In this conceptual context, a 'Body without Organs' explains a state of openness to new forms of expression and possibilities. This openness should not be confused with pathological chaos or disorder. Deleuze and Guattari suggest that the 'Body without Organs' is a body that is not organized according to pre-existing norms or structures but is nevertheless capable of organizing itself in new and creative ways. In this book, I employ this concept when explaining a historical point where nearly all activities of an assemblage come to a halt, awaiting the emergence of new structures. I specifically emphasize the correlation between the revolutionary socio-political transitions in Iran and the conservation and urban heritage planning assemblage entering a state of a 'Body Without Organs'.

Methods of data collection and analysis: Unravelling the book's structure

In its methodological approach, this book primarily adopts an inductive, empirical stance to explore, explain, and critically analyze the investigated phenomena, which are exemplified through a single embedded case study.[28] Source triangulation serves as a fundamental approach to ensuring the reliability of the collected data and its subsequent results. Nevertheless, when required, method triangulation (or, in this research, triangulation of data collection techniques) is applied to verify and validate qualitative findings.[29] For data analysis, the technique of thematic coding is employed to effectively categorize, cross-check, and triangulate data gathered from various sources, facilitating the interpretation of the research findings.[30]

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28   Robert K Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2009).

29   For different types of triangulation, see: Ibid.

30   See: H Russell Bernard, Amber Wutich, and Gery W Ryan, *Analyzing Qualitative Data: Systematic Approaches* (Los Angeles: SAGE publications, 2016); Uwe Flick, *An Introduction to Qualitative Research* (Sage, 2009).

While the assemblage-inspired methodology is less commonly utilized in urban heritage research, it is not a new or unproven approach within academic domains like urban studies and urban planning.[31] Elsewhere, I have explored how assemblage thinking can provide valuable methodological tools for addressing inquiries posed by urban heritage research. Methodologically, I am inspired by Baker and McGuirk's 'ethnographic sensibility' in following the interrelationships of human and non-human actors in urban assemblages.[32] It is important to highlight that instead of delving deep into the specific properties of places, ideologies, traditions, natural risks, artistic or political events, artists, and cultural products like songs and films, this research focuses on exploring the role they play within the urban heritage planning assemblage.

Throughout my fieldwork, I gathered research materials through online ethnographic observation[33] of mainstream media and social media platforms, including Instagram, Telegram, and Twitter. Additionally, between 2019 and 2022, I actively participated in urban heritage safeguarding campaigns and attended diverse events aimed at academics, professionals, as well as the general public to closely observe how actors interact and to track the development of projects on the ground.

In Part One, I approach the national conservation and urban heritage planning assemblage in Iran as an ethnographic 'site' of observation.

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31   For instance, see: Colin McFarlane, 'The City as Assemblage: Dwelling and Urban Space', *Environment and Planning: Society and Space* 29, no. 4 (2011): 649–71; Martin Müller, 'Assemblages and Actor-Networks: Rethinking Socio-Material Power, Politics and Space', *Geography Compass* 9, no. 1 (2015): 27–41; Gert De Roo and Jean Hillier, *Complexity and Planning: Systems, Assemblages and Simulations* (Routledge, 2016); Tom Baker and Pauline McGuirk, 'Assemblage Thinking as Methodology: Commitments and Practices for Critical Policy Research', *Territory, Politics, Governance* 5, no. 4 (2017): 425–42.

32   Baker and McGuirk 2017.

33   Stephen M Lochetto, 'Hybrid Ethnography: Online, Offline, and In Between', 2022.

In a manner akin to ethnographic architectural research,[34] my primary method of data collection is observation. In practical terms, I approach archival and published sources of data, such as legal texts, news, administrative charts and regulations, academic publications, photographs, and maps, with a perspective similar to an ethnographer viewing ethnographic artefacts.

Semi-structured interviews are conducted with academics, practitioners, and the general public, but these are treated as supplementary data sources. This approach is adopted because the human actors themselves are observed as participants within the assemblage. Thus, their viewpoints, while not determinative, are nevertheless influential in shaping the research results. On occasion, data collected from semi-structured interviews is further supported by brief telephone interviews and text/voice message surveys. It is crucial to note that the interviews were all conducted with consent; however, most are not attributed by name to safeguard the anonymity of the interviewees who might otherwise face negative repercussions.

During data analysis, I organized the data concerning different actors into thematic clusters, categorizing them based on the domains wherein they could be found. The more closely two actors shared a theme, the more interconnected they were within the assemblage. By mapping the alliances among actors in each historical period, I depicted the trajectories of the urban heritage assemblage, shedding light on its historical turning points. In the final illustration (see Figure 62), you can see how actors have collectively shaped the urban heritage planning assemblage in Iran through their involvement in territorializing and de-territorializing its structures.

The first part of the book indicates that from the early 1900s to 2022, the evolution of urban heritage planning in Iran is characterized by recurring cycles of struggle to establish an ordered and territorialized official heritage planning system in cities. Yet, with each shift in the political

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34   Linda Groat and David Wang, *Architectural Research Methods*, 2nd ed. (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2013).

landscape, the progress made in territorializing heritage planning and conservation experiences setbacks or significant alterations.

Part Two contextualizes and problematizes the national urban heritage assemblage in Tehran. This section places emphasis on examining heritage planning procedures within the area officially outlined as Tehran's official historic zone. It is worth noting that the decision to problematize urban conservation policies in Tehran has several motivations. First, the city offers valuable insights into the diverse challenges that heritage planning encounters in the context of a rapidly developing Iranian megacity. Second, as the capital, Tehran has played a pivotal role in shaping the modern national identity of Iranians and in assembling the structures of the conservation and heritage planning bureaucracy in Iran. Lastly, the risk of losing what little is left of its built heritage positions Tehran as a setting where the consequences of overly practised reconstruction of lost monuments can be contemplated and examined.

Here, the ethnographic research narrows to the local dynamics of urban heritage assemblage in Tehran, encompassing the informal elements integral to this assemblage. Data collection and thematic categorization of the data follow the rationale explained in Part One. The only methodological difference is the inclusion of data collected through ethnographic research in the physical urban setting of Tehran's city centre. The main conclusion of this part is that, situated in a short-term society, the urban heritage assemblage in Tehran has no choice but to turn a blind eye to the long-term and accumulated unresolved economic, spatial, and socio-political conflicts surrounding public space in the city centre.

In the conclusion chapter, the identified tendencies of the investigated assemblage take centre stage, prioritizing insights over recommendations. While the chapter does not offer practical suggestions, the understanding of recurring behaviours provides potential glimpses into the assemblage's future tendencies if the current conditions persist. Amidst the prevailing political and ideological landscape in Iran and the Middle East, the hope of providing urban heritage planning with a sturdy foundation seems to be fading, and this poignant revelation stands as a pivotal finding of this research.