to live and meet their needs within the place (Lang 1994). The sense of place might be more easily met in small societies as neighbourhoods, villages, towns, and even small cities. In contrast to many other human needs it becomes more difficult to gain such a sense in giant metropolises and global cities. But if there is representation of the common cultural meanings of immigrants in a real and physical living area, it will help them to build a sense of place even in a new land. Applying even small signs of culture in particular places in global cities is a means to helping them create their "places" in response to cultural diversity (Qadeer 1997). Nurturing cultural identity is at the heart of multiculturalism policy and is likely to encourage a growing sense of place in global cities.

Construction of Communities

The crisis of community is demonstrated as one of the defining themes of our contemporary era. This crisis is manifest especially in global cities, where a struggle over symbols, meanings, and representation may have profound social and cultural implications for each immigrant (DeChaine 2005). Nevertheless, place-identification and a sense of belonging to a place do not seem to have diminished in importance for most people. And, sense of belonging to a place is usually inseparable from the ties to the particular human community that inhabits the place. Indeed the sense of place and the sense of belonging to a community are embedded in a mutual and inevitable process.

Immigrants have a particularly strong need for community, for practical as well as emotional support, and past experience shows that they will almost always form their own communities over time, sometimes spatially concentrated (enclaves), sometimes spatially more dispersed. A real multicultural policy encourages community organizations which are being formed by immigrant groups; also it facilitates the incorporation of immigrants into wider, cross-cultural activities and organizations and even the construction of their own living places (Sandercock 2003).

Cultural Renewal

How, then, might specific cultural features of different ethnic groups be reshaped in a new land where many things are different from home? The specified cultural forms, functions, and identities of places and communities in the new place have already been achieved through a long period of *trade-off* with other cultures, involving interconnections to their physical environment, response to the policies of governments and other local institutes, the gradual growth of science and arts, and many other factors. The question then is how might new ethnic identities be shaped in global cities in a relatively short timeframe? Also how might they be shaped in response to the challenge of some other more extended cultures such as the mainstream culture in the country in which they now live?

Some theories have resisted conceptions of integration into a pre-existing culture and community by challenging ideas of fixed ethnic minorities and an ethnic majority, in favour of cultural renewal. This alternative challenges the dominance of the given culture, with its unspoken

assumptions of superiority, and the marginal status of minority ethnic and subcultures as a model of their relationship which leads to closure in both. In other words, without exchanges between the mainstream culture and subcultures the positive growth of any of these is less likely. Such assumptions cut the dominant culture off from critical perspectives and alternative traditions and fail to take into account influences from the mainstream culture on ideas and artistic forms and minority cultures. But by learning from each other, they can bear on and reshape the dominant culture, contributing to remaking a shared public culture in an intercultural way (Bloomfield and Bianchini 2004).

The presence of a dominant culture does not mean denying the existence of subcultures or the heterogeneity of cultures as the most important characteristics of multiculturalism. Multicultural policies may go in a different direction. Here I am focusing on the coexistence of different ethnic cultures in a multicultural city or community. Such coexistence may comprise *new versions of specified ethnic cultures* which are both similar to a home or original culture while being influenced by the mainstream and other cultures too.

Exact ethnic cultures might not be entirely replicated in a new land, however cultural practices and beliefs are likely to influence immigrants' choice of neighbourhoods in which to locate or style of housing to rent, purchase, or build. Stereotypical examples are that the Portuguese prefer two kitchens, Italians like large lots for gardens, and the Chinese notion of feng shui predisposes them against houses on cul-de-sacs. Certain neighbourhoods may also be favoured by new immigrants for their proximity to existing schools with language classes and to appropriate religious associations and cultural institutions (Qadeer 1997). So culture is always changing and reforming in response to challenges from other ideas, technologies, and cultures. That is to say, it might also be expected to help the ethnic cultures if they do save and improve some main, common, and continued aspects of their original culture for developing their identity in a multicultural city.

Reterritorialization

Globalization is a story of interconnectedness between societies and cultures (Hawkins 2006). "The growth of cultural flows has increased sameness between distant places; but it has also fostered the complexity of local cultures. The culturally globalizing world is a complex process of creation of deterritorialized cultures which are reterritorialized in different forms in different places. [Thus] global city culture is a combination of multiple reterritorialized cultures, rather than a unified culture...." (Short and Kim 1999, 4). The concept of reterritorialization allows for a better understanding of the strong presence of heterogeneous forces in multicultural societies (Short and Kim 1999). Reterritorialization is a very powerful concept in the analysis of the process of heterogenization of cultures and is helpful for explaining how immigrants might rebuild their new communities and identities in global cities.

Reterritorialization thus refers to ethnic groups collectively rebuilding their homes in new lands. That process could be shaped by creating their distinct neighbourhoods comprising some specified urban forms and functions. This kind of reterritorializing might help them to feel at home and improve their sense of place in global cities. Thus the city, its districts and neighbourhoods, and the pattern in which they are shaped is considered an important factor in helping ethnic groups strengthen their cultural identity, even in a new form but different from others (Faryadi 2002). What policies might a city pursue to help improve the sense of place for immigrants?

A Multicultural City

Given that multiculturalism is approved legally and politically by authorities of a city, one might expect that the city's spatial structure and urban forms and functions might be encouraged to be compatible with the core nature of multiculturalism. A multicultural city is one open to change, capable of responding to the vision and imagination of its citizens, and welcoming newcomers and conscripting their skills and talents and their feelings to revitalize the city (Bloomfield and Bianchini 2004). A multicultural city has the capacity to harness the largely reluctant movement of newcomers, to stir itself up and to enlarge its horizons so as to make newcomers feel at home as citizens, just as it makes tourists welcome as temporary citizens. This city might be called a *cosmopolitan city* in being a place that provides a secure, prosperous, and productive future for immigrants, a safe haven and refuge for the persecuted, and supports the creation of a vibrant culture and of communication between citizens of all backgrounds (Bloomfield and Bianchini 2004). Others have used the metaphor of *the mongrel city*: the possibility that arises from living alongside others who are different, learning from them, and creating new worlds with them rather than fearing them. This might be a new urban condition which is emphasized in difference, otherness, diversity, and plurality (Sandercock 2004a).

Based on the heterogeneous nature of multiculturalism, a city committed to a multicultural policy often requires a divergent set of community services, housing facilities, and neighbourhood arrangements that take into consideration the needs of its various ethnic groups. Also the transnationalism of the global economy is contributing to a further diversification of forms of buildings and of organization of spaces in contemporary cities (Qadeer 1997). Managing the coexistence of ethnic groups in the shared spaces of neighbourhoods, cities, and regions, improves their capacity for collective growth (Sandercock 2004a; Hawkins 2006; Wood 2004; Qadeer 1997; Bloomfield and Bianchini 2004). That can help immigrants wrest new possibilities from space and collectively renew their cultures and places. Heterogeneous urban forms in global cities are also considered a positive element for cultural growth, because cultures always grow through trade-offs with other cultures. In short, a multicultural city pursuing a policy of multiculturalism is one that might be organized "heterogeneously" too.

Urban Characteristics of a Multicultural City

Two general functions shape the urban characteristics of a global, multicultural city. First, there are global functions which facilitate participation in the global economy. Normally, these are concentrated in the main business centre of the city, which might be seen as a *global space*. Second, there are local and everyday urban functions which are concentrated in *urban nuclei*. Urban nuclei are located on the peripheries of the main city core and engender more feeling as places. Global space is mostly considered as part of Castells' *space of flows* and the urban nuclei might be seen as part of the *space of places*. Most global activities occur in the spaces of flows while the more local and social experiences are organized in the space of places (Castells 2000). In short, a global- multicultural city is a *decentralized-concentrated* conurbation or city-region. It consists of the main or core city with concentration of global functions and mixing of different cultures, and multiple urban nuclei as residential, industrial, or administrative places located on the peripheries of main city core (Faryadi 2002, 2003).

Central cities often contain global and universal spaces, most of whose functions are part of flows in virtual space rather than directed at real urban nuclei. But these spaces also are affected by a diversity of different cultures and have to be considered therefore as intercultural spaces. Such intercultural spaces are capable of supporting symbolic re-enactments of civic conflicts and coexistence, or of representing the diverse cultural life of the city (Bloomfield and Bianchini 2004). Intercultural spaces and places undermine the dominant cultural community and reflect the diversity

of its citizens. They are recognized as the *composite nature* of the city which might be a universal space and might be embodied in civic institutions, symbols, and celebrations through which citizens recognize them (Bloomfield and Bianchini 2004). Those intercultural symbols, places, and spaces all will stand in the global spaces located mainly in downtowns and the central business district.

Thus a *central global space* is not recognized as a specific urban form spirited by any specified culture but reveals *a mixing of different cultures and the composite nature* of the city. The central core of a global city might be considered as the *common and similar aspects* of global cities usually revealed in similar urban forms (e.g., condensed and high-rise buildings), but which might still be characterized by some intercultural symbols. In contrast, urban nuclei are small urban units such as neighbourhoods related to everyday life and local functions. They might be seen as *milieux* which are inspired by different values and the social organization of different ethnic cultures (Albrow et al. 1997). Urban nuclei as the lower levels of a global city's spatial structure are the main places where immigrants live and meet their every day needs. Urban nuclei in this way have the potential to represent *distinct and creative* aspects of ethnic cultures in a variety of forms, and consequently might reveal the *heterogeneous nature* of the global city. [The urban nuclei as] ethnic neighbourhoods might constitute the most striking impact of multiculturalism as sites for urban planning (Qadeer 1997).

Spatial Structure of a Multicultural City

Based then on these two main functions and spaces of global cities, the answer to the first question—how should global cities pursuing a multiculturalism policy represent their multicultural nature?—becomes clear. Multiculturalism might be pursued by a heterogeneous spatial structure composed of:

- Multiple concentrated and distinct ethnic neighbourhoods which are inspired by different ethnic cultures and reveal the *heterogeneous nature of the city*
- Central global spaces which reveal the *composite nature* of the city, comprised of the mixing of different cultures in central places.
-

More generally, as a new urban phenomenon of the twenty-first century, this kind of spatial structure is emerging in the form of a networked polycentric megacity region, developed around one or more cities of global status. It is characterized by a cluster of cities and towns [and neighbourhoods], physically separate but intensively networked in a complex spatial division of labour (Hall and Pain 2006). It seems that emerging neighbourhoods specific to different ethnic groups might become the most important representation of the heterogeneous nature of multicultural cities. Indeed, the most significant impact *of multiculturalism on cities is the presence of ethnic neighbourhoods and ethnic businesses* (Qadeer 1997), *where people might spend most of the hours of their day and meet their every day needs*. Thus the central process of shaping urban structure arises from the concentration of ethnic social communities and activities in specific and distinct clusters of urban neighbourhoods which are decentralized outside of the main city centre. This pattern will let ethnic groups draw benefit from the advantages of agglomeration economies as well as communal sentiments (Qadeer 1997). The presence of these ethnic neighbourhoods might clarify immigrants' multiple identities and their sense of place and help them to feel at home. Based on these arguments, I formulate the following statement about an ideal global city pursuing a multicultural policy. *Such a city, consisting of concentrated, distinct, and heterogeneous ethnic neighbourhoods, seeks to define policies that have the potential to nurture ethnic cultural identities and their sense of place.*

Reterritorialization of Iranians in the Toronto Metropolitan Census Area

Ethnic Concentration

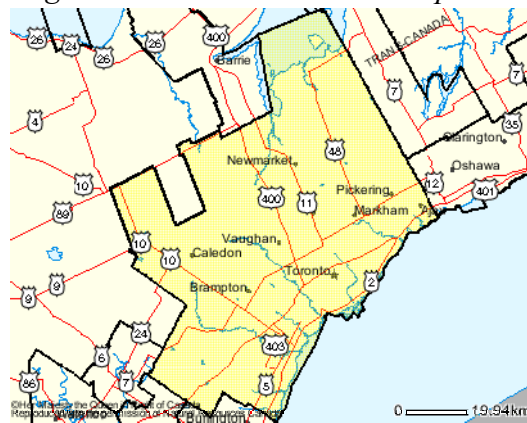
Ethnic residential concentrations have been considered historically as features of Canadian cities. Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver, of course, had Chinese, French, Jewish, and Italian districts in the late nineteenth century. Prairie cities had sizable concentrations of Eastern Europeans and Aboriginal peoples, and even a small town, Fort William, Ontario, had a Finnish colony. As Qadeer (1997) has illustrated, the urban structure in Canada is changing and cities have spilled out to form multifocal metropolises. Also ethnic concentrations are forming in new parts of cities which are more socially diverse. Qadeer demonstrates these processes through studies of Agincourt in metropolitan Toronto, Vancouver's Richmond area, and Montreal's West and North Island as examples of neighbourhoods characteristic of the new social mosaic in the suburbs. Also, he adds that such ethnic concentrations are evident too in edge cities² like Mississauga, Brampton, Richmond Hill, and Surrey. Based on these examples, he concludes that *multiculturalism as promoted through policy* now serves two functions. First, it fulfills the social needs of ethnic communities, and second, it weaves the diversity of both activities and built forms into urban and regional structures (Qadeer 1997).

In this regard, Hou and Picot (2004) explain that ethnic neighbourhoods could form rapidly if immigrants from a minority group settle exclusively in a place where members of the same minority already live. Based on research, he adds that concentration of a minority or an ethnic group is most likely to occur in "neighbourhoods" with new housing developments and owner-occupied housing. I draw on these insights in my investigation of the concentration of Iranians in particular neighbourhoods in the Toronto Census Metropolitan Area.

Who are Iranians (as an ethnic group of Toronto)?

Consistent with the ideas of identity mentioned earlier in the paper, any person who speaks *Persian*, or has been born in any part of *Iran*, and is *living in Toronto* (Toronto Census Metropolitan Area) might be considered part of the Iranian ethnic group in the city. Needing, however, to rely on

Figure 1: Toronto Census Metropolitan Area



census data in order to enumerate this group, it was necessary to work with the definitions of identity employed by Statistics Canada. Thus for the purposes of this study those individuals who indicated "Iranian" as their ethnic origin with single responses³ are tabulated as Iranian.

The physical area chosen for this study is the Toronto Census Metropolitan Area within the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), which comprises the census subdivisions (or regions): Toronto,

Durham, Halton, Peel, and York (Figure 1). The TCMA is considered to be one of three global cities in Canada (Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver). According to Statistics Canada, Toronto is Canada's most populous census metropolitan area (compared to 27 other CMAs) and therefore is Canada's largest global city. It also posted the fastest growth rate compared to the two other most populous CMAs in recent years: Montreal and Vancouver, at 2.2 percent per year from 2000 to 2005. This growth has taken the form of "sprawl" in Toronto—that is, the population has expanded proportionately more quickly in suburban areas than in the downtown core (Heisz 2006). The city of Toronto (or Toronto division) is the largest city in Canada and the fifth largest city in North America. The City of Toronto, with a population of 2,481,494 and 2,503,281 in 2001 and 2006, respectively, is the urban core of the TCMA which had a population of 4,682,897 and 5,113,149 for those same years (Statistics Canada 2007).

Concentrated Iranian Neighbourhoods

I turn now to investigate whether the majority of Iranians in the TCMA are living in concentrated, common, and similar neighbourhoods, districts, or even towns. I am interested in whether they have formed specific neighbourhoods, even though they are the twenty-sixth largest, and indeed almost one of the smallest, ethnic groups living in the TCMA.

The first step in deciding if a neighbourhood or district is Iranian involves looking at the numbers and relative concentrations of persons in the five regional divisions of the TCMA. Statistics Canada census data for 2001 show that the Toronto Census Division of the metropolitan area contains the largest number of Iranians (22,805 persons) followed by York Region (8,115 persons). When considered relative to the total population of each region, however, York Region has a higher concentration (1.11 percent) versus Toronto (0.92 percent) Accordingly, I selected these two regions as the most likely ones to demonstrate the reterritorialization of Iranians.

Table 1: Comparison of Iranian ethnic origin in community councils of the City of Toronto⁵ (2001)

Title	Total population	Iranian ethnic origin, single responses	Percentage of the total population	Rank of group
Total City of Toronto	2,481,510	Not in the top 10 ethnic groups		
Community councils				
North York	615,980	13,530	2.2	9
Toronto and East York	647,510	Not in the top 10 ethnic groups		
Scarborough	588,730	Not in the top 10 ethnic groups		
Etobicoke	604,516	Not in the top 10 ethnic groups		
Source: Official website of city of Toronto 2007a.				

City of Toronto

A comparison of the four community councils⁴ of the city of Toronto (Table 1) shows that North York community council, with a population of 13,530 Iranians, constituted the most important living area for Iranians in the city. Here Iranians were the ninth largest ethnic group in the community.

The North York community council, in turn, includes eleven of Toronto's wards. In looking at the distribution of Iranians across these wards by ethnic origin (single response) (see Table 2), I found that Ward 33 with 3,635 persons (the third largest ethnic group), Ward 24 with 2,125 persons (the fifth largest ethnic group) and Ward 34 with 1,905 persons (the fifth largest ethnic group), respectively, had the highest concentrations of Iranians. I thus consider Wards 33, 24, and 34 to be the main Iranian districts in Toronto.

Table 2: Comparison of Iranian ethnic origin in North York wards, City of Toronto (2001)

Wards	Total population	Ethnic origins, single responses	Percent of the total population	Rank of group
23	61,580	1,995	3.2	7
10	59,965	Not in the top 10 ethnic groups		
24	55,570	2,125	3.8	5
8	51,860	Not in the top 10 ethnic groups		
9	46,685	Not in the top 10 ethnic groups		
33	58,695	3,635	6.2	3
34	57,700	1,905	3.3	5
25	54,450	1,100	2	6
26	59,870	1,485	2.5	8
15	58,720	Not in the top 10 ethnic groups		
16	50,885	Not in the top 10 ethnic groups		
Total	615,980	13,530	2.2	9

Source: Official website of the City of Toronto 2007b.

Comparison of selected wards reveals the most populated Iranian neighbourhoods. As shown in Table 3, Don Valley is the neighbourhood with the highest number of Iranians (1975) in North York.

Table 3: Comparison of Iranian ethnic origin in neighbourhoods of Wards 33, 34 and 24 of North York, City of Toronto (2001)

Title		Iranian ethnic origin, single responses	Rank of group
Ward	Neighbourhoods		
33⁶	47- Don Valley	1975	4
	46- Pleasant View	590	9
	53- Henry Farm	980	4
24	48- Hillcrest Village	710	8
	49- Bay View Woods	440	9
	50- Newtonbrook East	510	9
	52- Willowdale	555	9
34	45- Parkwoods-Donalda	1,485	7
	43- Victoria Village	Not mentioned	-
	42- Banbury-Don Mills	Not mentioned	-
	40- St. Andrew-Windfields	605	8

Source: Official website of City of Toronto 2007c.

York Region

As noted above, York Region contains the second highest number of Iranians of the five regions in the TCMA. Indeed, when considered relative to the total population of each region, York has a higher concentration than the city of Toronto. I now carry out a similar analysis of York Region. Iranians are the sixth largest group of immigrants living in this region while the first and second largest immigrant groups are people from Hong Kong and Italy, respectively (Table 4).

Table 4: Largest groups of immigrants in York Region (Census Division) (2001)

Title	COUNT			
Total population by citizenship 20% Sample Data	725,665	Place of birth/ Total pop. (percent)	Place of birth/Total immigrant pop. (percent)	Rank of group
Total immigrants by selected places of birth	283,790			
Hong Kong, Special Administrative Region	43,240	5.6	15.2	1
Italy	38,235	5.3	13.5	2
China, People's Republic of	22,385	3.1	7.9	3
United Kingdom	19,590	2.7	6.9	4
India	14,115	1.9	5.0	5
Iran	7,930	1.09	2.79	6
Source: Statistics Canada 2001.				

York Regional Municipality contains eight towns or cities. The highest concentration of Iranians both in terms of percentage of the total population (7.5 percent) and the rank of the group (10th) is found in Richmond Hill (Table 5).

After Richmond Hill, Vaughan and Markham rank as municipalities with high concentrations (5.5 percent and 4.8 percent, respectively) of Iranians. Iranians living in these areas have mostly settled along Yonge Street in a district known as Thornhill.

Table 5: Comparison of Iranian ethnic origin in municipalities of York (2001)

Municipality	Iranian ethnic origin, single responses	Percentage of population	Rank of group
Richmond Hill, T	5280	7.5	10
Vaughan, C	1220	5.5	24
Markham, T	2465	4.8	17
King, TP	30	0.0054	40
East Gwillimbury, T	75	0.0049	31
Whitchurch-Stouffville, T	95	0.0045	24
Aurora, T	95	0.0025	39
Georgina, T	40	0.0025	42
Newmarket, T	90	0.001	48
Source: Statistics Canada 2001			

Richmond Hill town is divided into six wards or districts. As a percentage of all ethnic groups living within a ward the highest population of Iranians is found in Ward 5, followed by Ward 2. They are the sixth largest ethnic group in Ward 2 and the seventh largest in Ward 5 (Table 6).

Table 6: Comparison of size of Iranian community relative to other ethnic groups in Richmond Hill town wards (Divisions)

Ward	Iranian ethnic origin, single responses	Percentage population declaring Iranian ethnic origin	Rank of Group
Ward 1	740	2.36	9
Ward 2	995	3.25	6
Ward 3	730	2.98	7
Ward 4	485	1.63	10
Ward 5	1,450	4.14	7
Ward 6	865	3.06	8
Source: Town of Richmond Hill 2006a			

Table 7 shows that Ward 5 with nearly 243 Iranians per square kilometre is the area with the highest concentration and it can be considered the main Iranian neighbourhood in Richmond Hill. Ward 5 is also the most populated and the densest division of Richmond Hill.

Table 7: Iranian concentration (ethnic origin) in Richmond Hill town wards (Divisions)

	Total population	Iranian ethnic origin, single responses	Pop. of ward/ Pop. of Richmond Hill (percent)	Area (km ²)	Density of persons per km ²	Density of Iranians per km ²
Ward 1	22,636	740	17.4	54.	419.2	13.7
Ward 2	22,296	995	16.9	9.7	2,298.6	102.6
Ward 3	21,464	730	16.3	12.1	1,776.8	60.4
Ward 4	20,302	485	15.4	8.8	2,312.3	0.20
Ward 5	23,824	1,450	18.0	6.0	3,990.6	242.9
Ward 6	21,508	865	16.3	10.4	2,076.1	83.5
Source: Town of Richmond Hill 2006a						

Ward 5 is located along both sides of Yonge Street extending to Bathurst Street on the west and Bayview Street on the east. Major Mackenzie Drive West forms the northern boundary of the Ward, while Carville Road and the east part of Church Street and Hillview Drive provide the southern boundary (the boundaries of Ward 5 changed after December 2006).

Summary

Iranians are the *twenty-sixth largest group* by ethnic origin in the Toronto Census Metropolitan Area and the third smallest immigrant group. The analysis showed that the majority of Iranians are living in the northern part of the city of Toronto, especially in the North York area. They

are most concentrated in the neighbourhood of Don Valley, located in Ward 33, where they are *the fourth largest ethnic group*. This concentration extends north and into the southern part of York Region, where there are particular enclaves in Richmond Hill—specifically in Ward 5, where Iranians are *almost the seventh largest ethnic group* (Table 8 and Figure 2). This analysis thus suggests where Iranians have reterritorialized in the Metropolitan Toronto Census Area. It also demonstrates an organization based on a “decentralized centralization logic.” Remembering that centralization and decentralization are two contrasting processes currently occurring in global cities, their interactions with telecommunication technologies is expressed in the form of the *polycentric* or *multi-nucleated* city (Castells 2000; Moss and Townsend 2000; Graham and Marvin 2000; Gillespie and Richardson 2000; Lord Rogers 1999; Frey 1999; Fishman 2000). “Concentration” refers to concentration of global functions in the main city the of metropolitan area, especially in its central economic center or downtown core (CBD), while “decentralization” refers to transfer of some urban activities from the central area of the city into peripheral urban nuclei as neighbourhoods. So a global conurbation

Table 8: Iranian population in Don Valley and Richmond Hill Town

Region, City or Town	Total Population	Iranian Ethnic group	Rank Among other Ethnic Groups
North York, City of Toronto (Region)	615,980	13,530	9
Ward 33	58,695	3,635	3
Urban development services, city planning, policy and research, September, 2003.			
Neighbourhood 47 (Don Valley)	26,975	1,975	4
Source of Data: Social Policy & Research Unit with assistance from Toronto Public Health.			
Richmond Hill Town, York Region	132,030	5,256	8
Ward 5	23,824	1,450	7
Source: Official website of the City of Toronto 2007a, 2007b and 2007c and Town of Richmond Hill 2006a.			

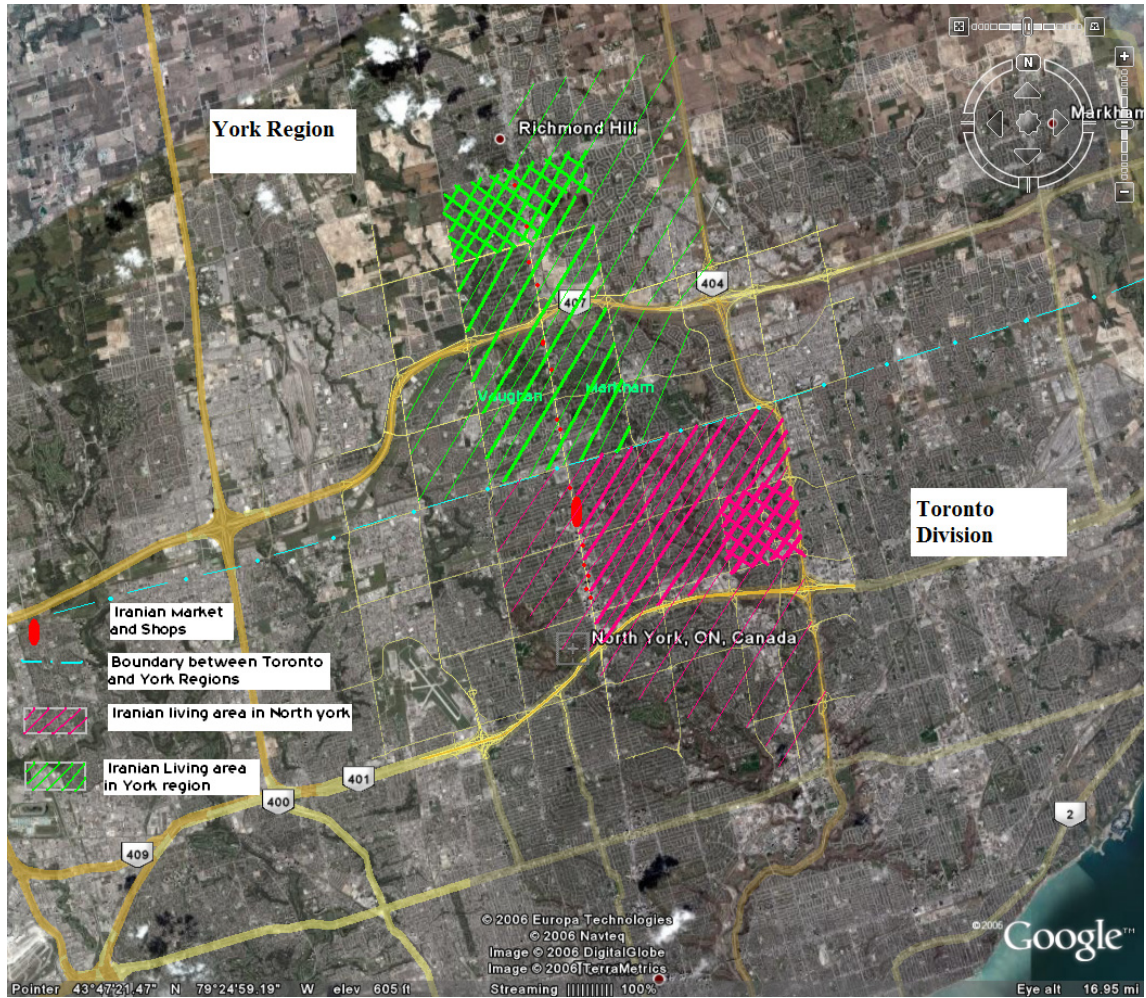
consists of the main city centre with concentrated global activities and some residential neighbourhoods or industrial and administrative nuclei (Faryadi 2003).

Visual Analysis of Urban Forms and Functions of Two Iranian Neighbourhoods in Toronto

I turn now to consider my question about how *a heterogeneous spatial structure comprising different ethnic neighbourhoods might contribute to the multicultural nature of global cities*. In such cities, we might expect the emergence and creation of distinct ethnic neighbourhoods, where persons in the group mark their “place” through distinct urban functions, forms, and spaces. To the extent that physical signs of these forms are present, they constitute the actual representation of multiculturalism in global cities and may be an indicator of a successful multiculturalism policy.

Urban functions are different activities allocated to land to meet the residential, cultural, educational, recreational, and many other needs of a community. Simply put, they are “what actually happens within space” (Lang 1994, 183). Urban forms are the physical *containers* shaped by buildings, streets, and squares where those activities occur, or as Lang (1994) states, they are three-dimensional physical environments of links and places. Urban spaces contain such urban forms and functions and these might be expected to reflect the socio-cultural value systems of the community. Clearly “the social and cultural complexity of a city has necessarily to do with its physical and structural complexity and density” (Krier 1990, 43). If we can observe urban functions and forms distinct to particular areas that are consistent with expected cultural views and practices of the people living there, we will have some indication of a supportive urban environment for multiculturalism to flourish.

Figure 2: Distribution and concentrations of Iranians in global city of Toronto



Source: Google Earth website 2006.

With these points in mind, I explored the two Iranian neighbourhoods identified above: Don Valley (North York, Toronto Region) and Ward 5 (Richmond Hill, York Region). I was interested to determine to what degree, if any, there are distinct urban forms and functions in these neighbourhoods that reflect the concentrations of Iranians present in them. The main questions here are:

- To what degree do Iranians' neighbourhoods or living areas manifest some specific and distinctive urban signs?
- Are there any differences between the Iranian neighbourhoods and other neighbourhoods nearby?
- Based on this analysis, what further steps might be taken to improve Iranians' sense of place in these neighbourhoods?

Before beginning the analysis of these questions, it is useful to ask what kinds of urban forms and functions we might expect Iranians to manifest in shaping their neighbourhoods. Should we expect them to be like those found in traditional cities or more modern cities in Iran? In light of my earlier discussion of cultural renewal, we should not expect either of these patterns. Rather, we should expect to find forms that reflect jointly the new forms and functions of global cities and common characteristics and signs of Iranian cities and culture. That is, the neighbourhoods would share some

broad similarities with others in the TCMA, but also reflect alongside those general forms some distinct aspects of Iranian culture. In particular, these aspects might include some *familiar, common, and continuous* urban forms and functions found in Iranian cities.

Urban Design Criteria for Analyzing the Distinctiveness of Iranian Neighbourhoods

Criteria for analyzing the distinctiveness of Iranian neighbourhoods might be arrived at through two different but compatible approaches: *forecasting* and *looking back*. Forecasting draws on some general urban planning principles and criteria developed to improve the quality of life in the future for cities experiencing intently the processes of globalization and the effects of the information and communication revolution. In contrast, a city “looking back” would reflect in its forms some of the general and common urban principles and rules which have been continually used to form and redevelop older cities (in this case, older cities in Iran). Though an earlier comparison of these two groups of principles (Faryadi 2002; 2003; 2006), I have formulated a set of urban design guidelines that might improve Iranians’ urban distinctiveness under conditions of globalization. They comprise some general and flexible *urban planning and design criteria* that may be used for designing and rebuilding Iranian neighbourhoods in global cities. These criteria are divided into two groups: urban functions and urban forms. Each criterion is signed either with “I,” “G,” or both letters. The letter “I” stands for “Iran” and means that the related criterion is extracted from Iranian cities (looking back). The letter “G” stands for “global” and indicates that the criterion is also compatible with some new general urban planning rules which are developing to improve the quality of life in global cities (forecasting).

Those criteria that are met in the given Iranian neighbourhoods are indicated with a “✓” I have carried out the analysis using qualitative and subjective methods, based on personal observations made while visiting the neighbourhoods and taking photographs. I also reviewed Iranian local newspapers and conducted some informal interviews with Iranians in the city of Toronto.

Distinct Urban Functions

✓ 1- G, I. To perform some social functions and ceremonies in public urban spaces

There are some public places like Mel Lastman Square in North York which are used for Iranian social gatherings, especially for celebrating unplanned social and happy events. The criterion is met.

✓ 2- G, I. Development of some distinctive commercial places or markets (bazaar)

There is an Iranian market or plaza in North York. This market offers almost all the needs of Iranians, including, for example, “Halal” meat, Iranian foods, dry goods, foreign exchange services, photo shops, travel agencies, and many other activities (Figure 3). In addition, there are quite a few individual shops distributed along Yonge Street between North York and Richmond Hill. I also noticed many signs in the Persian language (Figure 4). The market is easily accessible to Richmond Hill residents via Yonge Street (Figure 5). Criterion is met.

✓ 3- G, I. Development of specific religious meeting places such as mosques

There are some places for religious communities to meet like the Imam Ali Centre in North York, and some other religious and charity functions are active in Iranian neighbourhoods. Criterion is met.

Figure 3: Iranian plaza, North York



Figure 4: Persian urban signs



4- G, I. To provide everyday needs, easily accessible by foot, in small neighbourhood centres or shops scattered inside neighbourhoods

There are no small neighbourhood centres or shops easily accessible by foot to respond to everyday needs. Like other citizens, Iranians usually drive to larger shopping centres, plazas, and supermarkets to provide for their needs. Criterion is not met.

5- G, I. Development of a specific community centre for public meetings

There are some different Iranian community organizations and NGOs active in Iranian neighbourhoods such as the Iranian-Canadian Senior Citizens Centre of Ontario, the Richmond Hill Iranian Seniors Group, the Ontario Iranians Society, the Toronto Iranians, and many others. But they usually gather in private home or halls (announced in Iranian local newspapers). Although the existence of these community organizations might improve Iranians' sense of belonging to a community, they are too small and specific (not integrated), and thus are unlikely to be able to foster integration of the broader Iranian community and thus meet its social needs. It can be argued that the lack of a distinctive Iranian community centre lowers Iranians' collective social participation. Criterion is not met.

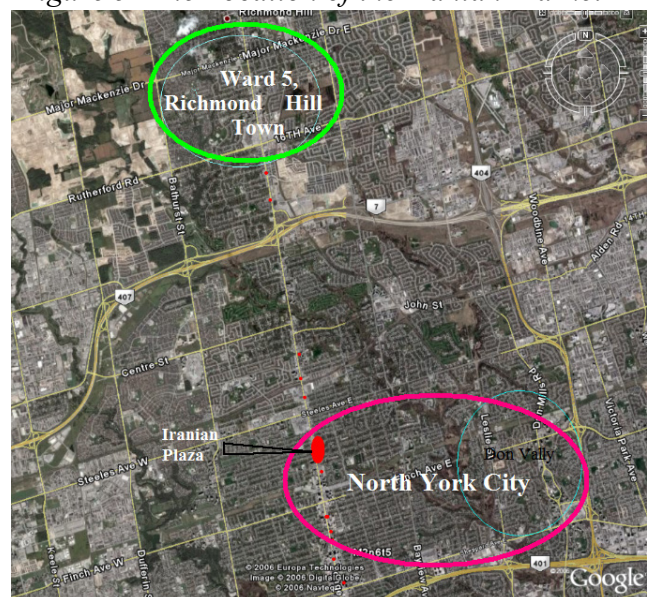
6- G, I. Development of a specific cultural centre (such as a public concert hall, theatre, or cinema)

Similarly, the lack of a specific cultural centre (such as a public concert hall, theatre, or cinema) lessens the likelihood that Iranians can sustain cultural and artistic functions over the longer term. Criterion is not met.

✓ 7- G, I. Development of specific outdoor recreational spaces and places

Iranians usually perform their outdoor ceremonies (like Nature day and the last Wednesday of the year), and engage in public recreation in Leslie Park and Sunnybrook Park located in North York. Criterion is met.

Figure 5- The Location of the Iranian Market



Source: Google Earth 2006

8- I. Development of specific public sport places separate for men and women

There are no specific Iranian gymnasiums or sports centres with separate space for men and women. Criterion is not met.

✓ 9- G, I. Development of ethnic restaurants which offer Iranian cuisine

A number of Iranian restaurants offer a variety of Iranian foods both in Don Valley and North York. Criterion is met.

✓ 10- G, I. Development of art activities and training

There are some private and individual ethnic artistic activities like art galleries, art exhibitions, and training in folkloric music and dance in Iranian neighbourhoods. These are not highly organized and institutionalized and most of these activities are performed in private homes instead of specific, designated places. Criterion is partially met.

Distinct Urban Forms

✓ 1- G, I. Concentration of main public facilities in the main neighbourhood centres and axis

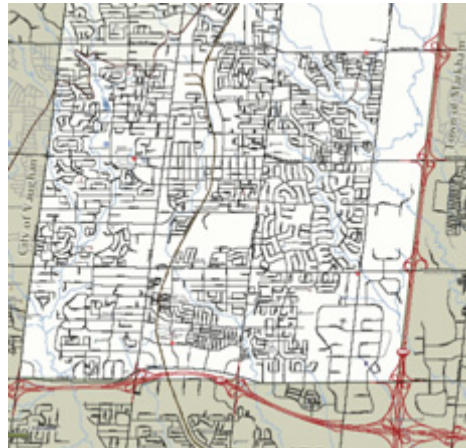
As was observed above, the main neighbourhood centres, the Bayview shopping centre in North York and the main shopping centre in Richmond Hill, are located at the corner of the intersections of the main streets of Iranian neighbourhoods. This characteristic is always considered in the cities of Iran. In Toronto, as well, it is considered a general rule for urban planning. This criterion is met.

Figure 6 sinuous roads in Don Valley, Toronto



Source: Official website of City of Toronto 2007c.

Figure 7 sinuous roads in Ward 5, Richmond Hill Town, York Region



Source: Town of Richmond Hill 2006b.

✓ 2- I. To provide sinuous roads (a variety of sights and landscapes)

Sinuous roads are characteristic of neighbourhoods in Iran. The streets in Don Valley (North York) and Ward 5 (Richmond Hill) are shaped in a curving and sinuous way similar to many other neighbourhoods (see Figures 6 and 7). Again this urban form is a general rule of new urban design in Toronto and cannot be attributed specifically to the presence of Iranians. It is possible, however, that Iranians feel more comfortable locating where such patterns are dominant. I consider this criterion to be met.

✓ **3- G, I. To provide a variety of housing types in each neighbourhood for varying levels of income**

Variations in housing types are a general property of GTA neighbourhoods. Thus this criterion is also met.

✓ **4- G, I. Development of public natural and green spaces in the neighbourhoods**

Iranian neighbourhoods, similar to many other neighbourhoods in Canadian cities, are developed with some consideration given to the inclusion of natural green spaces and parks. The form of these green spaces is different from gardens and parks in Iran. This criterion is met in part only.

Except for the first four criteria below, the remaining ones are not met in Iranian neighbourhoods in the city of Toronto. Some of them, such as numbers 8 to 13 might be too difficult to meet as signs of Iranian culture in Toronto or any other global city. For example to enclose private yards is a very important characteristic of Iranian neighbourhoods which have existed for several centuries up to the present, even though the amount of enclosure and the covering materials have changed a lot. Still the principal cultural value of maintaining the privacy of houses and families is a constant over time.

5- G. Distinct urban design of public spaces in different ethnic neighbourhoods

6- G, I. To provide a kind of formal or functional enclosure for each neighbourhood (trees, forests, rivers, etc.)

7- G, I. To make symbolic gates at the entrance of main roads of each neighbourhood

8- G, I. Different urban designs for the development of different ethnic neighbourhoods

9- G, I. Development of small neighbourhoods with everyday amenities

10- I. Applying some symbolic signs or forms in public buildings in main neighbourhood centres

11- G, I. Development and creation of buildings that are tied to ethnic origin

12- I. Development of an almost integrated urban texture comprising relevant forms of buildings

13- I. Development of some kind of enclosures for improving housing privacy (soft walls, fences, plants)

14- I. Distinctive design of housing, including interiors, facades, and roads in different ethnic neighbourhoods

15- G. To provide familiar urban signs in important places or dates

16- I. To plant rows of trees along the sides of streets

17- G, I. To coordinate the urban texture to different characteristics of natural landscapes

18- I. To have roads conform to the natural landscape

19- I. To form main streets along rivers

20- I. To save and design the landscapes of rivers and valleys so that they pass through the neighbourhood

Another main urban form which is not met in Iranian neighbourhoods is the existence of small neighbourhood centres, accessible by foot. These centres take a variety of forms in Iranian cities, whether alongside the main part of the principal neighbourhood street, at the corners of main intersections within the neighbourhood, or along the sides of small local quarters. There are some other criteria which might easily improve the sense of place in Iranians' neighbourhoods in global cities such as applying symbolic signs or forms in public buildings in main neighbourhood centres.

Also some Iranian architectural elements like arches might be used in creating symbolic gates at the main entrance of Iranian neighbourhoods to improve their sense of place. The idea is illustrated by the gate to the downtown area of the city of Hamilton below and by the entrance to a bazaar in Isfahan, Iran (Figures 8 and 9).

Figure 8: Isfahan traditional Bazaar, introduces an applicable specific Iranian architectural element, the arch



Figure 9: Symbolic Gate of Downtown Hamilton



Another important step would be to permit different urban design plans for developing different ethnic neighbourhoods as part of the general urban design system. This step would encourage more heterogeneous neighbourhoods in global cities, while helping to support ethnic identities. My visual analysis of Iranian and other neighbourhoods in Toronto showed few relevant differences that might be associated with ethno-cultural design patterns (Figures 10 and 11). Almost all the neighbourhoods in Toronto, York, and other regions looked alike and had been conceived along the same lines.

This analysis shows that there are signs in Iranian neighbourhoods of urban functions representing Iranian cultural influences. When it comes to urban forms, however, the overall finding is that the planning policies in the MTCA push all neighbourhoods to conform in most respects to North American norms. There seems to be little evidence of planning policies that make room for and encourage distinctive urban forms that are more reflective of the cultures of ethnic groups concentrated in particular neighbourhoods.

Figures 10 and 11: Similar Townscape of Iranians' Neighbourhoods



Don Valley, Toronto



Conclusion

Iranians rank twenty-sixth in size among the ethnic groups in Toronto, and thus are one of the smallest ethnic groups in the city based on Statistics Canada data. In this paper, I explored the nature of multiculturalism in the global city of Toronto and showed that Iranian immigrants are reterritorialized and concentrated in some specific areas and neighbourhoods especially in North York, Toronto, and Richmond Hill in York Region. This concentration provides a window into the heterogeneous spatial structure of Toronto, which is composed of different ethnic neighbourhoods organized on the basis of “decentralized centralization” logic.

Exploring the urban signs of distinct ethnic neighbourhoods as important physical features of a multicultural city showed that Iranian neighbourhoods offer a number of functions to Iranians, but that these are not manifest through specifically Iranian urban forms. If a given global city has a distinct multiculturalism policy, one might expect that its planning functions would create considerable space for the incorporation of urban forms sensitive to cultural practices of the ethnic groups concentrated in those neighbourhoods. My visual analysis of Iranian neighbourhoods in the metropolitan Toronto region showed little evidence of such a policy. Multiculturalism may be an official policy of the federal government, but it appears to be much less so for urban governments, at least in the Toronto area. In the absence of such urban policies, and thus the opportunities to build places whose urban forms and functions reflect the cultural values of ethnic groups dominant in such places, it is less likely that members of those groups will come to feel “at home” in the city.

This finding would also suggest that Iranians will have few tools for improving and renewing their culture in the Toronto urban space. The main concern here is what is happening to their culture? Is it becoming walled in and ossifying or is it disappearing? What are their cultural preferences? More generally, what will happen to the city if the ethnic cultures disappear in favour of forming a new collective culture? Would such an outcome have more benefits for the city and its citizens? But would such an outcome be consistent with multiculturalism as a policy and as a value? If, in contrast, one believes that a heterogeneous global city with policies favouring multiculturalism is more interesting, vibrant, and attractive for residents, immigrants, and global tourism, should urban planning and design in Toronto, a global city, especially at the level of neighbourhoods, not be more flexible to accommodate different urban forms for different ethnic cultures? A city is the product of its people and of its official urban planning system. The situation of small communities like the Iranians in Toronto might be improved, a sense of place might become more entrenched, and they might come to feel more “at home” if planning systems were more flexible.

Admittedly, this analysis is preliminary. Other smaller ethnic communities like the Iranian one should be studied. And the situation of these smaller communities should be compared to the larger ones in the city before drawing final conclusions. A larger population size may make it possible to have in place a larger number of ethnically distinct urban forms and functions. It would also be helpful to compare smaller ethnic communities who have a longer history in the city to those, like the Iranian one, which have a shorter history. Determining a sense of place and the degree to which people feel at home would also require additional research that would include qualitative personal interviews.

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Notes

¹It is supposed in this research that the majority of global immigrants who are living in global cities have migrated from urban centers.

²“Edge city” is a term used in reference to the modern condition of sprawling development in contemporary American cities. Edge cities result from the process of unavoidable fragmentation of the existing city (old metropolitans), a displacement of the centre of gravity of urban dynamics from the city center to the urban periphery (Nesbitt 1996). Edge cities are where most of the new houses, most of the new jobs, and even most of the new cultural centres are concentrated. Increasingly, the major commute pattern is not from suburb to central city, but from suburb to suburb. These “edge cities” which have emerged in recent decades are clearly different from the earlier middle-class suburban developments in size, complexity, and even function (LeGates and Stout 2000).

³ Ethnic origin or ancestry in Statistics Canada refers to the roots or ethnic background of a person. Given that new ethnic groups may arise over time, and any individual has two parents, four grandparents, eight great-grandparents and so on, it may be difficult for a respondent to answer a question about origins. So respondents may report multiple ethnic origins. The tabulation of the resultant data, therefore, becomes complex. This is usually handled by showing the population that declared a *single origin* and the population that declared *multiple origins* (meaning that these respondents are counted more than once) (Statistics Canada website). So to avoid overestimating the population of Iranian ethnicity, single responses are used in this research.

⁴ Community council is the official unit of division of the City of Toronto.

⁵ Data for each community council were extracted separately from the complete community council profile. Data shown in the other tables in this paper were obtained in the same way.

⁶ Although Tables 2 and 3 were generated using the same data sources, the total Iranian population in Ward 33 and Ward 24 (Table 2) differs from the sum of their numbers in neighbourhoods of these Wards (Table 3). This discrepancy is because of some overlapping of adjacent neighbourhoods and wards.

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Institute on Globalization and the Human Condition

The Institute on Globalization and the Human Condition was created in January 1998 following the designation of globalization and the human condition as a strategic area of research by the Senate of McMaster University. Subsequently, it was approved as an official research center by the University Planning Committee. The Institute brings together a group of approximately 30 scholars from both the social sciences and humanities. Its mandate includes the following responsibilities:

- a facilitator of research and interdisciplinary discussion with the view to building an intellectual community focused on globalization issues.
- a centre for dialogue between the university and the community on globalization issues
- a promoter and administrator of new graduate programming

In January 2002, the Institute also became the host for a Major Collaborative Research Initiatives Project funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada where a group of over 40 researchers from across Canada and abroad are examining the relationships between globalization and autonomy.

The WORKING PAPER SERIES...

circulates papers by members of the Institute as well as other faculty members and invited graduate students at McMaster University working on the theme of globalization. Scholars invited by the Institute to present lectures at McMaster will also be invited to contribute to the series.

Objectives:

- To foster dialogue and awareness of research among scholars at McMaster and elsewhere whose work focuses upon globalization, its impact on economic, social, political and cultural relations, and the response of individuals, groups and societies to these impacts. Given the complexity of the globalization phenomenon and the diverse reactions to it, it is helpful to focus upon these issues from a variety of disciplinary perspectives.
- To assist scholars at McMaster and elsewhere to clarify and refine their research on globalization in preparation for eventual publication.

To reach the IGHC:
1280 Main Street West
Hamilton, ON L8S 4M4, Canada
Phone: 905-525-9140 ext. 27556
Email: globalhc@mcmaster.ca
Web: globalization.mcmaster.ca



Urban Representation of Multiculturalism in a Global City: Toronto's Iranian Community

Shahrzad Faryadi
Assistant Professor of Urban Design/
Urban Planning
Faculty of Environment
University of Tehran
#23 Ghods Ave. Enghelab Street
Tehran, Iran

Email: sfaryadi@ut.ac.ir