**Personal information**

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**Studio**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Complex Cities Studio</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>Prof. Stephen Read (first mentor)</td>
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**Argumentation of choice of the studio**

Complex Cities Studio allows me to undertake multiscalar approaches to problems that attack cities in transforming process. I firstly selected my location and then selected the studio related to it. I liked to search in the spatial structures of cities and their links to urban growth, function and experience that the studio is searching.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Urban Compositions</th>
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<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>Prof. Leo van den Burg (second mentor)</td>
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**Title**

**Title of the graduation Project**

**Historic Religious Identity, Ray Urban Dignity,** Searching Planning perspective at the neglected historic religious district to revive the local quality as a promoter of urban cohesion in different scales

**Problem Statement**

In fact, from 1920, the end of Qajar dynasty, Tehran modernization resulted in Tehran polarisation. Hence, it was divided in two parts, rich (north) and poor (south). Furthermore, a rapid growth of urbanization and migration in Tehran after Islamic revolution, has affected in Ray, physically and socially that led to separate Ray from the rest of Tehran in higher scale. In addition, due to environmental and spatial changing, a fragmentation happened inside the district that led to create a gap between residents and migrants, poor and rich in local scale. Although diverse groups from different cultural back grounds, social, educational and economic levels live close to each other, they do not have strong relationship due to their differences and lack of mutual understanding. On the other word, Ray suffers from social exclusion which means weakness of the Ray to keep all individuals and groups within reach of what we expect as a society. In addition, due to lack of proper facilities and life quality, residents who are able to relocate, leave Ray and they are replacing with new migrants or people from other areas who do not any sense about Ray. It leads to change its identity and become pale. Tourism infrastructure and necessary facilities are not proper. Owing to lack of hotel, tourists prefer to stay in the North districts and spend just few hours in Ray to visit the holy shrine and rarely historic areas. Thus they do not participate in district economy a lot. Overall, Ray suffers from spatial-social segregation in local level as well as metropolitan scale. The quality of life in Ray is low and need of the local services and facilities are tangible. In addition, Ray has not been facilitated with needed services and infrastructure for tourism development.

This project will research deeper the problem of segregation in relation to the normative instruments and then look for alternatives to promote a synergetic structure. In this research process some questions should be answered in order to reach an efficient way to achieve the aims. Therefore, the Main Research Questions are:
How Ray can be improved to have better social interaction within the district? What kind of social and spatial interventions are needed to provide this opportunity?

How Ray can be improved to have better synergy with the rest of the city in future? What kind of physical and spatial interventions are needed to provide this opportunity?

The following sub-research questions, therefore, represent the in-between steps that will be taken:

- **Why** Ray district with 6000 years antiquity, highest tourist attractions in Tehran metropolitan, the third important religious zone in Iran, has been segregated with poor condition in local level?
- **What** spatial regeneration interventions can increase livability in this area?
- **How** Ray can use of its inherent potentials to reinforce investment opportunities? What are Ray inherent potentials and which one has a powerful role?

**Goal**

In order to address a solution to what was defined in the problem statement, the main aim of this project is find out about important factors for integrated spatial development of Ray as a segregated district first in local level and then in Tehran metropolitan area. To have a better understanding about segregated historic-religious districts, a broad review on segregation factors and theirs impacts on residential desirability of Ray will be done. As a matter of fact to achieve these goals, the position of Ray and its transformation during the history should be done from the beginning of the project that help to understand why Ray has been segregated. At the end, some solutions will be suggested to deal with this phenomenon in different scales.

This project will be developed based on this belief that: if the city applies proper normative instruments in relation to local services, can promote more interaction between residents in different levels that leads to increase social cohesion. As a result, in long term period, gradually spatial-social segregation in higher scale will be solved. In addition, The project tries to answer to the present needs of district by social-spatial interventions in order to increase touristic and residential desirability in local level as well as metropolitan level. In fact, Improving the local structure within metropolitan structure is the aim of the project.

Furthermore, by improving the local urban quality, private sectors are encouraged to investigate in Ray to promote the opportunities of tourism development. As a result, by investigating in different sectors, new job opportunities will be provided and economy development will be boomed.

**Process**

**Method description**

The key method in this graduation project is the exploration of Ray as a historic religious district which has been neglected. This will take place in two phases; a general study of historic districts and an deep study of segregation and fragmentation reasons. Literature study takes a prominent place in the research as well. The definition of criteria for social-spatial segregation and spatial-functional qualities are key elements in the research by case studies which will be derived from literature.

The Analysis of Ray is probably the biggest activity in the research project, according to three different dimensions: the historical dimension, the spatial dimension and the social dimension by means of a literature study and mapping and site observation. In fact, it is necessary to analyse, Ray transformation and development during its history. It helps us to find out a dialogue between past, present and future. Basically, this analysis should be done as a first step of the project and other analyses are based on it. Actually, by perceiving the role of the old structure and its relation to different development during the time, dedicating of some specific areas to special kind of functions can be defined for future development. Moreover, studying in urban history help us to understand its identity clearly, social and urban identity. The scheme below gives an overview of the mentioned steps that will be taken.
Literature and general practical preference

Reflection

Relevance

**Societal Relevance:** Actually, due to the role of Tehran in the region, there are government undertaking visions to transform the city into an international class. According to Ray role which is defined as a historic religious core in Tehran metropolitan, is clearly towards the economic, cultural growth of the district, in order to decrease social spatial segregation problems.

In local level vision, there are developing plans for Ray in order to increase social cohesion and cultural identity. Generally, there are some topics at the heart of all planning discussions in the district such as...
developing the shrine’s surrounding, reusing of the derelict industrial sites by replacing with sustainable ones, rehabilitation of the urban decay, improving the public transportation and public spaces, organizing the historic zone and generally reviving the local identity and quality.

My graduation project aims to address firstly a range of local problems such socio-spatial segregation and fragmentation and then proposing a more integrated planning for Ray district.

Scientific Relevance: There is considerable scientific research being done in the field of segregation having social, spatial and institutional impacts on the city. But these are usually general or based on one-dimensional cities. My theory paper for the graduation project aims at studying the reasons of social-spatial segregation in special district with a complex character. Ray can be analysed as a multi-dimensional district. Historic, cultural, religious, touristic, industrial, economic and migration factors have made the district so complicated. Basically, to have realistic judgment, understanding the historic process of Ray is significantly important that helps to intervene correctly but unfortunately there are not any maps to show this process. As a result, historic analysing and producing new analytical maps will show Ray potentials and problems. They lead to attract planners, socialists, government attention to this important area with a clear perspective. Therefore, these gained documents can be used as a foundation for further urban development and coming studies.

Time planning

The phasing of this graduation project was defined by two axes, one is the time-line, based on presentation schedule (P1, P2, P3, P4 and P5) and the other is based on the actions which should be developed during the project process. These actions are defined as follows: Project definition, analysis in different scales and layers, Defining alternative scenarios and implementation means, design and Conclusions. The project will take one year; starting at the beginning of September 2013 and finishing with the final presentation in July 2014.