

## RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE AS A MEANS OF SHOWCASING WESTERN MODERNIZATION: THE CASE OF TEHRAN (1963-1979) (1)

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**Keywords:** Iranian modernization;  
westernization; fetishism of urbanization;  
urbanism, alienation.

1. This paper is based on studies undertaken for a Ph.D. dissertation entitled as *Socio-spatial Disparities: the Production of Marginality within Urban Space of Tehran (1963-1979)*, by Paria Valizadeh, under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Güven Arif Sargin in Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey, 2018.

2. The term cosmopolitan elite is used to refer to the Marxist perspective and characterized an international bourgeoisie ideology operating in different parts of the world promoting the lifestyle of privileged Westerners.

### INTRODUCTION

In 1963, Mohammad Reza Shah launched a six-point reform entitled the White Revolution as a step toward modernization that would herald a new era. The White Revolution was to be the Shah's bloodless solution. In his reform package, specifically his land reforms, he radically modified and gradually eliminated pre-capitalist forms of production in rural society, and introduced capitalist economic policies that encouraged foreign capitalist investment. Before the land reforms, Tehran was a relatively small pre-industrial town, but in the aftermath of the land reforms, the city turned into a metropolis with accentuated north-south polarization. The White Revolution with land reforms at its centerpiece paved the way for the incorporation of Iran into the global capitalist system. This led to the rising western-oriented bourgeoisie that aspired to live a westernized lifestyle as a part of the cosmopolitan elite (2). Their move toward a westernized lifestyle brought about further divisions and in turn, sharpened existing socio-spatial segregation between the bourgeoisie and the lower-income classes.

Following the modernization programs of the White Revolution of 1963, Tehran as the capital city underwent major urbanization. At the core of this urban process was the power of the state, towards which urban investments were directed. Indeed, the state's aim was to modernize the image of the city and not the city itself and this led to perpetuating uneven development which became the predominant pattern of urbanization. As the ruling power aims at improving the image of the city, the areas with concentrated poverty would be disregarded and pushed to the margins. In Tehran modernization took the form of showcase development projects in specific urban locations and leaving the rest intact leading to spatial segregation based on social classes that stretched along the north-south urban axis. Urban planning was also complicit in producing a class-determined fragmented urban space. As part of the state's modernization

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program, the planning strategy was, intentionally, aimed at economic-based segregation of social groups across the urban space a kind of “planned segregation by income for the Tehran metropolitan area has been a feature of development policy” (Amirahmadi and Kiafar, 1987, 167-77). This planning strategy was carried out by the state and the private sector throughout the 1960s and 1970s, in the form of building housing projects based on the economic status of residents in particular urban locations. The north of Tehran planned to be occupied by the high-income, the center by the middle-income, and the south by the low-income groups. In this light, in the 1960s, the neighborhoods such as Naziabad and Kuy-e Nohom-e Aban in south Tehran were built for the working class; Tehran Pars in the eastern parts of the city was designed for middle-income groups, and Abbasabad in north Tehran was developed for high-income groups. That is to say, social gradient among different income groups found concrete reflections on the urban space of Tehran in the 1960s and turned the city into a dangerously divided capital in the late 1970s.

The urban experience of modernization for different income groups living in different parts of Tehran varied. Constructing a modern westernized image for the city and encouraging the upper class to live a westernized lifestyle led to uneven urban development, and segregation of social classes based on income level, and fetishism of urbanization. The association of modernization with the west, including the adoption of Westernised lifestyles led to what has been described as westoxification. Building on Heidegger’s criticism of modern Technology in 1977, Iranian intellectuals coined the term westoxification as best described the intoxication of Iranian society by western culture and values, specifically the United States, in the name of modernization. Residential architecture constitutes a significant part of Tehran’s urban form and can offer a good reflection of the modernization process as it unfolded in Tehran during the 1960s and 1970s. It demonstrates how the associations between modernization with westernization find spatial representation in the housing domains of both new urban poor and rich (3).

From the beginning in the 1960s, medium and high-rise residential apartment buildings became the most common form of residential architecture in Tehran. These became very popular with the Iranian bourgeoisie that eagerly moved from their courtyard houses to high-rise residential apartments. The aspiration to live a westernized lifestyle with socially constructed segregational tendencies can often account for their (Iranian upper class) relocation to the high-rise housing projects. Besides being the most visible representation of space production under capitalism it was also a spatial response to their differentiated taste and desire. This fetishizing of high-rise apartments in Tehran can be explained as fulfilling the differentiated taste and desire of the Iranian upper class and, indeed, accumulation of what Bourdieu (1977) called “symbolic capital”. It can be said that satisfying the socially constructed differentiated desire, its fetishizing value, and promoting a lifestyle that can be lived only by those who could pay for it helped to sustain the creation of urban segregation that led to the deep division of class within Iranian society in the late 1970s.

The main focus of this study is the architectural and urban qualities of the new housing that emerged out of the modernization process and its socio-spatial impact on the urban experience of everyday life in Tehran of the 1960s and 1970s. The major method will be a critical analysis departing from Tehran and findings will result in discussions based on the theoretical

3. The term “new” is used to refer to the emergence of the urban poor as the new social class following the implementation of the White Revolution of 1963 and its reform package. Breakdown of rural society, capital-intensive industrialization, and concentration of industries in Tehran were the motive forces behind the rural-urban migration. As a result, the growing urban labour force could not be fully absorbed into the modern urban economy. Thus, the surplus urban labour force, mostly uneducated and unskilled rural migrants who are detached from pre-capitalist forms of production, that had to reside in the south and its urban fringes led to the emergence of the new urban poor consisting of rural migrants who were then urban unemployed and underemployed. The emergence of a growing class of urban poor, then, dates back to the early 1960s and as one major urban-based class can be identified especially after the implementation of land reform laws. Regarding the “new” urban rich, the formation of the social upper class fascinated with the westernized way of living and being a part of the modern global elite in the Iranian society of the 1970s is intended.

framework of the study. Being the symbol of modern Iran, the capital city of Tehran offers a powerful case study through which to examine the impacts of pushing the society towards westernization as modernization. It focuses on residential architecture, as this shaped a part of Tehran's modern urban image and contributed largely to deepening class divisions. Thus, throughout the study arguments will draw on Tehran's housing production under the modernization process for its historical and spatial analysis.

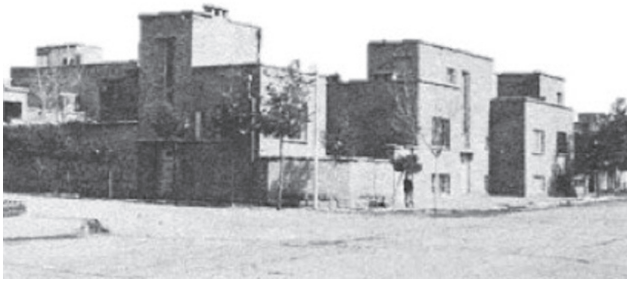
### **SEGREGATION AS THE PREDOMINANT PATTERN OF DEVELOPEMNT**

After the White Revolution of 1963, Tehran, as the country's capital, underwent major urbanization and modernization programs. At the core of this urbanization process was the command of capital and state, based on which built environment was produced. As Soja and Hadjimichalis (1979) put it: "Stated somewhat differently, every mode of production produces its own space, or perhaps more accurately, its own socially organized space, which becomes particularized and concrete within a given social formation". From the mid-1960s onward that form of capitalism supported the urbanization processes of Tehran, and its class-divided urban space could be considered as a direct product of the capitalist mode of production of space. In tune with the nature of capitalist developments that sustain socio-spatial disparities, the top-down imposed planning strategies solidified the class-based fragmentation of the urban space. In this hierarchical arrangement, residential segregation was based upon class stratification along the north-south axis. An examination of the Tehran Comprehensive Plan of 1968 best demonstrates that high-, middle-, and low-income families' residential neighborhoods are located in the north, in the center, and the south of Tehran, respectively. The concentration of capital investments in the form of modern facilities and institutions in the north and southern location of industrial activities contributed to form a sharply bipolar division of rich north and poor south across the urban space of Tehran. This north-south polarization of Tehran calls to mind what Smith (1984, 149) says; "This is nowhere clearer than in the geographical contradiction between development and underdevelopment where the over-accumulation of capital at one pole is matched by the over-accumulation of labour at the other."

The modern urban planning strategy that the government implemented at that time institutionalized residential stratification based on economic classes. This spatial segregation based on economic classes stretched along the north-south axis maintained and laid the foundation for further urban development so that while the proposal for constructing low-cost housing projects was to be located in the south, new housing projects for the high-income class was in the north.

### **MODERNIZING TEHRAN'S URBAN 'IMAGE' THROUGH HOUSING PROJECTS**

The process of "metropolitanization" in Tehran was accompanied by the devastating reality of a crisis of public housing, particularly in the south of the city that demonstrated that a severe problem existed. Since housing is one of the most crucial geographical indicators of uneven urban development in the city, the housing quality of the southern parts of Tehran



**Figure 1.** Chaharsad-Dastgah housing complex, Tehran (Eshragh, 1971)



**Figure 2.** Chaharsad-Dastgah housing complex, Tehran (Eshragh, 1971)

deteriorated more and more. During the last years of Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi's reign (the late 1970s), the housing problem was at its worst. As Madanipour (2006, 434) claimed; "Urban expansion in Tehran was based on under-regulated, private-sector driven, speculative development. Demand for housing always exceeded supply, and a surplus of labour and capital was always available; hence the flourishing construction and the rising prices of land and property in Tehran".

The government was aware of the problem of a shortage of housing, high property price, and high rent. To resolve the problem, the state unveiled a program to construct low-cost housing units through relocating a part of the low-income people from poor-quality constructed one or two-story buildings to the apartment blocks. While the very first examples of mass housing projects constructed in Tehran during the 1940s and 1950s were one or two-story houses, it can be noticed that from the 1960s onward mid-rise apartments emerged. One of the first modern mass housing projects in the southeast end of Tehran was Chaharsad-Dastgaha project of 400 low-cost housing units for low-income state employees started in 1946 (Figure 1, 2). The housing units of this complex were generally single-story or two-story houses with a basement. To cite the main principles of the Chaharsad-Dastgah housing complex, it can be said that the average area of each plot is 170 square meters. There was the main square on the north side of the neighborhood that functioned as both public space and green area. Arefian and Moeini (2016, 37) stated that, "terraced housing combined spatial economy with ease of construction. Flat insulated roofs were chosen for houses, with plain brickwork to facades and plain white finish to interiors. Kitchens, storages, independent yards with a trough, and balconies were common elements. Toilets in all types were provided outdoors in yards and connected with shallow wells which work with septic tanks". These 400 low-cost housing units were granted to low-income homeless state employees without receiving any prepayment on favorable terms; but because dwellers were unable to meet the expenses it hindered development of the project (Eshragh, 1971, 113).

The Narmak project was a large housing complex in the eastern part of Tehran developed in the form of a neighborhood for middle-income residents in the 1950s (Figure 3, 4). The whole area of Narmak was about 600 hectares. Bahrambeygui (1977, 141) indicated that "on this large area, 8000 plots of land between 200 and 500 square meters in area were laid out and on most of these one-storeyed villas with small gardens were eventually built. This residential district has been divided into 19 sections, each with open spaces and equipped with power supply and well water". Open spaces provided room for children's playgrounds and green zones.



**Figure 3.** The urban layout of Narmak, Tehran (*Journal of Bank-e Sakhtemani*, 1955)

**Figure 4.** The mass housing project of Narmak, Tehran (Adjdari, 1956)

4. I visited the National Archive of Iran; Architectural archives of the Tehran University in person in April 2017.

There were car-free zones that became safe areas for residents. Spaces for gatherings of the residents were also designed. Ultimately, in the following years, Narmak became a successful model for modernist mass housing projects built in Iran.

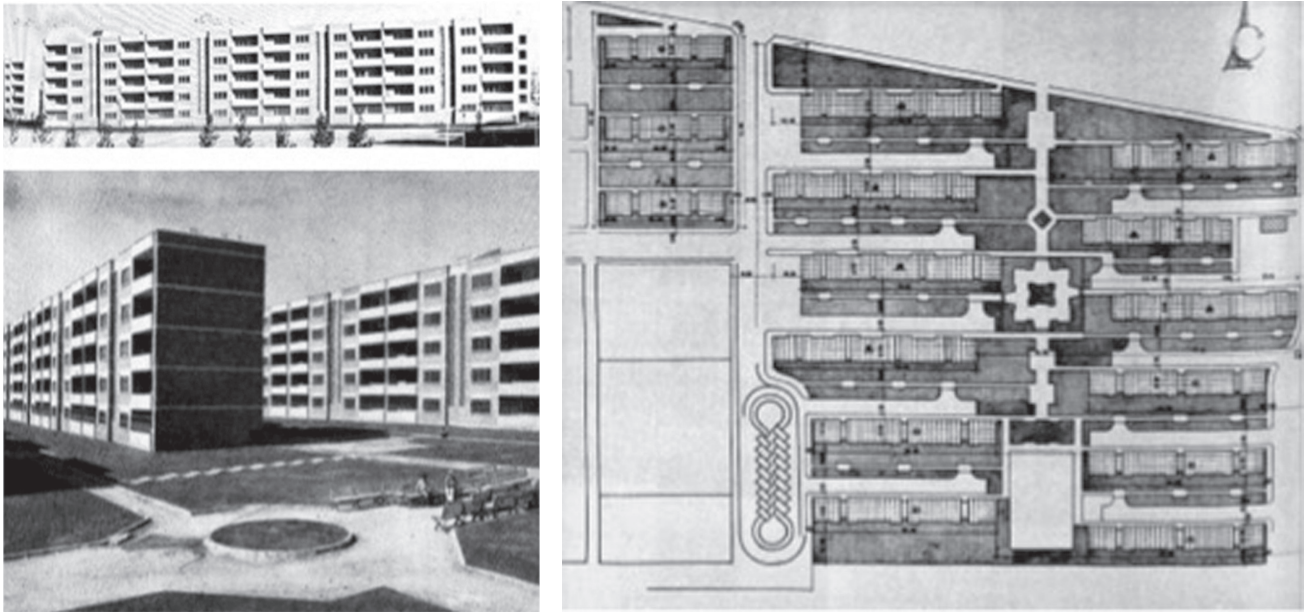
The development of new housing neighborhoods continued in the same manner with projects such as Kuy-e Mehran (1963), Kuy-e Farah (1963), kuy-e Kan (1964), Kuy-e Nohom-e Aban (1965). Most of this is low-rise housings for single families and less common walk-up apartments of four- and five-storey. Kuy-e Kan, for example, a four-story apartment blocks constructed in the 1960s to accommodate 40.000 lower-income families is one of the early examples of mid-rise apartments as mass housing projects (**Figure 5, 6**).

The Kuy-e Kan was an unappealing choice for the lower social strata. Drawing on the letter of Iran's housing organization about the Kuy-e Kan project, less than 20 percent of the supposed class applied to purchase these houses, and they remained empty (4). Although problems like lack of communal spaces and remoteness from the city center existed, the main reason as mentioned in the housing organization's letter that the Kuy-e Kan was that lower income families were not accustomed to living in apartments. Although in the following years, there were some attempts

**Figure 5.** The Kuy-e Kan project, Tehran, 1964 (National Archive of Iran)

**Figure 6.** The Kuy-e Kan project, Tehran, 1964 (National Archive of Iran)





**Figure 7.** Kuy-e Chaharom-e Aban in Naziabad, Tehran (Eshragh, 1971)

**Figure 8.** The urban layout of kuy-e Chaharom-e Aban, Tehran (Eshragh, 1971)

made to stimulate low-income families to live in the Kan's apartments, when comparing this project with other single-family housings for lower-income groups, it is apparent that the apartment mode of living was unfamiliar with them.

As an example of mid-rise apartments for lower-income groups, the project of Kuy-e- Chaharom-e Aban in the Naziabad area can be mentioned (Figure 7, 8). Naziabad is located in the south of Tehran between the Qale Morghi military airport and the railway station. The land formerly comprised a large number of brick kilns, and other buildings involved in producing construction materials. The new apartment blocks were four stories (first phase) and five stories (second phase) for low-income groups and construction began in 1969. Typically, plots were of 80 square meters, where domestic space was reduced just to the essential needs, such as bedroom, living room, kitchen, and toilet. During the first phase of the project eight apartment blocks of four-story and later in the second phase of development, seven apartment blocks of five-story were constructed. More than meeting an urgent need for housing, residential projects like Kuy-e- Chaharom-e Aban acted as a means to modernize the image of the capital city. The reluctance of the lower-income groups to move into the apartment blocks demonstrates their reluctance to submit to an enforced new lifestyle. While living in mid-rise apartment blocks (four or five-story apartments) was an unattractive experience among low-income families, inhabiting high-rise residential apartments became a new fashion for the Iranian upper class to such an extent that those who live there would gain a privileged status and become a part of the cosmopolitan elite. The highest buildings in Tehran from the late 1960s and 1970s were luxury residential apartments in the northern areas of the city. These were developed in several phases and became the model for further developments of a similar kind. However, the large number of lower-income groups together with mass immigration created a housing demand that the limited capacity of the existing provision could not meet.

During the 1970s mass-produced apartment housing existed around the world but varied from country to country in terms of the architectural

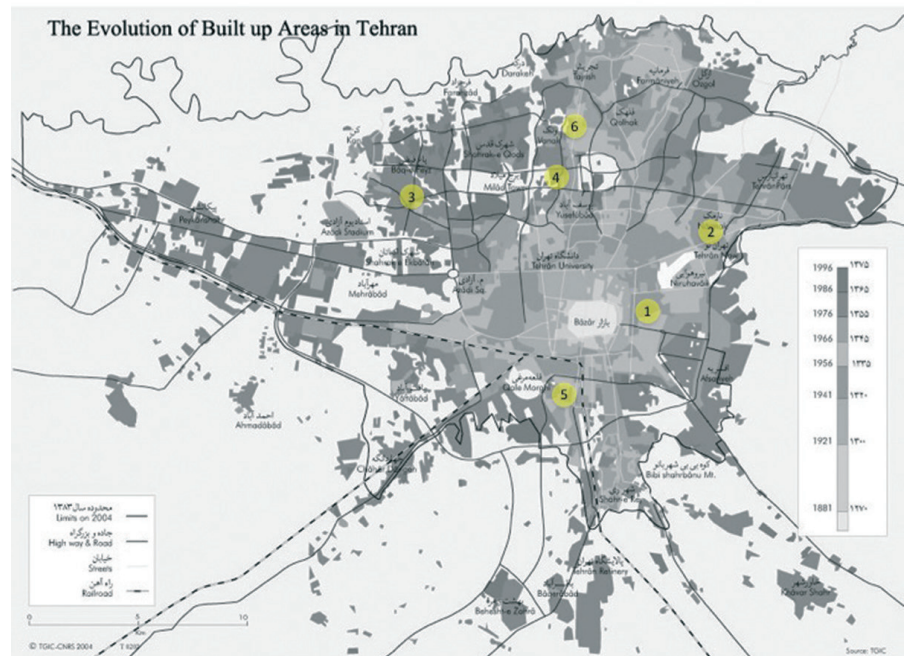
qualities of the buildings and the social status of the residents. For instance, while in the United States and Russia, most of these mass-produced serial apartment blocks were to house poorer and vulnerable groups; in Shanghai and Mumbai, these buildings were constructed to accommodate a wealthy middle class (Urban, 2012). This was also the case in Tehran during the 1970's where high-rise modular apartment blocks were built for the Iranian bourgeois class. In this regard, Urban (2012, 15) says: "But not everywhere were the modular blocks designed for the working class. Under the regime of Mohammad Reza Shah in Iran, legislation was passed in 1964 to encourage private investment in the housing sector." For example, Eskin towers, Park de Prince, and A.S.P are all high-rise luxury residential apartments with penthouses (Figure 9, 10). Although the housing problem did not affect the rich and privileged Iranians, the desire for living in the westernized lifestyle was a major motive for the relocation of a segment of Tehran's elite from their courtyard houses to high-rise residential apartments. In other words, the westernized lifestyle of many of the privileged Iranians was more consistent with the high-rise buildings in which they aspired to live. For the Iranian bourgeois class, these high-rise apartment buildings embodied the lure of modernity and their aspired westernized lifestyle (Urban, 2012).

In fact, by the 1970s the government was promoting modernist urban developments, notably in Tehran where global capitalism was supporting urbanization. Through this market-led urbanism large corporations (mostly international) that were looking for large profits executed a series of large-scale projects in the city as high-rise residential buildings targeting the Iranian bourgeoisie. Then, those who wanted to be a part of the global elite began to move from their traditional homes to high-rise residential complexes that provided them a modern westernized living environment. Eskin towers were one of those high-rise residential projects that had prestige among the Iranian upper class. Feniger and Kallus (2015, 240) remarked that "the Eskin project, initiated in 1972, was intended as a mixed-use luxury compound. It comprised three towers of 32 floors each, above five floors of high-end commercial facilities with underground parking. It is located at the intersection of two main streets in the north of the city, facing Pahlavi Boulevard (today Valiasr)". Two rows of penthouses were designed at the top of towers. The commercial center that has a separate entrance was designated for luxury brands. The design of the plan of the residential sector, the housing units' area and facilities provided are significant. "Each floor of Eskin's residential towers comprised four split-level large and luxurious apartments differently arranged, with large

**Figure 9.** A.S.P residential towers after completion, Tehran, 1969 (Wikimedia Commons, 1969)

**Figure 10.** Eskin towers under construction, street view, Tehran, 1976 (Honar-e Memari, 2020)





**Figure 11.** Map of Tehran, showing the urban expansion of the city from 1881 to 1996 and the locations of mentioned housing projects (Tehran Municipality, 2007)

1: Chaharsad-dastgah 2: Kuy-e Narmak  
3: Kuy-e Kan 4: A.S.P Towers 5: Kuy-e  
Chaharom-e Aban 6: Eskan Towers

rooms, balconies, state-of-the-art facilities, and a servant's annex" (Feniger and Kallus, 2015, 240) .

The market-led approach to urbanism considered the city as an investment instrument providing attractive returns. The Eskan project can be classified in this category but was not attentive to the overall needs of the city. Tehran in the 1970s was suffering from a housing shortage, high rents, and high property prices. This project and other luxurious high-rises that were built in Tehran throughout the 1970s were not intended for the lower and the middle-class population that had to cope with the housing problem. These high-rises were the architectural expressions of market-led urbanism; machines for making a high rate of profit and accumulating wealth; and symbols of representing Tehran as a modern city.

In the 1970s the Iranian bourgeois class aspired to live in high-rise apartments while lower class families were reluctant to submit to this mode of living. For the Iranian bourgeoisie living in high-rise apartments embodied the promoted westernized lifestyle and fulfilled their differentiated tastes. Constructing apartment buildings and promoting this mode of living was a means to help the state to create the desired modern image for Tehran. However, the cultural and ideological differences that existed between high-income and low-income social classes who resided in a particular socio-spatial distance from each other produced the different degree of receptivity. As Castells (1977, 385) puts it: "Differences in cultural style, rooted mostly in social class and family practices, will be symbolically reinforced by the social-spatial distance and be the environmental imagery". Then, while the Iranian upper class were fascinated with westernized culture and so adapted themselves more easily to a modern lifestyle, this was not the case for the lower classes.



### **FETISHISM OF URBANIZATION: WIDENING SOCIO-SPATIAL GAP BETWEEN URBAN POOR AND THE RICH**

Since market-led urbanism is a mode of urbanization shaped by a free-market economy, its relevant experience of urbanism is also dictated by free-market ideologies. This process of urbanization produces a rather different experience of urbanism for different income groups living in the same city. The experience of urbanism for those living in informal settlements that lack access to the very basic infrastructures such as electricity, water, and sewage system could not be the same as the high-income families. This is the uneven urban development that dramatizes the urban poor's experience of urbanism. The shortage of adequate housing and basic infrastructure and services is the issue that the poor in south Tehran had to cope with everyday life but this was not the case for the rich in north Tehran. The fetishism ascribed to this mode of urbanization reveals that development programs do not always improve urban quality of life, but in some cases could produce more poverty.

As mentioned earlier there was a relocation of the urban rich those who wanted to live a westernized lifestyle and saw high-rise apartment living as part of this. During the 1970's these segregational tendencies extricated them from the courtyard houses and the associations that came with them. This high-rise living was considered fashionable and only available to the wealthy. Regarding the production of this kind of differentiated tastes and preferences and the spatial representation of the very differentiation through the construction of particular built environment within which upper-income groups live, it could well refer to Bourdieu (1977) and what he calls as "symbolic capital". Bourdieu argues that in addition to the prevalent forms of the accumulation of capital, another form of accumulation, that of symbolic capital also exists. He describes this symbolic capital accumulation as "the collection of luxury goods attesting the taste and distinction of their owner" (Bourdieu, 1977, 197). He discusses the produced effect of the conversion of economic capital into symbolic capital, where he writes: "Symbolic capital, a transformed and thereby disguised form of physical 'economic' capital, produces its proper effect inasmuch, and only inasmuch, as it conceals the fact that it originates in 'material' forms of capital which are also, in the last analysis, the source of its effects" (Bourdieu, 1977:183). The fetishizing value of symbolic capital that Bourdieu claims is clearly understood. The fetishism embedded in this form of capital serves the owners' differentiated taste and segregational tendencies. Bourdieu's discussion could be extended to explicate the production of the specific built environment for upper-income groups to fulfill their differentiated tastes. The high-rise apartments of the 1970s were the residential typology that on the one hand could satisfy the upper-class communities' socio-spatial distinction preferences and on the other hand, could provide them the opportunity to live a westernized lifestyle as a part of the cosmopolitan elite.

Therefore, in Tehran in the 1970s there had been a fetishizing of high-rises where residential apartment complexes for the rich city dwellers in north Tehran proliferated. It can be said that the process of urbanization in Tehran was linked to the fetishism of urbanism, the urban experience of modernization. This form of urbanization in Tehran was accompanied by fetishism from the outset because in its essence it was a capitalist urban process that operated at all levels of the city. The fetishism embedded in the

urbanization of Tehran varied according to different income city dwellers ranging from the fetishizing of high-rises to urban living.

Despite the years of growth and prosperity in the 1970s in Iran, the lack of consideration for the basic needs of the poor produced a rather different experience of urbanism for them. The unevenness of developments and urban inequalities were at their worst especially in the capital city of Tehran. The poor were unable to enjoy the benefits of the city and the urban process that unfolded. For them housing and other basic needs were neglected and their living conditions worsened after the implementation of these urban development schemes. The fetishism of urban development can be an explanation for how growth and prosperity might produce even more poverty. Implementing these housing projects was a means of modernizing the image of Tehran.

The urbanization of a city, as Merrifield (2014) states, is a twofold process that produces high-rise buildings and highways as well as marginal zones and unpaved streets. Particularly when the aim is set to construct a modern urban image for a city, urban development patterns will occur in specific urban locations and comprise constructing projects that target upper-income groups who can afford living in the promoted lifestyle. This is how market-led urbanism produces, reproduces, and transforms the urban space of cities; how cities capture monetary investments and become vital nodes for market exchange; how developments are not for the sake of people, but rather for the market. Molotch (1976, 309-32) best expresses this issue when he describes the city as a “growth machine”, but not for all social groups. The neglected urban poor, who reside in areas that lack adequate public facilities and services or in informal settlements on the urban fringes, have a very different way of life, and very little choice. Only when the urban realities of these underprivileged groups are acknowledged, will urban planners explore possibilities of constructing alternative and more inclusive development paradigms to replace the existing setting will arise.

The feverish fetishizing of high-rises in Tehran in the 1970s was consistent with western capitalist urban developments that prioritize profit and which led to what has been termed a “Westoxification” of Iranian society as a kind of intoxication produced by the society itself. During the 1960s and notably the 1970s, modernizing society based on dominant Western values, especially the United States, was at the top of the government’s agenda. Indeed, Iran was never colonized by the West directly, rather Iranian colonization by Western capitalist powers, particularly the United States was implicitly through the acquaintance of the upper class. The articles published in Architecture Journals of the time promoted American housing practices which influenced the interior design of upper-class Iranians’ houses. The lifestyle images of families and their living spaces projected in advertisements of different commodities illustrate the imposition of Western culture onto the society (**Figure 12**). The upper-class Iranian families absorbed this alien culture as an inevitable step to becoming a part of the modern global elite.

The term Westoxification is coined by Iranian intellectuals. It is derived from the Persian term *Gharbzadegi* which refers to the complete fascination with Western culture while eroding traditional Persian culture. The notion of Westoxification was developed from Heidegger’s criticism of modern technology that he provided in his book *The Question Concerning Technology* in 1977. As Heidegger (1977, 28) writes: “The threat to man does not come



Figure 12. Advertisement of wooden shutters of the brand named Mischler, published in Art and Architecture Journal of 1970 (*Honar va Memari*, 1970)

in the first instance from the potentially lethal machines and apparatus of technology. The actual threat has already affected man in his essence. The rule of Enframing threatens man with the possibility that it could be denied to him to enter into a more original revealing and hence to experience the call of a more primal truth". Building on Heidegger's core interpretation, the notion of Westoxification was devised and this conception could best epitomize the basic illness of modern Iranian society. At its root the term attempts to herald a kind of alienation that happened in the society that no longer just consumes Western imported products but Western culture and values as well. On the term Westoxification and its implications, Deylami (2008, 15). explains:

"It embroils its subjects into identifying with it so that the enthralling effects are no longer products of the West but the products of our selves and of our own desires. The strangeness of the Other becomes the strangeness of members of the body politic. It encodes subjects into believing that what the West has to offer is what we should desire. And in the end, it is the strangers among us that fuel *Westoxification*. It is the recognition of this characteristic of *Westoxification* the recognition of the ability to entice people into an alien way of life that becomes their own that fosters a sometimes nativistic orientation towards the rest of the world".

As Deylami mentioned, there was the hegemony of an alien culture that mainly dominated the Iranian upper class, tempting them to live an alien life. Since the fascination and absorption of this alien culture were mostly by the upper class, the more this infatuation developed, the more they

became alienated from the rest of the society. In this light, it can be said that Westoxification contributed to the intensification of socio-cultural gap between the urban poor and the wealthy in Iranian society of the 1970s.

One of the most visible impacts of enticing the Iranian upper class into an alien way of life is the relocation of the urban rich from their traditional courtyard houses with gardens, to these high rise apartments, such was their fascination with Western culture. The fetishizing of high-rises in Tehran in the 1970s was the exploitive desire to see these developments primarily as investment instruments using a capitalist model that considers the city a site for the accumulation of wealth. However, its popularity with the Iranian upper class imitating the west is the most visible feature of a Westoxified society.

## CONCLUSION

Conditions of socio-economic domination lead to different urban experiences and different spatial practices and lifestyles. Doubtless, the spatial practices of the mass of the low-income group for whom the urban experience entails coping with deprivations of all sorts are distinct from the upper-income group that considers the same urban space as a site of capital accumulation. These spatial practices differentiate from each other through the agency of class. Distinctive urban experiences that bring about distinctive socio-cultural and ideological tendencies likewise arise from different conditions of class polarities. Despite the different experiences of urbanism by different income groups, examining the urbanization process of Tehran indicates that the fetishism can be involved in both low- and upper-income groups' urban experiences the fetishism that the mode of urbanization shaped by the free-market economy that produced it. The state's implemented strategies and development projects under the modernization process of Tehran were oriented toward solidifying spatial segregation and neighborhood privileges. The result of this planned segregation of groups on the basis of income level was widening the socio-spatial inequality within the society. Along with this growing gap among different social classes, a new lifestyle emerged, which was confined to high-income groups who could afford to live in that way. Therefore, wealthy families within their wealthy enclaves constructed in the northern part of the city a space of westernized urban life, using western imported commodities and adopting western values. That is to say, the construction of wealthy neighborhoods in north Tehran brought about a new lifestyle that was experienced within their boundaries. The more the Iranian upper class aspired to live in a produced new and alien lifestyle, the more they became alienated from their society.

Like most countries in the Third World, modernization was synonymous with westernization in Iran. However, the cultural shock that came along with the modernization process in Iranian society was very rapid and alienating (Beeman, 1982). As Sreberny-Mohammadi and Mohammadi (1994, 71) stated "it also had important class dimensions, for the cosmopolitan lifestyle help up as the model of modern life and espoused by so much media content was only affordable for a small urban elite". Even cultural advertising was responsible for intensifying the gap of tastes, values, and lifestyles between the cosmopolitan upper class and the rest of Iran (Sreberny-Mohammadi and Mohammadi, 1994). Promoting this new way of living laden with western values was a part of the Iranian modernization process, so besides cultural programming, development

projects were also in accord with producing socio-spatial setting appropriate for experiencing it such as the construction of an extensive network of highways, luxurious hotels, high-rise apartments, western-oriented leisure, and commercial activity centers and so on. Moreover, this new mode of living experienced by the Iranian upper class was helping the state in constructing the 'image' of modern Iran.

Throughout the study, the focus was on residential architecture since beyond providing housing as this was an important tool for modernizing the city, and shaping Tehran's future urban image. The examination of the medium and high-rise residential apartment buildings of the 1960s and 1970s helped to better understand how westernization in the name of modernization led to a modern western image for the city and to meet the aspirations of the target group of upper-income classes. Modernizing the image of the city rather than the city itself led to the perpetuation of uneven development since the state was only intent on showcasing these modern and highly profitable developments in Northern Tehran which did little to address the needs of the less privileged. The pursuit of an improved place-image led to the purification of the problematic neighborhoods of southern Tehran. The state-run projects in the Iranian modernization process were mainly disconnected from the needs of the majority of the society and were intended as a highly visible symbol of development. State development policies only succeeded in sharpening the socio-spatial gap between different income groups. Shaping the affluent enclaves in the northern parts of the city to serve the interests of its wealthy dwellers was an outcome of Westoxification, which alienated people from their cultural roots. At the same time the impoverished neighborhoods in the southern parts were worsening and this resulted in a pattern of uneven development.

This uneven urban development in Tehran during the post-White Revolution period was one major motive that paved the way for the 1979 Revolution. In 1979 Tehran became a major player of the revolution, as the socio-spatial polarization that existed within its urban space had reached a dangerous level. The impoverished southern neighborhoods and surrounding slums that were considered as obstacles for improving the place-image of the capital and hence disregarded were of the first sites out of which the urban uprisings stemmed in the late 1970s. The housing problem was one of the remarkable active forces that lay behind the participation of the discontented masses in the 1979 Revolution (Bayat, 1997). In other words,, shaping the high-city space to serve the needs and interests of high-income residents and excluding lower social classes from the benefits alienated the urban poor from the development process. The alienation of the urban poor has the potential to stimulate activities that have a revolutionary dimension. Unlike the myth of the development process, the ever-growing socio-spatial inequality and the resulting deterioration of urban life were concrete realities experienced by the urban poor throughout the 1960s and 1970s.

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## **MODERNİZASYON SÜRECİNDE BATI'NIN GÖSTERİMİ OLARAK KONUT MİMARİSİ: TAHRAN ÖRNEĞİ (1963-1979)**

1963 Beyaz Devrim ile gündeme gelen modernleşme programları, başkent Tahran'ın sosyo-mekânsal organizasyonunu dönüştürdü. Ancak İran'da modernleşmenin uygulanması, aslında, eşitsiz kentsel gelişmenin yeniden üretilmesine, sınıf ayrışmalarının şiddetlenmesine ve 1970'li yılların İran toplumunda bir tür kentleşme fetişizmi geliştirilmesine büyük oranda katkıda bulunan Batılılaşma ile ilişkilendirildi. Toplumun batı ve özellikle ABD imajında modernize etmek, terfi edilen şekilde yaşamayı göze alabildikleri için üst sınıfları büyük ölçüde büyüledi, ve Batılılaşmış yaşam biçimine olan çekimleri ne kadar geliştirse toplumun geri kalanına o kadar yabancılaştılar. Buna bağlamda bu çalışma, özellikle Tahran'daki önemli coğrafi gerçekleştirmelerden biri olarak konut alanında batı imajında gerçekleşen bu modernleşmenin etkilerinin eleştirel bir analizini yapmayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışma boyunca, Tahran'daki hem kentli yoksulların hem de zenginlerin barınma ihtiyaçlarını karşılamak için modernleşme ile Batılılaşmanın konut alanında nasıl mekânsal temsiller bulduğu incelenecektir. Bu analiz sayesinde, kentleşme fetişizminin özellikle konut mimarisi odaklı, ve ana akım İran modernleşmesi olarak modern bir yer imajı arayışı, 1960'lar ve 1970'lerde Tahran'ın kentsel mekânına da etkileriyle ilgili geniş bir anlayışın çizilmesi beklenmektedir.

## **RESIDENTIAL ARCHITECTURE AS A MEANS OF SHOWCASING WESTERN MODERNIZATION: THE CASE OF TEHRAN (1963-1979)**

Modernization programs in Iran emerged with the 1963 White Revolution and transformed the socio-spatial organization of the capital city of Tehran. This modernization was associated with Westernization and led to uneven urban development, exacerbated class divisions and developed a kind of fetishism of urbanization in the Iranian society of 1970s. Modernizing the society in the image of the west and in particular the United States fascinated the upper classes since they could afford to live in the ways described in the media, and the more their fascination with the westernized way of living developed, the more they become alienated from the rest of society. This study conducts a critical analysis of the impacts of modernization in the image of the west, notably in the domain of housing as one of the crucial geographical materialization in Tehran. The study will examine the link between modernization and westernization through spatial representations of case studies from both rich and poor within Tehran. It is expected that the ongoing study help to get a broader understanding of the impacts of fetishism of urbanization focusing on residential architecture, and pursuing an improved-place image as mainstream Iranian modernization on the urban landscape of Tehran in the 1960s and 1970s.

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