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## Mr. Hashemi and Family Dynamics in Iran

By Ronak Karami<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

The 1979 Revolution in Iran exploded aggressively because of the pressures that the Shah enforced on Iranian society; however, similar to the Shah, the Islamic regime imposed strict rules and regulations on Iranians in different ways to control society (especially women) via Islamic values. Hoping to create an obedient society, the state focused on educating children and youngsters on the ideologies of the 1979 Revolution. It emphasized gender discrimination in order to create a new generation who would follow the traditional model of mother-at-home and father-at-work because it needed women inside the house who can give birth and raise their children (especially boys) with revolutionary ideologies and men outside the house who will fight for the nation when necessary. This essay focuses on the social sciences textbook that was taught in third grade primary school classrooms in Iran for three decades, from 1983 to 2013. Written by Gholam-Ali Haddad-Adel, the textbook tells the story of an Iranian family who has to leave their town, Kazeroun, to live in the eastern town of Iran, Neishabour, because the father has been transferred by his office. This article aims to demonstrate how gender was supposed to be practiced in an Iranian family during these three decades based on the ideology of the 1979 Revolution. To do so, the paper studies the way social sciences in primary schools defined family, childhood, motherhood, and fatherhood for children through the revolutionary values. Moreover, it breaks down the ideological codes of the time about family dynamics that have been represented to the children through pictures and stories. As a result, the values of the 1979 Revolution that construct an ideal family would be elaborated to help the audience identify and clarify some of the most significant ideological issues that are still being taught to Iranian students today.

*Keywords:* Social Sciences, Mr. Hashemi's Family, Ideology of the 1979 Revolution, Family Dynamics, Gender Discrimination, Education in Iran

### Introduction

#### *The 1979 Revolution and Its Aftermath*

Iran's 1979 Revolution "erupted like a volcano because of the overwhelming pressures that had built up over the decades deep in the bowels of Iranian society" in order to form a new ideology and a new culture (Abrahamian, 2008, 155-6). The Shah had established autocratic rule, which faced opposition from intellectuals and the urban working class that intensified over the years (Abrahamian, 2008, 155-6). Abrahamian asserts that "In an age of republicanism, he flaunted monarchism, shahism, and Pahlavism. In an age of nationalism and anti-imperialism, he came to power as a direct result of the CIA-MI6 overthrow of Mossadeq – the idol of Iranian nationalism"

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(Abrahamian, 2008, 155-6). Even though Iranians put all their hopes in the 1979 Revolution, it caused a retrogression in the country, including eight unprofitable years of war with Iraq. Soon, the Islamic regime imposed its own strict rules and regulations on Iranians in order to control society and harmonize people's lives with its Islamic values.<sup>2</sup> In this sense, the new state tried to question concepts that were valuable to the Pahlavi dynasty and anything that seemed to be a symbol of Pahlavism. For instance, in contrast with the practice of sexualizing women during the Pahlavi era, the Islamic regime established strict rules and enforced rigid regulations for all graphic representations of women (Shirazi, 2010, 109). That is, "posters, banners, even postage stamps instructed women inappropriate social and ethical behaviors, including public dress and veiling. Iran's artists found increasingly innovative ways to represent the ideal Iranian woman" (Shirazi, 2010, 109). Meanwhile, the educational system became one of the main concerns of the new state: "the Islamic Republic has placed great emphasis on reforming the educational system to reflect its ideology, and education has been allocated a generous portion of government expenditures" (Hoodfar, 1994, 15). Therefore, the regime attempted to train obedient individuals via school textbooks. In producing textbooks for both children and adults, the regime systematically imbued specific images with religious-political messages. These textbooks introduced the meaning of family, society, gender, etc., based on the dominant ideology of the time so that the new generation would not be a threat to the state.

#### *The Islamic Revolution and the State's Focus on Young Adults*

The desired culture of a dictatorial system is transmitted from one generation to another by the dictators focusing on children. Shafiei (2011) claims, "Scholars have shown that family and reproductive patterns may often become the foundation from which new political and cultural paradigms are imagined" (28). In every society, including Iran, individuals enter a world of symbols after birth and they learn a collection of necessities and forbidden items (Yazdi and Dezhmakhoo, 2014, 3). Therefore, "the parents are reproducing themselves in the system in which they have grown up" (Yazdi and Dezhmakhoo, 2014, 4). In Iran, "children are located in a value system which teaches them what to do or what not to do in the purpose of being good for the political system since the very beginning of their lives" (Yazdi and Dezhmakhoo, 2014, 1). The state makes all aspects of life (including gender practices) political and intervenes in all private and public aspects of life in order to destroy the self and educate individuals "who obey the system and who reproduce it from the parents to children, from generation to generation" (Yazdi and Dezhmakhoo, 2014, 3). The state wants to make sure that if a child does not learn the values of the 1979 Revolution in the home, she/he learns it in the educational system (Yazdi and Dezhmakhoo, 2014, 4). Controlling and suppressing personal interests are among the first skills learned by Iranian children: "The Iranian educational system takes students' individuality and makes them memorize information with ignorance of their interests and talents" (Yazdi and Dezhmakhoo, 2014, 4). Through social sciences, the regime is able to transfer the dictatorial ideal lifestyle, which has been institutionalized as cultural traditions generation by generation (Yazdi and Dezhmakhoo, 2014, 14).

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<sup>2</sup> There is a discussion within the Islamic world about the interpretation of Islamic views. In this article, every time phrases such as Islamic ideologies or values are mentioned, it refers to the Islamic views that have been defined and interpreted by Shi'ism and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Even though the Islamic Regime attempts to control the new generations' lives, "young Iranians are now the de facto opposition in the Islamic Republic" (Cohen, 2006, 3). Since the regime is restrictive, volatile, and autocratic, it allows very few people to obtain a glimpse inside (Cohen, 2006, 3). Cohen asserts that a glimpse inside of the Iranian state reveals a society that is much different from how it appears to the outside world (Cohen, 2006, 3). That is, the majority of young Iranians are forward-looking, liberal-minded, and sometimes anti-regime (Cohen, 2006, 3). The regime does its best to train the youngsters based on the revolutionary ideologies from the first day of school, yet it has lost the hearts and minds of the Iranian youth (Cohen, 2006, 3). Hence, the best way for the state to prevent these political sentiments from exploding into a full-scale revolution is to impose restrictions on civil liberties and hide under the banner of ideology (Cohen, 2006, 3). The educational system may be unsuccessful in brainwashing young adults because they are "frustrated by their inability to find jobs even after earning degrees, their limited means for political or social expression, and their limited access to an increasingly modernized and technologically integrated world" (Cohen, 2006, 4). Accordingly, they choose social rather than political resistance as the best way to express their opposition to the regime. The social sciences textbooks encourage students to take the Prophet Mohammad's family as their role model; however, it is not very successful since youngsters regain control over how they choose to demonstrate their faith and practice their beliefs (Cohen, 2006, 4). Unlike Mr. Hashemi's family, who attends Friday Prayer together, less than three percent of youth attend Friday Prayer in Iran (Cohen, 2006, 5). Moreover, while female youngsters are not necessarily opposed to wearing hijab, they want the freedom to make their own choice (Cohen, 2006, 5). Cohen (2006) asserts, "As the first generation socialized in post-revolutionary Iran, the youth have grown up with a frame of reference different from those of previous generations. They are coming to understand their growing importance and potential influence" (13).

### *The Research Question and Its Significance*

From the Islamic Revolution to the present time, Iranian students start studying social sciences in the third grade of elementary school. This article illustrates how the third-grade social sciences textbook used from 1983-2013 presents the ideologies of the 1979 Revolution through family dynamics. In addition, it aims at demonstrating the way the ideology highlights traditional gender stereotypes, which leads to further subordination of women and men's dominance. To do so, this research explores how each family member is represented in the book. That is, it studies the way this social sciences textbook used in primary schools defines childhood, motherhood, and fatherhood for children based on the revolutionary values. The significance of this study lies in the way it breaks down how ideological codes of the time have been represented to children through pictures and stories to show in what way gender was supposed to be practiced in an Iranian family during these three decades after the Islamic Revolution. That is, this research depicts each member's role of a desired family based on their gender and their relation to the nation. Therefore, those values that shape the ideal family would be elaborated to help the audience identify and clarify some of the most significant ideological issues that have been taught to Iranian students since 1979. For this purpose, the following is divided into five sections to examine the way concepts such as family, motherhood, childhood, and fatherhood are defined during the early years of school in Iran via the story of Mr. Hashemi's family.

## **Mr. Hashemi's Family as the Ideal Family for Three Decades**

### *Mr. Hashemi's Family*

As it was mentioned before, the third grade of elementary school is the first year in which Iranian children become familiar with social sciences. Written by Gholam-Ali Haddad-Adel, the social sciences textbook used in third-grade classrooms from 1983 to 2013 tells the story of an Iranian family who has to leave their town, Kazeroun, to live in the eastern town of Neishabour because the father has been transferred by his office. As the father's surname is Hashemi, the family is called the family of Mr. Hashemi. Through the family's move to a new city, the students were supposed to learn about different places, culture, history, etc., of Iran. Nevertheless, the story has many deficiencies which confuse the students: it introduces concepts without giving any background, e.g. the book talks about Iranian society and the 1979 Revolution without any preparation. That is, it does not depict what was it like before the revolution except for mentioning that there were cruel kings who ruled the country. Furthermore, the children start learning about the family without knowing anything about the self. Although the textbook was edited once in 2003, the imperfections were still significantly evident. Consequently, the story of Mr. Hashemi's family was eliminated from social sciences textbooks until 2013. The new books are not as sophisticated as they were claimed to be, and they share deficits similar to the story of Mr. Hashemi's family; however, this paper's focus is only on the story of Mr. Hashemi's family that had remained with Iranian students for a long time.

### *Family Dynamics and Gender Practices*

The first chapter of the book introduces the members of Mr. Hashemi's family and describes their duties so that children learn each member's place in the family. It should be noted that family law and social policies in Iran presume and support only the heterosexual nuclear family. Mr. Hashemi's family consists of the father, the mother, the son, the daughter, and the grandmother (Mr. Hashemi's mother):

Ali Hashemi is a third-grade student of elementary school. He has a sister who is one year younger than him. Her name is Maryam. Ali is the son of Mr. Hashemi. Mr. Hashemi works at the post office of Kazeroun. Mrs. Tahereh, Ali's mother, is a housewife. Mr. Hashemi's mother lives with the family as well. (Haddad-Adel, 1983, 2)

The picture of an ideal family is presented to the students through the introduction of the textbook: Mr. Hashemi is the center of the family with whom the whole family is being recognized. The mother and the daughter are introduced by their relationship with the son of the family, Ali. In this sense, the state considers women's subordination and men's dominance not as an idea but as a fact. The Islamic regime shapes the definition of the ideal family: "The family of the Prophet Mohammad plays a significant role in the symbolism around the Iranian family. Fatima al-Zahra and their resulting children are the symbols of an ideal family" (Shafiei, 2011, 24). Hence, Mr. Hashemi's family is to a large degree similar to Prophet Mohammad's family.

The textbook presents the traditional gendered arrangement of mother-at-home and father-at-work. Students read how different household activities are done by each family member:

In Mr. Hashemi's house, everyone cooperates with one another. Mr. Hashemi does the house's groceries and Mrs. Tahereh makes dresses in addition to doing the chores. She spends her small income on the family ... Ali buys bread and oil for

the house ... Maryam helps her mother in the chores. She wishes to learn cooking and tailoring from her mother. (Haddad-Adel, 1983, 2-3)

Accordingly, “mothers and fathers parenting practices continue, in the main, to be gendered activities” (Bainham, Sclater, and Richards, 2000, 107). Parental responsibility is defined as fathers who protect their family and mothers who nurture the children. The textbook depicts gendered images of mothers as carers and fathers as financial providers. The book “effectively sidelined fathers from a moral, ethical, educational and caring role whilst it placed mothers at the center stage of their children’s development” (Bainham, Sclater, and Richards, 2000, 108). While parents are presented as protectors and providers, the children are presented as a miniature model of adults who should be obedient and well-behaved. Although during Iran–Iraq War the state emphasized the mother-child tie mainly because men were obliged to leave their family to attend the war, there are either no signs of families with a single parent or there are negative representations of them in social sciences textbooks. This, too, has significant connotations for gender roles: “The negative imagery of single mothers and absent fathers itself sustains implicit ideas about the desirability of polarisation along gender lines in the nuclear family ideal” (Bainham, Sclater, and Richards, 2000, 107).

Through the story of Mr. Hashemi’s family, the family is refashioned and situated in relation to the nation in the sense that everything that is for the benefit of the state is good for the family as well (Najmabadi, 2005, 194). As it was noted before, Mr. Hashemi’s family is the ideal model of an Iranian family whose goals are the same as the regime’s goals. Overall, the family’s aims and desires must be in favor of the state, which should be constructed based on the values of the 1979 Revolution. The picture of Ayatollah Khomeini can be seen on the walls of Mr. Hashemi’s home to note the importance of this figure among the family members. During the trip, the family visits some cities in Iran; however, they only visit specific places in these cities that are noteworthy to the state, such as Imam Reza’s shrine or Shah Cheragh (Imam Reza’s brother’s tomb). The father prepares his children to serve the regime by introducing Khomeini as the hero who saved the country from foreigners and telling stories about the positive effects of the 1979 Revolution on the country. He also wakes the family up at dawn, so they can say morning prayers together (Haddad-Adel, 1983, 8). While the family visits Behesht-e-Zahra, a cemetery where the martyrs of the 1979 Revolution and the Iran–Iraq war are buried, the mother says: “Let’s vow to protect the Islamic Republic as long as we are alive” (Haddad-Adel, 1983, 44). Then, together, they shout revolutionary slogans (Haddad-Adel, 1983, 45). The only non-religious place that the family visit is the Shah’s palaces to emphasize the Pahlavi regime’s luxurious lifestyle while the majority of Iranians were poor and miserable (Haddad-Adel, 1983, 51). The parents also emphasize the palaces’ furniture which was imported from foreign countries to remark that the Shah was dependent on those countries, whereas the Islamic Republic brought independence for the country (Haddad-Adel, 1983, 55). Therefore, Mr. Hashemi’s family (as an ideal Iranian family) live based on Islamic ideologies and act only for the benefit of the state.

### *Childhood and Gender Discrimination*

The definition of a child as the miniaturized model of an adult has become a cultural pattern over a long period starting at least from the Qajar period (1779–1925) (Yazdi and Dezhmakhoo, 2014, 3). In Mr. Hashemi’s family, the children are portrayed as miniature models of adults as well. Children are shown as individuals who must follow the adults’ acts because they are not able to distinguish what is good and what is bad by themselves. For instance, Maryam and Ali’s body

gestures and clothing are the same as their parents and they act like adults. Their lives are miniature models of their mother's and father's lives. When Ali visits his aunt's husband's workshop, he asks questions about the machines and the job to learn more. While he takes a tour of the workshop with his aunt's husband, the reader would not notice any difference between the young man and Ali since they both talk like adults (Haddad-Adel, 1983, 40). It should be noted that Maryam and Ali never visit (or do not seem to want to visit) places suitable for their age, such as an amusement park, during the trip. At the end of the story, Ali writes a letter to his friend in which he explains his trip with his family. The letter is as sophisticated as letters that are written by adults. Not only the choice of words and grammar, but also the content of the letter seems erudite (Haddad-Adel, 1983, 90-4). From this, Iranian children learn to accept some social responsibilities which are normally unconventional for their age: they learn to give up playing and paying attention to oneself, especially in the more traditional context of small towns like the one in which Mr. Hashemi's family live (Yazdi and Dezhmakhoo, 2014, 4). Moreover, the absence of material items such as toys or concepts like playing is noteworthy in the story. This is a parable of the living situation of many Iranian kids. As Yazdi and Dezhmakhoo (2014) assert in their research, "although children's material culture (especially toys and clothes) is produced nowadays, the process of conformity is continuing in the form of behavioral patterns" (12). Even though the researchers demonstrate that the situation of middle-class children is a bit different, as they are often allowed to practice childhood, they also highlight that conformity crossed class borders and influenced everyone (Yazdi and Dezhmakhoo, 2014, 12).

Maryam and Ali's way of life cooperates with the Islamic regime: Ali was enrolled in Basij<sup>3</sup> classes as soon as they settled down in the new town (Haddad-Adel, 1983, 92) and Maryam was praised by the new school principal because of her perfect Hijab (Haddad-Adel, 1983, 96). In this sense, the state is persuading boys to be prepared for war and girls to keep chastity by covering their hair and body. Neither Maryam nor Ali are represented as separate individuals, but as people united with the state. The state requires people who can develop and improve the ideological nature of the dictatorship and are always ready to sacrifice themselves for it (Yazdi and Dezhmakhoo, 2014, 13). When Mr. Hashemi's family visits Behesht-e-Zahra in Tehran, Ali thinks about the ways in which he can continue the martyrs' way (Haddad-Adel, 1983, 45). Moreover, he tells Maryam that now it is their duty to protect the state like all those martyrs who had been killed for the Islamic Republic of Iran (Haddad-Adel, 1983, 60). Hence, by applauding revolutionary values through Ali's reaction, "the dictatorial system manages to produce soldiers who might resist the systematized pattern" (Yazdi and Dezhmakhoo, 2014, 5).

Gender discrimination and a preference for sons are notable in the story of Mr. Hashemi's family, which presents the ideal model of an Iranian family. The state defines gender as either man or woman and between the two kinds, women are subordinated to men. To keep women and men in their proper places, the regime trains children in each gender's appropriate behavior. The most evident sign of gender discrimination in the textbook is that every time the writer mentions the kids' names, he puts Maryam's name after Ali's. During the trip, it is usually Ali who poses a question about the new things he sees and seems more eager to know than his sister. Whereas Maryam asks her parents questions as well, she, most of the time, follows Ali's questions. That is, Ali is the leader who asks and shows his curiosity, and Maryam is the follower who continues the discussion her brother has started. Additionally, the writer reveals only the thoughts of Ali to the students: Ali thinks about revolutionary values and the ways he would be able to protect them. On

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<sup>3</sup> One of the five forces of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps.

the other hand, not even once are Maryam's thoughts shown to the reader and this makes it hard to understand her character. As a result, she appears to be less worthy than her brother. Hence, although the state mentions the important role of women to participate in social and political life, it still wants to keep them subordinated. It seems that highlighting the significance of women in the Islamic Republic is mainly because the filial obligation was better fulfilled by women, as a daughter was believed to be more capable than a son in nursing and nurturing (Najmabadi, 2005, 120). The pictures in the textbook strengthen gender discrimination as well: female characters of the story completely cover their hair and their body, even during the times they are at home. Although Maryam is not yet of an age where she must wear a veil, she is presented with a veil similar to female grown-ups. Moreover, the characters' body posture is gendered: female characters sit in a much more compact way than male characters, which is a sign of women's chastity; on the other hand, male characters of the story sit in a more open and comfortable way. These pictures assist the text in presenting male dominance and patriarchy to Iranian children.

#### *Womanhood and Motherhood*

In a traditional society like Iran, the meaning of womanhood is entangled with motherhood; that is, a woman is defined through her role as a mother, and womanhood and motherhood are treated as synonymous identities and categories of experience (Arendell, 2000, 1192). Arendell (2000) asserts, "Mothering and motherhood are viewed as dynamic social interactions and relationships, located in a societal context organized by gender and in accord with the prevailing gender belief system" (1193). The state insisted, to a large degree, on pre-modern normative concepts of wife and mother which can be read through books of ethics (e.g the Quran) to produce a perfect Muslim woman who follows the patriarchal rules (Abu-Lughod, 1998, 91). In this way, the Islamic Republic emphasizes women's potential to perform as a perfect nurturer in the house (Abu-Lughod, 1998, 92). The state put its effort towards improving women's general status both in society and in the family. However, it was complex to modernize women's Islamic doctrine since "the gender roles and female domesticity advocated by the government as the cornerstone of its envisaged Muslim society do not reconcile easily with the improvement of women's position and socioeconomic integration" (Hoodfar, 1994, 15).

The reason that the Islamic state encouraged women to become educated and take part in society was mainly because it needed mothers who are familiar with revolutionary values so that they can train their children (most importantly, their sons) based on those values. The government "claim[ed]... that if girls were educated they would develop into educated mothers who will raise intelligent children who would ensure the nation's prosperity" (Shafiei, 2011, 27). As womanhood became entangled with motherhood, educated women were preferable for marriage because it was desirable to marry someone who would make a good mother (Shafiei, 2011, 28). Since the 1979 Revolution, Iranian women's "intellectual development or underdevelopment becomes the primary factor in determining the development or underdevelopment of the country" (Abu-Lughod, 1998, 103). Unlike the books of ethics in which the father is fully in charge of the children's upbringing, a mother is not functioning just as a womb but as a nurturer as well after the 1979 Revolution. In other words, an Iranian woman is supposed to mother the country and has acquired the primary responsibility (Abu-Lughod, 1998, 103). In this sense, Fatima, the daughter of the prophet Muhammad, is the role model of revolutionary resistance to the monarchy during the 1970s (Abu-Lughod, 1998, 217).

One of the aims of teaching social sciences through the story of Mr. Hashemi's family at schools in Iran is to "portray and reinforce the conventional notions of mothering and motherhood" (Arendell, 2000, 1194). The traditional way of Iranian life encouraged by the Islamic regime is



evident in Mr. Hashemi's family: the father, not his wife, is the manager of the household and in charge of the discipline and education of the children. Thus, the mother is not completely the nurturer and caretaker of the child. The father is the decision-maker and is addressed as the head of the household. It is the father, not the mother, who is in charge of a child's upbringing and who spreads his wisdom. Abu-Lughod (1998) asserts that "The confinement of women within the home, the gendered splitting of the private and public, and the exclusion of woman from the public sphere are all inadequately premised on the virtues of motherhood and chastity" (218). Since the Islamic regime wanted to construct national, revolutionary, and Islamic modernity, the figure of the woman has been constituted "as a metaphor for a besieged nation, an embattled self, a delicate interiority, the uncontrollable other, the unpierced pearl to be bought and protected, or the sacred interior" in the textbook (Abu-Lughod, 1998, 233). To be accepted in the society, Iranian women must perform as the pillar of the family, abide by all the laws laid down in the Sharia, and accept the misogynistic gender-coding that had been chosen for them (Abu-Lughod, 1998, 233). The figure of the mother in Mr. Hashemi's family is allowed indirect agency through her role as a mother and is constructed as a heroine in relation to her production of children (or soldiers) for the nation. Accordingly, "women's heroism is measured in terms of their life-giving capacities, since the more children/soldiers a woman gives birth to, the more significant her heroism" (Åhäll, 2012, 291).

In Mr. Hashemi's family story, the mother appears as "a socially constructed set of activities and relationships involved in nurturing and caring" for her family (Arendell, 2000, 1192). The mother, then, becomes the first and main source through which kids form their identities and learn their place in society (Arendell, 2000, 1192). From the first chapter of the book, the student will absorb the subordination of the mother that reinforces the traditional gender-based division: "Mrs. Tahereh works at home, she also sometimes makes dresses for others; however, she spends her small income on the house and family" (Haddad-Adel, 1983, 4). Thus, the mother of the family sacrifices her desires for the benefit of her family in a sense that, though her income is not a remarkable amount, she would rather spend it on the family. Moreover, she has accepted living with her mother-in-law without any objections (at least, the students would not find out how she feels about the situation). When Mr. Hashemi tells the family that he has been transferred to another city, Mrs. Tahereh gets a bit upset, but she does not reveal her feelings: "Everyone got surprised. Mrs. Tahereh got a bit upset. But the kids were happy since they could travel and visit other places in Iran" (Haddad-Adel, 1983, 6). This is as much as the students learn about Mrs. Tahereh's feelings. She has to obey her husband and follow his orders. The mother is introduced as peaceful and associated with a life-giving identity since "women's legitimacy as peace activists was predominantly given through their roles as mothers" (Åhäll, 2012, 290). Mrs. Tahereh's caring, as experienced in the family context, acts as the metaphor for all forms of caring. Moreover, unlike the father of the family, she does not speak much. Similar to Maryam, who follows Ali's questions, Mrs. Tahereh follows her husband's words. That is, after Mr. Hashemi answers children's questions and shares his wisdom, his wife follows his words and explains more about the subject. The only acts that Mrs. Tahereh does during the trip are buying items for the house or her work, such as cloth or suitcases. Thus, the mother is not identified by her actual feelings, but by things she does for her family. She is not portrayed as a subject with her own needs; instead, she is devoted to the care of others and she is self-sacrificing.

### *Patriarchy and Fatherhood*

The notion of fatherhood is not as entangled with manhood as motherhood is with womanhood. However, Iranian men should follow a fixed pattern to be considered men. They

should be the decision-maker of the house. They should protect and lead their family and be the breadwinner. Both after and before the revolution, men were to be breadwinners and disciplinarians (E. Dowd, 2000, 34). This is evident through the story of Mr. Hashemi's family, as the father is the one member of the family who decides where the family goes or even where the family lives. E. Dowd (2000) asserts that "Across cultures, fathers tended to engage more with older children, and more with sons than with daughters" (24). In Iranian culture, fathers are to be patriarchs. The literal meaning of "patriarch" is father and ruler, and for Iranians, "the two ideas are so completely identified that it leaps imagination to grasp that there are societies in which father does not mean ruler" (Burgess, 1997, 4).

The father-child relationship is a significant bond in Iranian society since there is an association between fatherhood and God. The relationship goes back to the relationship of God as a father to human beings and the Prophet Mohammad and 12 Imams to the nation (Dowd, 2000, 24). In addition, the cultural and historical images of fatherhood are of authority figures such as Khomeini. In this sense, the father-child relationship can also be a representation of Khomeini's relationship with the nation, which has been mentioned in the story of Mr. Hashemi's family. The elementary school students in the story of Mr. Hashemi's family call Khomeini their father in the letter they have written in the last pages of the textbook (Haddad-Adel, 1983, 97). Similar to the representation of Khomeini, ideal fathers are heroes and leaders. In this sense, Mr. Hashemi is introduced as an economic provider, friend, and male role model, and Mrs. Tahereh as a nurturer.

In Iran, fathering in the sense of nurturing children is not a common experience for men: "There is a dominant mode of fatherhood which involves minimal or no caretaking, with no other connection or contribution to the children" (Dowd, 2000, 22). The presence of Mr. Hashemi in the household of children does not guarantee active nurturing; rather, it demonstrates that he is involved with children to share his wisdom and to teach them lessons. Moreover, "fatherhood is consistently characterized by economic providing, serving as a role model, protecting family members, and functioning as an authority figure. While capable of nurture and caregiving, fathers consistently do less direct childcare work than mothers" (Dowd, 2000, 24). The best way for the regime to pass these ideologies from one generation to another is via social sciences textbooks. It is through the story of Mr. Hashemi's family that boys learn how to be future husbands or fathers. They learn about family structure and their place as the head of this institution. In addition, the textbook gives all the required instructions about how to act like a man or a father in society. The father should be manly: "fatherhood and patriarchy have historically been intertwined, and men's dominance and male-female differences have been taken for granted" (Dowd, 2000, 37). When Maryam gets lost, the mother starts crying, not knowing what to do; it is the father who stays calm and tells her not to worry because he taught Maryam what to do in these situations (Haddad-Adel, 1983, 82). The difference between the parent's reactions in this incident presents the idea that men are more rational, and calm by nature, whereas women are more emotional. As shown in these textbooks, "the role of the father has been seen as essential and unique. The most enduring historical definition of a father has been as breadwinner, and the emotional or companionate side of fatherhood has been distinctly secondary" (Dowd, 2000, 37).

## **Conclusion**

The 1979 Revolution in Iran exploded aggressively because of the pressures that the Shah enforced on Iranian society. The Shah's autocratic rule was opposed by intellectuals and the urban working class because he flaunted monarchism and Pahlavism in an age of republicanism.

Consequently, Iranians put all their hopes in the 1979 Revolution; however, soon, it turned out to be a huge disappointment and caused a retrogression in the country, including eight unprofitable years of war with Iraq. The Islamic regime imposed its strict rules and regulations on Iranians to control society and harmonize people's lives with its Islamic values. In order to create an obedient society, the state focused on educating children and youngsters the revolutionary ideologies and highlighted gender discrimination. In this sense, the desired culture of a dictatorial system would be transmitted from one generation to another by dictators focusing on children. The Islamic Republic put its effort into making all aspects of life political and intruding on all private and public aspects of life so that it destroys the self. The state required individuals who obey the system and reproduce it from one generation to another. In this sense, it needs women inside the house who can give birth and raise their children with the ideologies of the 1979 Revolution. Thus, a family may become the foundation from which new political and cultural paradigms are imagined. Parenthood and childhood are defined through revolutionary ideologies and gender discrimination. It should be noted that, though the Islamic Republic attempted to control the new generations' lives, it has lost Iranian youngsters' heart so much so that they are now the de facto opposition in the Islamic state. Nowadays, Iranian young adults choose social resistance as the best way to express their opposition to the regime.

The Islamic Republic noticed the importance of education in transferring its ideologies from one generation to another. In this sense, the best way to train the generations in its revolutionary values is through the social sciences textbooks at schools. From the Islamic Revolution to the present time, Iranian students start studying social sciences in the third grade of elementary school. This essay focuses on the social sciences textbook used in the third grade of primary school in Iran which had been taught for three decades (1983-2013). The book tells the story of Mr. Hashemi's family, who are moving from their town to live in an eastern one. Via the story, children get to know about the dominant values in the country. They also get to know how to act based on the traditional gender roles for the benefit of the country. The paper aims at demonstrating the degree to which the textbook presents the revolutionary ideologies in family construction and the extent to which it depicts gender discrimination. To do so, it explores each family member's representation in the book; that is, it studies the way the textbook defines childhood, motherhood, and fatherhood for children based on Islamic values. The significance of this study lies in the way it breaks down the ideological codes of the time that have been illustrated to the children through pictures and stories to show in what way family and gender were supposed to be practiced in Iran during these three decades after the revolution. Therefore, those revolutionary ideologies that influence family construction can be elaborated to help the audience identify and clarify some of the most significant ideological issues that are being taught to Iranian students.

As mentioned earlier, the goal of the Islamic regime is to destroy the self and train individuals who would follow the ideologies of the 1979 Revolution and traditional gender roles. For this purpose, the roles of every member of Mr. Hashemi's family has been defined based on Islamic values. In this sense, the family of Prophet Mohammad came to be the ideal model of family construction. As social policies in Iran support the heterosexual nuclear family, this textbook presents the traditional gendered arrangement of mother-at-home and father-at-work. Iranian women and men should behave based on the definition of gender in their society which makes women subordinated to men. Additionally, gender discrimination and a preference for sons, which are common in the country, are presented in the story of Mr. Hashemi's family. The story of Mr. Hashemi's family defines children as miniature models of adults: the children's body

gestures and their ways of speaking, thinking, and writing are all similar to their parents. These kids do not visit any place suitable for their age during the trip. Moreover, the absence of material items such as toys or concepts like playing is noteworthy in the story. In general, the state portrays each member of the family situated in relation to the nation, i.e. Mr. Hashemi's family is the ideal model of an Iranian family whose goals are the same as the regime's goals.

In a traditional society like Iran, a woman is defined through her role as a mother, and womanhood and motherhood are treated as synonymous identities and categories of experience. Since the Islamic Republic needed mothers who are familiar with revolutionary values so that they can train their children (most importantly, their sons) based on those values, it emphasized their value as nurturers in the home. Thus, the state still wants women subordinated to men. For this reason, it demonstrates the picture of Mrs. Tahereh as a patient, loyal wife who obeys her husband. In the story of Mr. Hashemi's family, Mrs. Tahereh is not portrayed as a subject with her own needs but is devoted to the care of others. On the other hand, fathering in the sense of nurturing children is not a common experience for men. The father is the head of the family and the decision-maker. Throughout the story of Mr. Hashemi's family, men's dominance and male-female differences have been taken for granted. Fatherhood and patriarchy have historically been intertwined, and the father-child relation has been an important bond in Iranian society. For there is an association between fatherhood and God. The father-child relationship is also a representation of Khomeini's relationship with the nation, which has been mentioned in the story of Mr. Hashemi's family as well. Overall, the traditional gendered arrangement of parenting practices that the social sciences textbook depicts is the ideal model that the Islamic regime praises in Iran.

Both the story of Mr. Hashemi's family and the content of the later social sciences textbooks require further study so that the effects of the ideological codes on kids can be evident. As there have not been considerable works on social sciences textbooks in Iran, subsequent research can examine both the hidden Islamic ideologies within these books and their effects on the students. Future research can also study other grades at school or more recent social sciences textbooks. Accordingly, one would prepare surveys and interviews to depict the effects of the textbooks on the new generation. This paper also leads the way for the researchers to investigate other textbooks at schools which the state has politicized, such as Persian literature. Such examinations are important, first, because they might reveal reasons for some common traditions or specific behaviors among Iranian people, and second, they might awaken the society and help the people to recognize the ideological codes hidden in every aspect of their life.

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