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Dwelling, Dispute, and the
Space of Modern Iran

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AT the end of the nineteenth century, a group of Iranian reformist intellectuals began to criticize the effectiveness of the rule of the Qajar dynasty (1794–1925).¹ After Nasir al-Din Shah's assassination in 1896, Iran saw a vital new period due to the expansion of modern schools and the growth of publications with themes ranging from geographical discoveries and political conflicts to scientific developments and adventure novels. These educational venues afforded the Iranian public insights into the world beyond their own country.² The 1906 constitutional revolution led the parliament to draft laws enacting more centralized state control, but the political turmoil of World War I put the intended reforms on hold. It was not until the founding of the new Pahlavi dynasty by Reza Shah that the country underwent major infrastructural reforms affecting the look of its cities and residential neighborhoods.

During Reza Shah's reign (1925–1941) the norms for urban public spaces were dramatically altered, not only through the construction of wide streets, new shops, and modern administrative buildings but also by the introduction of public areas for social interaction and entertainment. The development of transportation infrastructure and the revamping of such services as schooling and health care, together with the new cinemas and parks, brought about an expansion of the public sphere. By the 1920s educational reforms had helped produce a homogeneous modern middle class, much of which was employed by governmental institutions.³ Mindful of the destructive side effects of industrialized urban modernity, the government tried its best to prevent disorder and to create a society made up of educated, disciplined, and productive individuals.⁴ This required the expansion of new state-run projects regarding the population's well-being even beyond the traditional areas of taxation, levying

soldiers, and preventing anarchy.⁵ The improvement of home life as a major factor in making Iranian society healthier and more productive received further attention during the early Pahlavi period. More than ever before, women's magazines and the press proclaimed the importance of the actual residence itself and its impact on the health of the family and society as a whole.

The discourse of domesticity gradually crept into the field of state policy, which sought to build better homes.⁶ During the reign of Reza Shah, housing development plans were implemented mostly through foreign contractors. From the 1920s until 1951, when Iran nationalized the oil industry and evicted the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, such oil cities as Abadan and Masjid Suleiman saw massive expansion to house laborers and oil-industry specialists who had arrived from the United States, Europe, India, and the Persian Gulf states.⁷ Many other foreign architectural firms and consultants were involved in the building of residential neighborhoods in Iran's industrialized cities, among which were the Scandinavian consortium SENTAB (Svenska Entreprenad Aktiebolaget) and the Austro-Hungarian industrial enterprise Škoda. In addition, there was the housing for trans-Iranian railroad-company employees constructed mostly by Italian consultants.⁸ These projects were accomplished according to foreigners' specifications, and it was not until the beginning of Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlavi's reign (1941–1979) that the Iranian government itself began to formulate standards for housing. These codes were implemented through a number of development plans.

As Iranians struggled to come to terms with the country's identity on the brink of widespread Westernization, the house and its contents became one focus in the clash of traditional ways with the pressure to modernize and achieve a better standard of living. This topic gave rise to much fervent political debate and also to many discussions about moral and ethical problems within Iranian society. Contemporary writers in Iran watched the process of domestic modernization with doubt and called instead for reform of the cultural and moral character of the families who would occupy the newly constructed houses. Although Western ideas were certainly catalysts and influences in the movement to bring Iran into step with up-to-date and possibly beneficial technology in the home, Iranians themselves were actively engaged on a local level in figuring out which aspects of contemporary Western home life actually worked for them and which did not. The outcome depended on the question of adjusting a national and personal identity to rapidly changing times—something that only the people of Iran themselves would ultimately be able to do.

Not at Home: The Home Economics of the Left

Between 1941, when Reza Shah was forced to abdicate, and 1953, with its coup against democratically elected Prime Minister Mohammed Mosaddeq (in

office 1951–1953) sponsored by the American CIA and the British MI-6, political activists in Iran experienced a freedom of expression and free elections not previously permitted. At that time the most prominent Marxist group was the Tudeh party, whose activities were not only political but also cultural. *Bidari-e Ma* (Our awakening), the women's bimonthly publication of the pro-Communist Tudeh party, presents a vivid picture of the latter enterprises.⁹ Its writers considered coveting new fashions and the latest household commodities to be irrational, and encouraged women to "go local" rather than to rely on imported medicines and cosmetics. The healing properties of water, for example, were stressed: drinking plenty of water was seen as the key to beauty, and water was said to be able to heal most bodily ailments, including nervousness and anxiety. Creative methods for recycling disposable materials were also presented. Above all, working outside the home was encouraged. In an October 1944 article titled "Home and Its Limits in the Modern Age," contributor Farah Laqa Alavi emphasized the statement that most of women's traditional responsibilities (such as training children, preparing food, and so on) should now be taken care of by the society at large beyond the confines of the home.¹⁰ In step with early Soviet ideology, the main concern of *Bidari-e Ma* was to get women out of the house.

This rejection of domesticity was more vividly addressed through the symbolic way in which the magazine represented the nation as a house inimical not only to women but to all Iranian citizens. The cover of every issue featured the headline, "We [Iranian women] also have Rights in this House." Writing in the first issue of *Bidari-e Ma* (in June 1944), in an article titled "Bidar shavid!" [Wake up!], contributor Maryam Firouz (founder of the women's branch of the Tudeh party) regarded Iranian society as a dark house filled with cigarette and opium fumes. Under the influence of these drugs, the people trapped in this house had become listless and lazy. They did not even bother with opening the windows to let in fresh air. The home's residents sometimes saw the beautiful outside through this curtain, but because of their fatigue, they found it almost impossible to reach the outside. The author mentioned that although men sometimes had a chance to get close to this window and possibly get some fresh air, women were always forced away from it and had no opportunity to access the world outside.¹¹ The house and its tasks were seen as the reason for the limitation of female life.

Domesticity was thus rejected altogether, and the magazine deemed Soviet society to be the most advanced when it came to the affairs of women and families. Quoting the Iranian Marxist and Tehran University professor Said Nafisi, who periodically paid visits to Russia to attend cultural events, the magazine portrayed Soviet women as open-minded and active in the public sphere. The magazine also reported that despite their simple look and modest outfits, Soviet women possessed a unique natural beauty that surpassed women of other na-

tions.¹² “Hard work has allowed these women to stay fresh and in shape,” he wrote. “There is hardly any fat or out-of-shape woman and most of the time you see young women around you. It seems as if the Soviet woman never gets old.”¹³ Nafisi seems to have been captivated by the views of Bolshevik activist Aleksandra Kollontai, who depicted the ideal Communist woman as a very simple and slim type.¹⁴

The more popular Iranian newspapers did not describe Soviet life in such positive terms. In a 1952 article titled “Love in the Soviet Union,” the popular biweekly *Taraqqi* (Progress) reported on the difficulties of married life in Russia. A caption to a picture portraying a family jammed into a small bedroom reads, “Family life in Russia: Most families have no more than one or two bedrooms.”¹⁵ While acknowledging that love and family life were different before Stalinist times, the newspaper still found these domestic issues in the early days of the Soviet Union to be problematic. Featuring passages from Kollontai, the article refers to the time of Lenin, when free love, antimarriage, and antimogamist thoughts were advocated by some.¹⁶ As a result of these ideas, the Soviets were not only endangering needed population increase but also causing high rates of abortion and single-motherhood.¹⁷ Such criticisms of the USSR had increasingly occupied the pages of the popular press since the late 1940s and were not unfounded.

The Azerbaijan Crisis of 1946, when the Soviets threatened to overstay their wartime occupation of parts of Iran, became one of the major means that shifted the United States to a Cold War mind-set.¹⁸ The American struggle to keep Iran from communism led to the 1953 CIA and MI-6 sponsorship of the coup against Prime Minister Mosaddeq. This marked the beginning of heavy U.S. support for the Pahlavi monarchy.¹⁹ In its effort to prevent Iran from falling into Soviet hands, the American government did not restrict itself to “political” means alone. In fact, the United States hoped that a “quiet diplomacy,” instead of war and violence, would produce the desired results. “You should not start to fight if you cannot win; sometimes just to be right is enough.”²⁰ This statement came from a short American film made soon after the Azerbaijan Crisis. The documentary opens with a speech by U.S. president Harry Truman about Iran and goes on to celebrate America’s success in the Azerbaijan conflict, saving “a small nation” from becoming Communist. Interestingly, Iran was personified in this film as a bride at a village wedding. The ceremony is upset by the approach of Russian soldiers but as soon as help from the United States arrives and the Soviets are driven away, the ceremony takes place and the whole village comes to life. Spring replaces the dark winter, and nature’s beauty blossoms.

However, by 1951 economic and political relations between Iran and the Soviet Union were already reestablished, and a demarcation agreement was signed in Tehran by a Soviet-Iranian joint commission. This Soviet-Iranian rap-

port prompted Associate Justice William O. Douglas of the U.S. Supreme Court to assert that “we [the United States] will write their history instead of letting Soviet Russia do it.”²¹ American foreign-policy makers became determined to furnish Iran with ideas, commodities, and technologies in an effort to integrate the underdeveloped country into the global capitalist economy. In this sense, the agenda of Truman’s Point IV Program of economic aid to Iran shared much in common with the broader post–World War II discourse of international development, which sought improvement in such sectors as health care, education, agriculture, housing, and urban planning.

Model Homes: Reforming Domestic Skills

In addition to building dams and roads, improving rural life, and eradicating numerous contagious diseases, the Point IV Program for Iran established a home economics department supervised by the U.S. Department of Education.²² The affairs of women, along with their families and homes, were a focus of American intervention in Iran. Part of the program looked to improve the Iranian woman’s domestic situation.²³ Helping young women to create a less labor-intensive way of life and to develop “good taste” in decorating and furnishing their homes was seen as a pathway leading eventually to an improved economy.²⁴ Inevitably this approach indirectly stimulated a desire for Western commodities.

Despite earlier efforts, systematic and nationwide transformation of Iranian home life had to wait until after World War II, when the financial and technical assistance provided by the Point IV Program reached Iran. Changes brought about by the program were not in and of themselves unique, as hygiene and domestic improvements had been a focus of Iranian reformers and missionaries to the country since the second half of the nineteenth century. The novelty lay in that these changes indirectly reoriented the Iranian economy toward mass-market consumption even though the project’s emphasis was placed on supplying women with new skills and know-how in the domestic sphere. Bernice W. King, the attaché to the U.S. Department of Education and head of its Home Economics Department in Iran, conducted extensive research in Iran.²⁵ According to her, the introduction of Western domestic furnishings and Western models of living “gave a real opportunity . . . to raise the level of living for the country as a whole.”²⁶ For home economics specialists, developing an appreciation for discipline and order in bodily habits and effecting changes in Iranian home life were crucial. The 1959 Moscow “Kitchen Debate” between the USSR premier Nikita Khrushchev and the U.S. president Richard Nixon demonstrated that Cold War animosities functioned on wildly diverse levels and featured not just missiles and spheres of interest but also automobiles, washing machines, and toaster ovens.

The Point IV Program's Division of Education and Training began its work by setting up a unit for home economics in the capital.²⁷ Later similar units were established in other cities.²⁸ The programs were designed for girls of high-school age and took place in model houses built for the purpose, wherein the students were to spend the hours allotted to homemaking and then return to their high schools for the remainder of their classes. Point IV specialists planned to help these young Iranian women refine their domestic skills; improve the quality of their food and cooking methods; consider their family's health and hygiene; and develop "good taste" in decorating and furnishing their homes, through which process they would be able to create more labor-saving kitchens and living rooms on their own. The desired result was illustrated in the actual arrangements of the model houses and were intended to serve as preliminary blueprints for future Iranian homes. The models' design ran from landscaping at street front to color combinations for each room—including furnishings, walls, floors, and ceilings—as well as the china, wood, silver, and glassware to be used. Each of the model houses was furnished with upholstered sofas, coffee tables, armchairs, and such. Rooms with specific uses, such as the dining room, were configured according to American ideas based on a small nuclear family. However, modes of familial interaction and privacy in the model homes differed from those prevalent in the usual Iranian courtyard house lived in by an extended family (figure 6.1).

In most Iranian cities the traditional plan was an open rectangular courtyard with rooms on two or four sides. These rooms often housed members of an extended family in single-family units. During the day each single-family unit ate in the same room where at nighttime the family would spread its cushions and blankets for sleeping. Such quintessential Western spaces as the dining room and living room were not immediately identifiable in the traditional Iranian house, which was more of an amorphous communal unit wherein multiple functions often took place in a single room. The courtyard house evolved from the geographic, topographic, and climatic conditions of various regions in Iran, and the overall arrangement of the interior of such a house was based on kin relations; although it was not just the structure of the family that determined the specific architectural layout. In the traditional house some herbs and vegetables were grown in the courtyard, and much of the comestible meat and dairy products came from animals raised on the premises. Many of these homes included the addition of an isolated courtyard (*narinjistan*). Its small scale and four thick walls retained the warmer daytime air and thus made possible the growing of citrus fruits that would otherwise be impossible given the cold desert winters of arid areas. The traditional house was a self-contained entity. The introduction of different recipes and new rituals in meal preparation and in dining required revised spatial arrangements. The availability of new products to fill these dif-



Figure 6.1. An example of suggested interior designs for the living room at Shiraz Division. Source: The Album of the Home Economics Department, Division of Education and Training, U.S. Department of Education, 1954, n.p. By permission from the Library of Congress. Photo courtesy of the U.S. Department of Education.

ferent spaces transformed the holding's previous economic sufficiency into a fledgling unit of consumer spending.

In the Point IV curriculum, besides food preparation, spatial arrangement, and the choice of furniture, there was also the subject of body position to be achieved through the "table service and etiquette" portion of the program. The disciplined female figures stand out in the photographs taken by staff members of the Point IV Division of Education and Training.²⁹ The schooling was meant to change both the thinking of the Iranian housewife and her actual positioning and movements within the home through the formation of "rational habits" in place of the "mindless routines," in the American educational reformer John Dewey's sense of the expression.³⁰ To avoid the inefficient pitfalls of traditional housework in Iran, such as sweeping the floor with a short broom or cooking while squatting on the floor (figure 6.2), it was deemed necessary to follow Dewey's principle of developing critical self-awareness so "that habits be formed which are more intelligent, more sensitively percipient, more informed with foresight, more aware of what they are about, more direct and sincere."³¹ Although it is hard to trace the actual ways in which Point IV special-

ists adapted educational principles advocated by Dewey, drawing a connection between U.S. educational policies abroad and contemporaneous pedagogical themes espoused by important American didacts does not seem farfetched. In fact, the desire to inculcate “rational habits” in a traditional society represents a microcosm of the Point IV Program’s larger agenda: “Nations, like men, must learn to crawl before they can walk.”³²

Training included efforts to make Iranian women rethink their “place” within the home, in a quite literal sense (figure 6.3). Every step of women’s activities within the kitchen was recorded. Mopping the floor or cleaning the

Figure 6.2. An Iranian woman cooking at a traditional stove while in a seated position. *Source:* The Album of the Home Economics Department, Division of Education and Training, U.S. Department of Education, 1954, n.p. By permission from the Library of Congress. Photo courtesy of the U.S. Department of Education.



Figure 6.3. Students in the kitchen in a Tehran school. *Source:* The Album of the Home Economics Department, Division of Education and Training, U.S. Department of Education, 1954, n.p. By permission from the Library of Congress. Photo courtesy of the U.S. Department of Education.



windows (activities that undoubtedly existed before) took on new meanings as performed by women dressed in Western attire (figures 6.4 and 6.5). In fact, what in many cases may have been “mindless routine” suddenly became a “rational habit” when performed within the confines of the model house. The whole program was bound to new environments, garments, furniture, and appliances.³³ Without encountering this new economy, Iranian women could hardly become modernized. The model and its contents became a new “habitus” (in French anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu’s sense of the term). Although at first glance the program seems geared toward women, the rhetoric of masculinity and femininity worked powerfully to reconstruct the identity of both sexes. Certainly, changes in cooking, hygiene, and other domestic activities that were taught at school meant that a new female desire was being created for Western products to use in advanced kitchens and houses. These innovations also tended to bring about a new male desire concerning both the house and the housewife. Not long after the program began, some Iranian men remarked that they “would not marry any girl who had not received some of the new training in the Home Economics.”³⁴

Morphing Homes: Household Consumption Patterns in Transition

For obvious reasons the Point IV Program kept its rhetoric far from questions of market transformation and preferred instead to emphasize the more innocuous terms of “official home life” and “healthier life-styles.” Nonetheless, these boilerplates occasionally revealed their hand most transparently. Something as simple as readymade ice cubes helped to create a market for ice storage devices and other related facilities for the mass production of ice for household consumption. Ice cubes were first introduced to a large majority of Iranians by the Point IV specialists in the early 1950s, ostensibly for health purposes. Until that time people in rural areas and smaller cities used to collect the supposedly unhealthy natural ice at the bases of mountains. When Point IV specialists had a hard time convincing people not to use this naturally occurring and hence free ice, as in Isfahan, they resorted to making the easily accessible free sources undesirable by contaminating them with colored liquids.³⁵

Not long after this occasion, the American York Corporation introduced facilities for manufacturing readymade ice cubes and ice storage devices.³⁶ Imported home appliances found a growing number of consumers as American companies (more than any other Western companies)—such as General Electric, Carrier Corporation, Hoover Company, McGraw Edison, Electric Bond and Share Company (EBASCO), Coleman, International Harvester, Emerson Electric, and CertainTeed—introduced their building materials, cooler chests, washing machines, vacuum cleaners, ovens, dishwashers, and shiny utensils into

Figures 6.4 and 6.5. Students learn how to clean the house at a school in Shiraz. *Source:* The Album of the Home Economics Department, Division of Education and Training, U.S. Department of Education, 1954, n.p. By permission from the Library of Congress. Photo courtesy of the U.S. Department of Education.



Iranian kitchens. By the final months of the Pahlavi regime (in late 1978), the Public Service Company of Iran (Shirkat-i sirvis-i hamigani Iran), which distributed appliances from companies ranging from American Philco, Hoover, and General Electric to the British Indesit, had established itself in twenty-two cities.³⁷

The distributor encouraged its regular customers to buy even more appliances by launching a lottery competition whose winner would receive a round-trip ticket to England, along with ten days' accommodation at a quality London hotel.³⁸ Over the next couple of decades, American exports to Iran expanded so that by the second half of the 1970s, the Iranian market was saturated with them—from the fast food of Kentucky Fried Chicken to Westinghouse refrig-

erators. In 1970 the value of U.S. exports to Iran amounted to \$326 million, while from 1970 to 1973 this figure increased significantly and then more than doubled over the next five years.³⁹ The demand for these commodities, as the anthropologist Arjun Appadurai has put it in another context, eventually became a “socially regulated and generated impulse, not an artifact of individual whims or needs.”⁴⁰

In 1966 this consumerist approach expanded to envisioning the form of future residential neighborhoods in the capital. Victor Gruen, an Austrian-born commercial architect known for introducing gigantic malls into American cities (thus earning him the moniker “the architect of the American dream”), proposed a new design for Tehran, a certain indication that consumerism in the Iranian capital had gained a firm foothold.⁴¹ A utopian project, Gruen’s comprehensive or master plan for Tehran surely enough included residential complexes that were developed around shopping malls (figure 6.6).⁴² These neighborhoods were also suitable for “an automobile society” in a capital that, in Gruen’s mind, was a rapidly growing business and holiday center in the region.⁴³ The diagrams and illustrations of his master plan presented an ideal life realized through the city’s revamped form. Unlike earlier initiatives, Gruen’s design for Tehran was neither geometricized nor smothered in strategies for order and control. The plan was programmed to accommodate commercial markets and to facilitate the movement of automobiles.⁴⁴

By the end of Muhammad Reza Shah Pahlavi’s regime in 1979, Gruen’s plan was only partially realized; but as early as 1950, many Iranians (including those in smaller cities) had already begun to remodel their homes based on recently available commodities and technologies. The introduction of new appliances, furniture, and building materials resulted not only in the construction of modern neighborhoods and houses but also in the refurbishment of already existing traditional domestic structures. It is important to grasp the manner in which Iranian notions regarding domesticity were evolving, rather than understanding home modernization as merely a top-down imposition dictated by Cold War politics. The discourse targeting a more hygienic environment successfully persuaded Iranians to change their homes. Large glass windows allowed natural light into rooms, replacing dark-colored windows. Cement tiles or mosaics (*muzaik*) paved the muddy courtyards. The introduction of Western appliances altered the physical appearance of the house even further.

The Iranian contemporary architect Ali Saremi has traced this transformation in a single courtyard family house built in 1921 in the northwestern city of Zanjan.⁴⁵ Saremi described what he considered to be five distinct stages that occurred over the course of the decade from 1950 to 1960. During this time new building materials and appliances either transformed the rooms serving traditional functions into new spaces with novel purposes, or eliminated par-

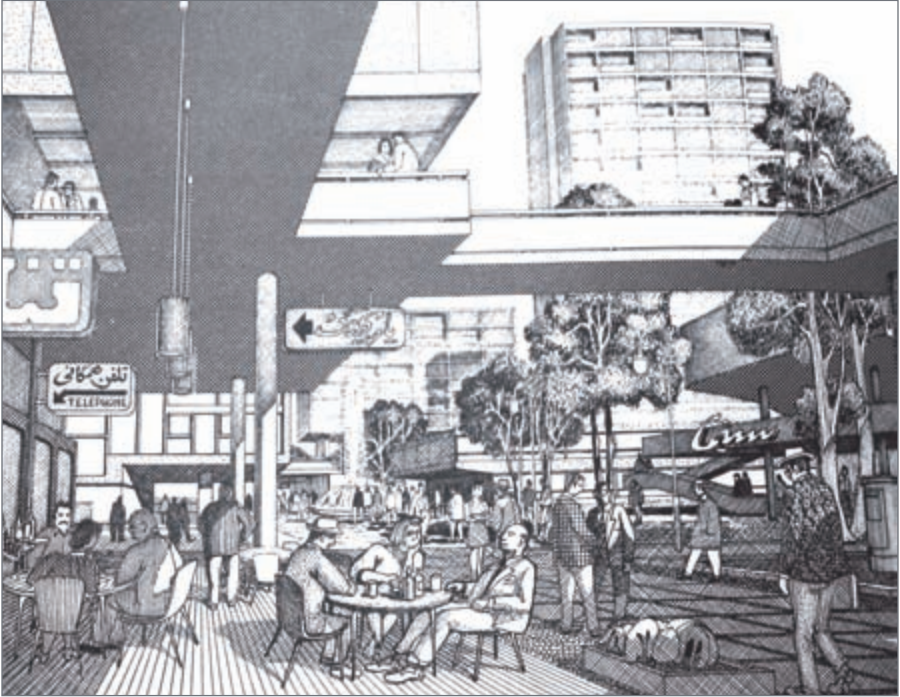


Figure 6.6. A sketch of an upper-class neighborhood (with the shopping mall at the center) from the proposed master plan for Tehran. Source: Consultancy report produced by Victor Gruen and Abdol Aziz Farman Farmaian of Tehran, 1966, n.p. Courtesy of the archives of Iran's Organization of Finances and Planning (Sazman-i barnameh va budjeh).

ticular spaces altogether. First, iron beams replaced the old wooden beams that had earlier been topped with a gabled metal roof (the addition of the gabled roof itself was a Western phenomenon and had become popular at the beginning of the twentieth century). Second, the use of gas for cooking as well as heating made possible the removal of the old masonry charcoal-burning oven in the kitchen and allowed more space for the new electric refrigerator. Third, the addition of a washing machine, vacuum cleaner, and other time-saving appliances eliminated the need for a maid; thus the vacated maid's room became another bedroom.

The fourth step involved the plumbing. Formerly the toilet was in a corner of the home's courtyard, and the neighborhood's public baths obviated any need for a shower in the home. New plumbing helped bring both the toilet and a shower inside the precincts of the house. *Huzkhanih*, the traditional summer room with its small pool, was turned into a simple shower area.⁴⁶ In eastern cities this room was also a ventilation wind tower or wind catcher.⁴⁷ Plumbing also left no use for the pool in the middle of the courtyard. The pool was there-

fore filled and covered with mosaic, allowing more clear space within the yard for parking an automobile. Finally, bringing the car into the yard also required the removal of little flower boxes, the widening of the traditional vestibule, and the replacement of the small wooden double entry doorway (with its two different-sounding door knockers to indicate the visitor's gender) by a large metal gate.

The process of transforming a house through the introduction of Western ideas and products shows the extent to which post-World War II changes in home life were impacted by Iranians' desires regarding the modernization of their homes (not counting these changes as a mere consequence of direct U.S. initiatives and other Western interventions). One also finds a surfeit of modernizing—even Westernizing—tropes throughout the popular media of the period. For instance, an article titled “How Do You Sit?” from a 1946 issue of *Taraqqi* (Progress) emphasized that one demonstrates a certain level of sophistication by using a chair, a piece of furniture that did not exist in traditional homes. The author claims that the people featured in the article are genuine Americans and encourages his readers to model their sitting habits after the gentlemen and ladies of New York City.⁴⁸ One picture shows an Iranian man with his legs crossed on the desk in front of him, with a caption indicating that the “newly Americanized Iranian youth” who follows this manner of sitting does not realize that well-cultivated New Yorkers would never position themselves like this.⁴⁹ Such visually assisted advice gave rise to specific habits in using imported furniture. The modernizing vision did not pertain to the mere acquisition of Western furniture and appliances but also to their use, replete with social fears about potential faux pas in the encounter with a new material environment. After World War II, Iranians sought to keep up both with Western consumers and with compatriots who had earlier acquired foreign products.

Consider an ad from a 1950 issue of the popular magazine *Tehran musavvar* (Illustrated Tehran) (figure 6.7). A woman stands by a wide-open Electrolux refrigerator filled with food, as she says in Farsi: “My Electrolux refrigerator, which works with both electricity and gas, has made my friends envious.”⁵⁰ This ad becomes more interesting when seen against some of the postwar American literature on the subject of economic development. In his 1953 book *Problems of Capital Formation in Underdeveloped Countries*, the Estonian American economist Ragnar Nurkse wrote that “in developing countries, the growing awareness of advanced living standards does not depend on the idea of ‘keeping up with the Joneses.’”⁵¹ He added: “The propensity to spend . . . depends on . . . demonstration leading to imitation. Knowledge of or contact with new consumption patterns opens one's eyes to previously unrecognized possibilities. It widens the horizon of imagination and desires. It is not just the matter of social snobbishness.”⁵² However, Nurkse's pronouncement falls somewhat short in the Iranian case.

Traditional Iran was certainly not devoid of “Joneses”-type expressions. The well-known saying “chishm u ham chishmi” (being concerned about one’s appearance and status after seeing those of others) could well be an equivalent of “keeping up with the Joneses.” Nonetheless, Nurkse’s account helps us understand how, at least in part, the desire for consumption of foreign goods in



Figure 6.7. The caption reads: “My Electrolux refrigerator which works with both electricity and gas has made my friends envious.” Source: *Tehran musavvar* 385 (Day 1329/December 1950), n.p. Image courtesy of Princeton University Libraries.

Iran explicitly resorted to such socializing devices. The Electrolux refrigerator ad exemplifies this production of desire; it shows how both the idea of “keeping up with the Joneses” and the imitation of foreign modes of living epitomized the Iranians’ desire to be modern. The push for change within the domestic milieu was thus driven by two coterminous “envies”: by Iranians’ standing in relation to their neighbors and by Iran’s position relative to the more technologically advanced Western countries.⁵³ This petit-bourgeois tendency has been well described by the French anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu. “In order to survive in the world of their aspirations,” he wrote, “they are condemned to ‘live beyond their means’ and to be constantly attentive and sensitive, hypersensitive, to the slightest signs of the reception given to their self representation.”⁵⁴ Iranian advertising in the mid-twentieth century seems to suggest that Iranians were meant to follow the path of the West and, like the European petit bourgeois, to “live beyond their means.”

Records from this period certainly show us that Iranian homelife had conformed to what Nurkse had already written in the early 1950s: that even though there may have been “people of ascetic bent who have no use for American gadgets, most people seem to like them. . . . The goods that form part of American consumption patterns are ‘superior.’”⁵⁵ The Point IV Program and other American- and Western-initiated efforts thus deeply impacted indigenous notions regarding the Iranian home and the practices within it in both conceptual and real senses. The results may be found in the most unlikely places, including among the pages of Ayatollah Khomeini’s illustrated *Risaleh-i Novin*. The *Risaleh* or *Tawzih al-Masai’l* is a handbook of behavior governing homelife, among other issues. It was first written down in the seventeenth century by the *mujtahids*, or highest-ranking authorities of Shiite Islam.⁵⁶ It has been revised several times during the twentieth century to correspond to Iranians’ changing life styles.⁵⁷ Khomeini’s illustrated *Risaleh-i Novin* is the most modernized version of these handbooks, both in its content and form.

Ayatollah Abdol Karim Biazar Shirazi (hereafter Shirazi) had always intended to bridge the gap between Western knowledge and traditional Shiite Islam. Illustrations helped Shirazi to fill this gap in a way that was not too removed from his intended audience’s experience. In the late 1970s Shirazi—a graduate of Montreal’s McGill University in the religious studies department who had also spent some time in the United Kingdom—translated, edited, and designed Khomeini’s *The New Risaleh*, previously available only in Arabic, titled *Tahrir al-Valisilah*, and first published in 1947.⁵⁸ The newer version, in progress for some years, was eventually released at the dawn of the revolution (1980) in four volumes, including two on personal and family matters. The Americans who attempted to reform the Iranian home in the 1950s had come from a generation that used charts and graphs, and these now rather dated materials seem to have

inspired Shirazi's editorial work. He claims that the *New Risaleh* became a best-seller and influenced the youth in exactly the same way that colorful magazines of the Shah's period had captivated them. It was able to compete with "dozens of attractive alternatives such as Marxism, and Western pop culture."⁵⁹

The commentaries in the *New Risaleh* define the modern home and practices within it from a religious perspective that sought to recalibrate the determination of the sacred and the profane, setting it within the context of modern products, situations, and activities. Khomeini's tract displays a continuous conflation of ritual purity, as required in the performance of religious obligations, with the concept of cultural purity. An important theme in the book is the dichotomy of *taharat* and *nijasad* (purity versus filth), which is seen to regulate bodily functions and habits. Shiite regulations governing water (*ahkam-i ab*) come to determine the ways in which a believer should use foreign appliances. According to *The New Risaleh*, the purity of clothes washed in the washing machine should be determined by the amount and source of water used in the appliance. Detergents have no place in this process of cleansing.⁶⁰ Likewise, the use of foreign toilets is legitimate only if one brings a bottle of water to use for washing after visiting the toilets (figure 6.8).

In attempting to bring back Iranians' everyday life to be more in line with orthodox tenets, the diagrams and charts of the *New Risaleh* were also an effort toward standardization and rationalization of religious information (figure 6.9). In this sense they embodied the Western orderliness and discipline that had long been encouraged by the Pahlavi state. The *New Risaleh* also helped translate the abstruse language of the Shiite religious texts into a popular form. In doing so, Khomeini's *New Risaleh* (albeit perhaps largely through the editorial and graphic contributions of Shirazi) sought to modify Shiite domestic practices within the context of the modernized home. Just as religious ideas in the *New Risaleh* were adapted to a modern context, the reality of everyday life in Iran from the early 1950s to the late 1970s shows that there was neither total conformity to Western life styles and commodities nor a steadfast embrace of "traditional values."

This strategy of combining foreign and traditional forms and practices may be found in both middle-class and upper-class homes. The Khodadad residence in northern Tehran is a case in point. Hossein Khodadad was an affluent merchant. In the mid-1970s, with the help of a modern Iranian architect and a local craftsman, he designed a house that used a hybrid mixture of traditional Iranian and Western architecture. The exterior seems to have been mainly inspired by older European styles. Triglyphs and metopes derived from ancient Greek temples appear on an architrave band that adorns the edge of the roof. Corinthian capitals decorate the columns, and rococo stucco reliefs replete with convoluted scrolls, tendrils, and other pliant forms shape the window frames. The windows them-



Figure 6.8. A page from Khomeini's *Tawzih al-Masai'l*, showing how to use washing machines and foreign toilets. Source: *The New Risaleh*, volume I, *Worship and the Development of Self*, edited by Abdol Karim Biazar Shirazi (Tehran: Moassisey-i Anjām Kitāb, c. 1980), 54. Courtesy of Abdol Karim Biazar Shirazi.

selves are screened by star-patterned openwork wood frames holding panels of dark-colored glass, as used in traditional Iranian courtyard homes to minimize both the intense natural light and direct visual access from outside.

The same mixed approach may be seen in the first-floor interior, where a

traditional music room, used for the reception of occasional visitors, is embellished with rococo stucco reliefs and furnished with Western-style furniture. This music chamber is a replica of that in the early seventeenth-century Ali-Qapu palace in Safavid dynasty Isfahan (1502–1736). Khodadad's music room exemplifies a plan used in many Iranian middle- and upper-class interiors: therein, a single traditional room strongly contrasts with the rest of the more modern house. Thus, although the overall plan and form of the interiors of many homes were borrowed from the West (including the furniture in them), an "Iranian room" helped preserve the grand heritage of both pre-Islamic and "Islamicate" Iran. This room was typically furnished with traditional cushions and carpets and was frequently occupied by male guests, who were often entertained with *hookah* (water pipe) and traditional music. By restricting their heritage to a single room, Iranian householders simultaneously celebrated and marginalized their traditional customs. Khodadad's house limits the custom of floor-sitting to its so-called Iranian room.

The Khodadad residence contains another room that was popular among the upper class and perhaps unintentionally mixed modern and traditional thinking. The study-office of the man of the house is itself a Western concept, but it also helped to perpetuate the importance of the male within the domestic setting. While modern homes, unlike the traditional courtyard house, certainly allowed for more flexible intermingling between men and women, they also reinforced the male's dominant family role by dedicating certain spaces to him (and his male companions), although this arrangement was often contested and then negotiated depending on the family's dynamic (figures 6.9 and 6.10).

Domesticity: The Discourse of the Deprived

By the 1970s the class status of an individual was not so much defined by the ways in which he or she used a chair, as in the 1946 issue of *Taraqqi* (Progress), but was determined primarily by whether one actually owned a chair. In the capital, owning better homes, Western-style furniture, and advanced commodities identified residents of *shomal-i shahr* (north of the city), while living in traditional homes or in shanties defined those of *jonub-i shahr* (south of the city). Within a short time period a large number of poor Iranians encountered, but were at a remove from, the abundance of Western-style material goods. They had no access to what the cultural historian Jordan Sand has described within the context of domesticity in modern Japan as a "culture of abundant knowledge."⁶¹ According to Sand, the highly literate population of late-twentieth-century Japan could connect with Western appliances and furnishings (without necessarily possessing them) through such publications as women's magazines and architectural journals. Most illiterate lower-class Iranians and the really

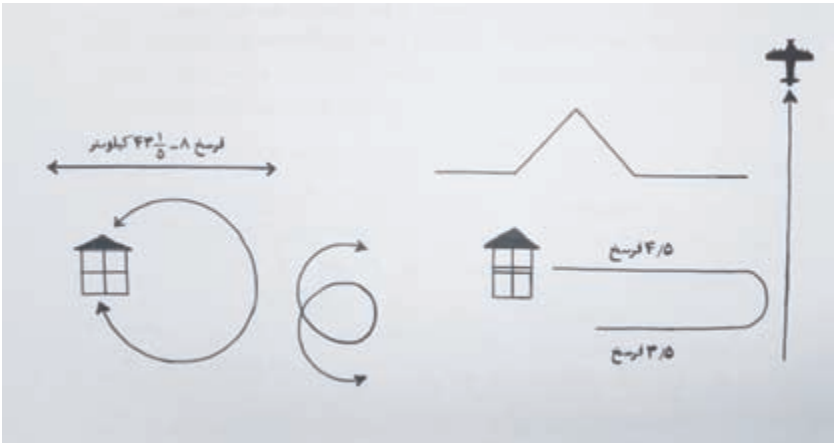


Figure 6.9. Diagrams showing rules of prayer while away from one's home. Source: *The New Risaleh*, volume 2, *Economic Issues*, edited by Abdol Karim Biazar Shirazi (Tehran: Moassisey-i Anjam Kitab, 1980), 101. Courtesy of Abdol Karim Biazar Shirazi.



Figure 6.10. Image of the interior of the Khodadad's house. The interior of the music room is a replica of the music chamber of the seventeenth-century Ali-Qapu Palace. Photograph by Pamela Karimi.

poor, however, merely witnessed the passing flow of Western commodities without being able to discern anything about the culture associated with them. Even those who found some connection confronted great difficulties in actually acquiring and possessing these Western goods.

Under the Skin of the Night (1974), a movie by Iranian filmmaker Freydoon Golé, vividly demonstrates this phenomenon. An underprivileged young Iranian man who sells tickets at a Tehran movie theater meets a young American tourist who is to leave Iran that evening. The man offers to accompany her throughout her final day in the city, and by the late afternoon the two wish to make love. As a fresh migrant to the city, however, he spends his nights in public shelters and so has no place to take her. In their wanderings, they eventually stop by a furniture shop, where they stare at a king-size bed behind the display window. The camera captures the imagination of the man as he envisions the American girl lying naked on the bed with himself at her side shortly thereafter. A group of street men watch them through the window.

By the time of the film's release, the new master bedroom for married couples—as opposed to the common sleeping room of the traditional extended family—had altered the most intimate exchanges between men and women. Sexual relations among Iranian couples had become more private and romantic. The film turned the notion of the sheltering bedroom into a stage set for public voyeurism. The scene encapsulates what the German sociologist Georg Simmel once alluded to in his 1907 work *Philosophy of Money*. It is the remoteness of the object of desire that gives it greater attraction.⁶² By the end of the movie the two main characters have left each other without having had a chance for fulfillment. For the underprivileged Iranian, the attractive American female (and also, perhaps, other foreign objects of fantasy, such as the fancy furniture in the shop) becomes iconic of what is present and within reach but ultimately inaccessible.⁶³ *Under the Skin of the Night* perfectly expresses the frustration of a disadvantaged class that has been torn from the security of traditional life but also denied the riches of a modernized society.

Indeed, this crisis of cultural identity with its feelings of anomie was not confined to the urban poor. Iranian intellectuals had many reasons to oppose the society that represented the Shah's regime. They not only thought that Iranian families were ill at ease with the imported modern life but insisted that these families were completely alienated from it. Iranian writer and social critic Jalal Al-i Ahmad addressed these concerns in his seminal book of 1962, *Occidentosis: A Plague from the West*.⁶⁴ "We are all like strangers to ourselves," he wrote, "in our food and dress, our homes, our manners . . . and, most dangerous, our culture."⁶⁵ Al-i Ahmad developed a stinging critique of Western technology. He argued that the decline of traditional Iranian industries was the beginning of Western "economic and existential victories over the East." A decade after his death, Al-i Ahmad's message became part of the ideology of the 1979 Iranian Revolution, which emphasized nationalization of industry and economic self-sufficiency.

The revolutionary elite criticized Western imports in their evaluation of the

moral character of household items and commercial goods, drawing a sharp distinction between local and foreign-made goods. Antinomies such as *halal-haram* and *taharat-nijasad*—terms once applied mainly to the human body and its environment—now were more strongly applied to imported commodities. Joint Iranian-Western enterprise (so-called montage) was considered *haram*, as described in early postrevolutionary books such as Hasan Tavaniyanfard's *Karkhanejat-i montage: Iqtisad-i shirk* (Montage factories: The sinful economy). Thus it is no surprise that later editions of Khomeini's *New Risaleh* actually excluded any and all images of Western household furniture. Architectural journals, such as *Maskan va inqilab* (Housing and the revolution), likewise rejected Western norms and encouraged pious homelife. The media showcased the “humble” household of Ayatollah Khomeini. *Kukh-neshini* (residing in shanties) stood in stark contrast to *kakh-neshini* (residing in palaces).⁶⁶ In accord with this, the revolutionary elite saw the so-called montage culture of the Shah's era as *mobtazal*, a term implying that which is corrupted, in poor taste, and slapped together.

The ideas concerning domesticity and daily life explored in this chapter show the interplay between Western initiatives and the active contributions of Iranians in refashioning or rebuffing these influences to fit their needs. Whether attempting the modification of Shiite domestic practices to be in step with modernization or criticizing Western ideas wholesale, the different voices analyzed have something in common. Rather than regarding modernization as the necessary adoption of Western institutions and norms, the protagonists introduced in this chapter were searching for alternative means by which to transform their traditional society. Most studies of Islamic domesticity give the impression that it was predominantly Westerners who shaped modern trends within the Iranian home. This chapter emphasizes the role of indigenous figures whose ideas and work should not be seen merely as a reactionary rejection of Western influence or a slavish acceptance of it but rather as a key factor in the creation of a non-Western modernity.

Notes

1. Shaul Bakhash, *Iran: Monarchy, Bureaucracy, and Reform under the Qajars: 1858–1896* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1991), 305–73.

2. Abbas Amanat, “Qajar Iran: A Historical Overview,” in *Royal Persian Paintings: The Qajar Epoch 1785–1925*, edited by Layla Diba and Maryam Ekhtiar (London: I. B. Tauris, 1999), 28.

3. Schayegh, “Sport, Health, and the Iranian Middle Class in the 1920s and the 1930s,” *Iranian Studies* 35, no. 4 (Fall 2002): 341–69; the information appears on page 342.

4. Darius M. Rejali, *Torture and Modernity: Self, State, and Society in Modern Iran* (Boul-

der: University of Colorado Press, 1994), 52; cited in Schayegh, "Sport, Health, and the Iranian Middle Class in the 1920s and the 1930s," 341–69.

5. Schayegh, "Sport, Health, and the Iranian Middle Class in the 1920s and the 1930s," 343.

6. This strategy entailed improvements, even more rigorously, in medical treatment, bodily hygiene, and public health.

7. The company that in 1909 built most of Abadan was the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (APOC), which changed its name to the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company (AIOC) in 1935. For more information about architectural undertakings in Abadan, see Mark Crinson, *Modern Architecture and the End of Empire* (London: Ashgate 2003), 53.

8. Mina Marefat, "The Protagonists Who Shaped Modern Tehran," in *Téhéran, Capitale Bicentenaire*, edited by Ch. Adle and B. Hourcade (Paris: Institut français de recherche en Iran, 1992), 102–3. Marefat refers to several sources regarding such contributions, among which are *Gozareshat* (Reports) I (1936): 21; "Italia Illustrata, numero speciale della Rivista Illustrata del Popolo d'Italia," special issue of *Italia illustrata* (1937); *Journal de Teheran* (Journal of Tehran) (March 1946), as well as multiple articles from the 1930s and 1940s in Iranian newspapers, such as *Ettela'at* (Information) and *Iran-i Emruz* (Iran today).

9. The publication was that of the Association of Women of the Tudeh Party. The magazine was edited by Zahra Eskandari-Bayat. Apart from the West and capitalism, *Bidari-e Ma* criticized the Pahlavi regime. The Tudeh Association of Women became a member of the International Democratic Foundation of Women in 1947 and was represented in international conferences in Budapest (1948) and Beijing (1949). The association was banned in 1949, and two years later it was replaced with the Democratic Association of Women. See Parvin Paidar, *Women and the Political Process in Twentieth Century Iran* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 124–25.

10. Farah Laqa Alavi, "Home and Family and Its Limits in Modern Age," *Bidari-e Ma* 3, no. 1 (Mihir 1323/October 1944): 13. In addition, the magazine criticized the harem in traditional Iranian dwellings and categorized any socioreligious ideas connected to this all-female space as superstitious; see Azam Sorush, "Societal Superstitions," in "Fundamental Reforms in Womens' Lives," *Bidari-e Ma* 2, no. 1 (Murdad 1323/August 1944): 8–10; note appears on page 10.

11. Maryam Firouz, "Wake Up!" *Bidari-e Ma* 1, no. 1 (Tir 1323/June 1944): 9–13.

12. "Interview with Said Nafisi," *Bidari-e Ma* 3, no. 2 (Shahrivar 1324/September 1945): 17–21.

13. "Interview with Said Nafisi," 21.

14. For further information about Aleksandra Kollontai's depiction of the ideal Soviet female body, see, for example, Eric Naiman, *Sex in Public: The Incarnation of Early Soviet Ideology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 208–49. It is noteworthy that in the 1920s, fashion designer Liubov Popova created outfits that intentionally obliterated the female body's curves; see Christina Kiaer, *Imagine No Possessions: The Socialist Objects of Russian Constructivism* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005), 132.

15. Under the Soviets the vast majority of the urban population lived under cramped conditions. In 1926 per capita living space in Moscow was 5.7 square meters. In 1956 the figure had been reduced to 4.8 square meters. This decrease was generally duplicated throughout the country and was sometimes even more dramatic. See James Bater, *The Soviet City: Ideal and Reality* (London: Arnold, 1980), 100; cited on 477 of Robert Porter,

"The City in Russian Literature: Images Past and Present," *Modern Language Review* 94, no. 2 (April 1999): 476–85.

16. Two other major advocates were philosophers Vladimir Solov'ev (1853–1900) and Nikolai Berdiaev (1874–1948), for whom birth represented the "bad infinity of physical reproduction." It was a reminder of the change of generations and of the seeming inevitability of human decay. See Naiman, *Sex in Public*, 28–31.

17. "In Russia Marriage Is Very Easy but Divorce Is Extremely Difficult," *Taraqqi* 9, no. 37/473 (Bahman 1331/February 1952): 6, 22.

18. This mention of Azerbaijan refers to a Turkish province in northwestern Iran and not what was then a Soviet province or what is now the independent country of Azerbaijan. The crisis in 1946 stemmed from a Soviet refusal to relinquish Iranian territories that had been occupied by the Red Army since 1942.

19. Following World War II, oil and military deals as well as America's technical assistance strengthened the contacts between Iranians and Americans. By 1979 some thirty thousand Americans were living in Iran.

20. Motion Picture Archives, MP 72-65, reel I, Harry S. Truman Library and Museum, Independence, Missouri.

21. In his 1950 speech at the University of Tehran, Douglas said that Iran needed a reform program of "perhaps 10% communism, 15% capitalism, and 75% something else." See John Donovan, *U.S. and Soviet Policy in the Middle East 1945–1956* (New York: Facts on File, 1972), 97–98.

22. The Point IV Program was established to promote U.S. foreign policy and to assist with the development of certain economically underdeveloped countries. The program's section in Iran was meant to improve Iranian industry, communication, transportation, general services, housing, and labor efficiency. The process was carried out through joint operations involving American officials and various Iranian ministries, agencies, and institutions. See *Act of July 1, 1951–June 30, 1952 on The Point Four Program in Iran Report* (Tehran: Agriculture College of the University of Tehran, 1952).

23. It is noteworthy that of the total budget of \$85,620,000 for the Point IV Program for the Near East and Africa, Asia and the Far East, as well as the so-called American Republics (Latin America), \$17,306,400 was dedicated to health; \$8,998,950 was intended for education; and only \$1,200,600 was allocated for housing. The largest portion of the funding, \$18,389,550, was set aside for agriculture and forestry. See "The Point IV Program," Foreign Relations, Rockefeller Reports, box 62, Harry S. Truman Library and Museum, Independence, Missouri.

24. Other initiatives included providing scholarships for supporting the education of young women at American colleges and universities. In addition, each year the Iranian Department of Education sent a high-school girl to attend the annual *New York Herald Tribune* Forum for High Schools. See the Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tehran, Iran, box 72, file 23: "Americans' Promotion of Health and Culture of Other Nations," no. 1/9 (June 5, 1953). It is important to note that the main agenda of the Point IV Program was to "help people to help themselves." As a 1949 article from the *Washington Post* reports: "Like the Marshall Plan, [the Point IV] has been a program of helping others to help themselves through cooperative effort," *Washington Post*, June 12, 1949, 3.

25. From 1952 to 1962, King served as a home economist educator in such countries as Egypt, Iran, Lebanon, and Turkey.

26. Bernice W. King, 1954, U.S. Office of Education, Home Economics, Division of Education and Training, lot 9235 (G) LC P&P, box 1 of 3, Library of Congress. The program's extensive research was conducted by King and her crew. She wrote: "The same basic needs were found everywhere. . . . After countless interviews, much digging into grass root needs, close observation of girls' schools of secondary level and homes of the destitute, the very poor, and the average and the wealthy, I was able to dream a dream and was ready to try to make that dream come true."

27. The homemaking programs in Iran were modeled after instructions that by the 1950s had existed in the United States for more than half a century. American homemaking educational programs in themselves dated back to the late 1860s. According to the architectural historian Gwendolyn Wright, most home economist specialists wanted to educate a great many consumers rather than a few good women designers. Moreover, greater standardization in American houses seemed a sign of democratic equality, a presumption that greater similarity between individual dwellings would create a more homogenous community. Therefore, in the American context the concern was not just to break with the unprofessional and unhygienic environment of older houses, but rather ideologically to effect change in larger aspects of culture. Gwendolyn Wright, *Moralism and the Model Home* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 164–66.

28. In addition to these efforts, the Education and Training Division of Point IV offered courses in Tehran that intended exclusively to "familiarize [Iranians] somewhat with life in the United States." This program included informal talks, panel discussions, and films. Attending the program was a requirement especially for those students who were to be sent to the United States for university education. See William E. Warne's personal letter to Reza Djaffari, at that time Iran's minister of education, in the National Archives of Iran, Tehran, box 297019988, folder 01452API, microfilm no. 121–44 (August 24, 1954). It is also noteworthy that the Cultural Branch (shu'bih farhangi) of the Point IV Program in Tehran organized regular evening gatherings that allowed the interaction of Point IV workers with Iranian officials and their families; see the National Archives of Iran, Tehran, box 290003684, folder 888V5ABI, microfilm no. 8–98 (1952/1331). Other cultural activities took place at various events organized by the Iranian-American Society (Anjuman-i Iran va Amrika).

29. In all likelihood these photographs were taken to be archived at the U.S. Department of Education. There is no evidence of the reproduction of these photographs in any Iranian publications, whether home economics books, women's magazines, or otherwise.

30. Martin Hollis, "The Self in Action," in *John Dewey Reconsidered*, edited by R. S. Peters (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977), 56–75; the quotation appears on 61. It is noteworthy that at the end of the nineteenth century, the body began to be understood as a mechanical element of industrial productivity and an extension of the factory apparatus. "Scientific management" as promoted by Frederick Taylor, also known as Taylorism, sought to rationalize and standardize the body's motions in order to convert it into efficient labor power. See Anson Rabinach, *The Human Motor* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).

31. John Dewey, *Human, Nature and Conduct*, part 2, section 4 (New York: Holt, 1922.), 128; quoted in Rabinach, *Human Motor*, 62.

32. Foreign Relations, Rockefeller Reports, box 62, Milo Perkins, "Point IV and U.S. Foreign Policy," p. 7, Harry S. Truman Library and Museum. This disciplining of the individual as well as the nation was different from the one at work in earlier colonial contexts where

there was “continuous supervision and control” and where the mechanical body was to be distinguished in political practice from the individual’s mind or mentality. See Timothy Mitchell, *Colonizing Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 100. The relationship between disciplining the body and creating an advanced state has been articulated by Arjun Appadurai: “The specific projects (however successful) of modern nation-state, ranging from sanitation to the census, from family planning to disease control, and from immigration control to language policy, have tied concrete bodily practices (speech, cleanliness, movement, health) to large-scale group identities, thus increasing the potential scope of embodied experiences of group affinity.” See Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 157.

33. In *Experience and Education*, Dewey draws a connection between one’s living environment and experience: “An experience is always what it is because of a transaction taking place between an individual and what, at the time, constitutes his environment. . . . The environment . . . is whatever conditions interact with personal needs, desires, purposes, and capacities to create the experience.” See John Dewey, *Experience and Education* (New York: Collier Books, 1938), 43.

34. Bernice W. King, 1954, U.S. Office of Education, Home Economics, Division of Education and Training, lot 9235 (G) LC P&P, box 1 of 2, Library of Congress. King’s assertion bears similarity to a commentary given by Henrietta W. Calvin, author of the 1918 American manuscript, *Home Economics Courses for Girls and Young Women*: “at no time can he [the returned World War I soldier] replace the woman who is well trained in home economics,” quoted in Phyllis Palmer, *Domesticity and Dirt: Housewives and Domestic Servants in the United States, 1920–1945* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989), 89. Although Point IV specialists did not provide such intense and structured programs for Iranian men, they nonetheless offered instruction for high-school boys in home economics. This included a preliminary manuscript to be later revised, published, and taught in schools for many years to come. Long considered part of a man’s homemaking duties, such building-technology subjects as patching cracks in plaster walls, repairing leaky faucets and clogged drains, designing walls and window treatments, as well as fixing electrical appliances were included in home economics courses for boys. The instructions emphasized advanced building methods. The report points out that there is no need for providing lessons on fine woodwork or other traditional crafts or decorative skills. Instead, the focus must be on such practical skills as terminating electricity-related problems. See the National Archives of Iran, Tehran, box 297014855, folder 332R5AP, microfilm no. 108–36 (1959).

35. Abbas Karbasiyan, “Tahlili bar natayij ijrai-i asl-i chahar-i Truman dar Iran” (An analysis of the consequences of Truman’s Point IV Program in Iran), *Gozarigh*, no. 701 (Day 1378/January 1999), 64–72; the information appears on 70.

36. This fact was communicated in a letter written by Ezatollah Entezam, the Iranian envoy to the Iranian embassy in Washington, D.C., addressing the Iranian ministry of finance, “*ravabet bazargani-e iran va amrika* (Iran-America Commerce Relations),” box 29, folder 26/2, letter no. 3410 (1330/1951), Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tehran.

37. “The Grand Forum of the Representatives of Philco, Hoover, and Indesit Products,” *Tehran Economist*, no. 1239 (Ordibehesht 1957/April 1978), n.p.

38. “Grand Forum of the Representatives of Philco, Hoover, and Indesit Products.”

39. Feruz Ahmed, “Iran: Subimperialism in Action,” *Pakistan Forum* (March–April 1973): 10–20; the information appears on 11.

40. Arjun Appadurai, “Introduction,” in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural*

Perspective, edited by Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 32.

41. The architectural historian M. Jeffrey Hardwick, for example, titled his book *Mall Maker: Victor Gruen, Architect of an American Dream* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).

42. The term “master plan” was first posited in 1955 by Charles M. Haar, a Harvard law professor who also collaborated with architects. It is noteworthy that the Iranian translation of this term is *Tarh-i Jami’* (or “general plan”). For a detailed discussion regarding Haar’s definition of “master plan,” see Timothy Hyde’s chapter in this edited volume. See also Charles M. Haar, “The Master Plan: An Impermanent Constitution,” *Law and Contemporary Problems* 20, no. 3 (Summer 1955): 353–418.

43. *Comprehensive Plan for Tehran, First Stage—Concept Development: The Planning Concept—Volume III*, Library of Congress Victor Gruen Collection (LoCVGC), box 45, folder 14, III-B-1-7.

44. These concepts are emphasized throughout the text of Tehran’s master plan project: “traffic and transportation planning, whereby new street networks are provided as needed to serve the growing city.” See *Comprehensive Plan for Tehran, First Stage—Concept Development: The Planning Concept—Volume III*; LoCVGC, box 45, folder 14, III-A-1-4. Similarly, utilities and their service networks had to keep pace with economic growth: “Housing design, minimum yet satisfactory building standards suited to economic growth and provision of commercial, services, and recreational facilities” (*ibid.*, III-A-3-2). My arguments about Gruen’s master plan for Tehran are inspired by George Wagner’s sharp analysis of the Fort Worth Plan. See George Wagner, “The Lair of the Bachelor,” in *Architecture and Feminism*, edited by Debra Coleman, Elizabeth Danze, and Carol Henderson (Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996), 183–203; the quotation appears on 193.

45. Ali Saremi, “Iran’s Unaccomplished Modernization in Architecture,” *Mimar* (farvardin–Ordibehisht 1385/March–April 2005): 31–36.

46. *Huzkhanih* is a summer room located beneath the *talar* (an open archway facing the courtyard). Another summer space is the *sardab*: a large, deep basement also used as a family living area during the day’s hotter hours. Although these elements are the main components of the summer area of the house, not all of them are necessarily found in all homes. See Masoud Kheirabadi, *Iranian Cities: Formation and Development* (Syracuse: University of Syracuse Press, 2000), 35–39.

47. This element is known as *badgir*, literally “wind catcher.”

48. The word used in this context is *nab*, literally “genuine.”

49. “How Do You Sit? Manners of Sitting Are Markers of One’s Identity,” *Taraqqi* 5, no. 31, series 207 (December 30, 1946): 6.

50. *Tehran musavvar* (Day 1329/December 1950), 56.

51. Ragnar Nurkse, *Problems of Capital Formation in Underdeveloped Countries* (New York: Oxford University Press, c. 1964), 61. Between 1951 and 1952 the content of this book was delivered in the form of public lectures in the United States, Brazil, and Egypt.

52. Nurkse, *Problems of Capital Formation in Underdeveloped Countries*, 61.

53. In his book *House and Home in Modern Japan: Architecture, Domestic Space, and Bourgeois Culture, 1880–1930* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), Jordan Sand provides a similar argument regarding the Japanese perception of progress in housing and home ethics in relation to those of the West. See especially 366–67.

54. Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, translated by Richard Nice (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), 345; quoted in Sand, *House and Home in Modern Japan*, 366–67.

55. Nurkse, *Problems of Capital Formation in Underdeveloped Countries*, 63.

56. The study of Islamic injunctions and laws through reasoning has been limited in accord with the principle of “sufficient necessity” (*wajib kifa’i*) to those who have the capability and are “worthy of such duty.” These individuals are called *mujtahids*. The act of following the *mujtahids* is called imitation. Shiism does not permit imitation of a dead *mujtahid*. Only a living *mujtahid* can comment on the circumstances that did not exist during the time of the deceased *mujtahids*. This marks the difference between Shi’a and Sunni Islam, when it comes to matters of everyday life. In Sunni Islam, due to a consensus of opinion (*ijma*) that happened in the tenth century, it was decided that submission to one of the four Islamic schools of law (Hanafi, Maliki, Shafii, and Hanbali) was necessary. *Ijtihad* or imitation of a school other than these four was not considered legitimate. Therefore, until recently (when some have turned away from this consensus) Sunni jurisprudence has remained the same as it was in the tenth century. See Allameh Sayyed Muhammad Hussein Tabatabaie, *Shi’a*, translated by Sayyed Hussein Nasr (Tehran: Araye Publications, 2006), 121–22.

57. The concepts of *halal* and *haram* are mostly taken from Jafer ibn Ali Yahya’s *Sharayih al-Islam fi Masai’l al-halal val haram*, whose interpretation of Islamic law is widely accepted among the Twelver Shiites—that is, those Shiites who recognize the twelve *imams* (leaders).

58. For more information regarding the history and development of *Tawzih al-Masai’l* or *Risalih* since the seventeenth century, see Ahmad Kazimi Mousavi, *Peydaish-i risalihay-i amaliyyeh va naghsh an dar gostaresh hughugh mosbateh Shi’a* (The advent of *Tawzih al-Masai’l* and its role in the betterment of Shiism), *Tahghighat-i Islami* 6, nos. 1–2 (1991): 103–13.

59. Ayatollah Abdol Karim Biazar Shirazi, interview by the author, tape recording made in Tehran, Iran, on February 10, 2007. It is worth noting that those people of an Islamist orientation during the revolutionary years found the *New Tawzih al-Masai’l* captivating, but it is hard to say whether it would have held any interest for those not “committed to the faith.”

60. Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, *The New Tawzih al-Masai’l*, edited by Abdol Karim Biazar Shirazi, vol. 1, *Worship and the Development of the Self* (Tehran: Moassisey-i Anjam Kitab, 1980), 52–54.

61. Sand, *House and Home in Modern Japan*, 369.

62. Georg Simmel, *The Philosophy of Money* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), 66.

63. This point is also mentioned by the narrator of the documentary *Iran: A Cinematographic Revolution* in which an excerpt from *Under the Skin of the Night* is featured; see Nader Takmil Homayoun, dir., *Iran: A Cinematographic Revolution*, Tehran, 2006.

64. The original title, *Gharbzadegi*, has also been translated as *Westoxication*.

65. Al-i Ahmad was most famous for coining the term *Gharbzadegi*—variously translated into English as “Westernstruck,” “Westoxification,” “Occidentosis”—in his book by the same name, clandestinely published in Iran in 1952. Jalal Al-i Ahmad, *Occidentosis: A Plague from the West*, translated by R. Campbell (Berkeley: Mizen Press, 1984), 57–58. This was, of course, part of a larger concern regarding culture and authenticity that appeared in the work of other Iranian intellectuals and commentators. The editor of the popular intellectual magazine *Firdaws* (vol. 895), for example, wrote on p. 3 in 1969 (1348/20, Janu-

ary 1969) that “we need our own Eastern culture. The very same which the Indians have preserved and the Japanese have safeguarded but which we have lost somewhere. In order to find it, we cannot cling to history. We have to reconstruct it.” Quoted in Negin Nabavi, “The Discourse of ‘Authentic Culture’ in Iran in the 1960s and 1970s,” in *Intellectual Trends in Twentieth-Century Iran: A Critical Survey* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003), 91–108.

66. These terms were highlighted by Khomeini but later used by other politicians, especially the third prime minister of the Islamic Republic, Mir Hussein Musavi. He was a trained architect and constantly used these words as he attempted to convince the government to contribute to housing for the poor. During his speech at the opening of an apartment complex for the poor in the city of Zanjan, he said: “The government should prioritize the building of houses for the *Kukh-neshinan*.” See *Jomhuri Islami* 1117 (21 Farvardin 1362/March 1983): 16. For Khomeini’s description of these two terms, see *Jomhuri Islami*, 1109 (Farvardin 1362/March 1983). Although in the long run these ideas were turned into mere ideological slogans that did little to help elevate the condition of peoples’ lives, there is substantial evidence—some of which has already been explored by other scholars (especially Asef Bayat)—that the implementation of these ideas in the immediate aftermath of the revolution garnered great acclaim among the poor.

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