

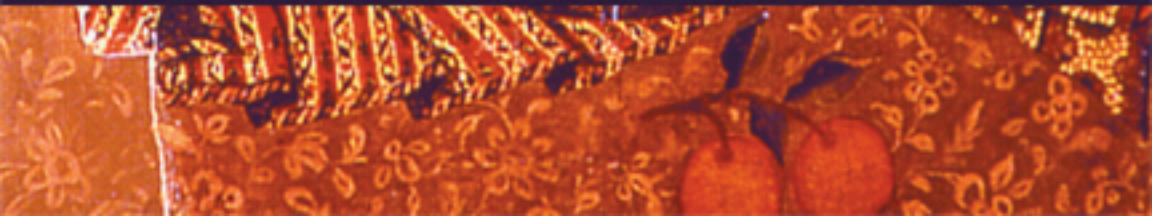


# Women with Mustaches

GENDER AND SEXUAL ANXIETIES OF IRANIAN MODERNITY

# and Men without Beards

AFSANEH NAJMABADI



*Women with Mustaches  
and Men without Beards*

*The publisher gratefully acknowledges the generous contribution to this book provided by the General Endowment Fund of the University of California Press Associates.*

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of Iranian Modernity*

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*University of California Press*

BERKELEY LOS ANGELES LONDON

University of California Press  
Berkeley and Los Angeles, California

University of California Press, Ltd.  
London, England

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Najmabadi, Afsane, 1946–

Women with mustaches and men without beards : gender and  
sexual anxieties of Iranian modernity / Afsaneh Najmabadi.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-520-24262-9 (cloth : alk. paper)—ISBN 0-520-24263-7  
(pbk. : alk. paper)

1. Women—Iran—Social conditions—19th century.  
2. Women—Iran—Social conditions—20th century. 3. Gender  
identity—Iran—History. I. Title.

HQ1735.2.N35 2005

305.42'0955'09034—dc22

2004017984

Manufactured in the United States of America

14 13 12 11 10 09 08 07 06 05

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

The paper used in this publication meets the minimum require-  
ments of ANSI/NISO Z39.48–1992 (R 1997) (*Permanence of Paper*).

*For Tally*



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# Acknowledgments

A book that has taken more than a decade to finish accumulates enormous debts of gratitude. But in repaying them one reenacts one's initial pleasures, remembering collegial conversations, insights gained, suggestions and criticism that pushed one's thinking along or made one rethink an argument or pursue another direction in the archives.

This book began during my year at the Pembroke Center for Teaching and Research on Women, Brown University, in 1988–89. Intending to pursue a very different research project, by the end of that year I had discarded it and embarked on what became this book. That year's conversations with other fellows and our weekly seminars produced the intellectual transition that shaped this book. My continued conversations with Elizabeth Weed, then the Center's Associate Director and now its Director, have been invaluable.

During the years I worked on this book I taught at Barnard College. I want to thank most affectionately Natalie Boylen Kampen for her trust and support of my work over all those years, and for patiently prodding me to learn how to see visual texts and interpret them productively. As the reader will see, I have come to depend on visual material for many arguments in this book. My other colleagues at Barnard (and at Columbia University), among them Elizabeth Castelli, Janet Jakobsen, Laura Kay, Irena Kelpfisz, Ann Pellegrini, Susan Shapiro, Deborah Valenze, Judith Weisenfeld, Liz Wiesen, and Angela Zito, gave me support and intellectual companionship. And we had fun together. I am also thankful to Elizabeth Boylan, Dean of Faculty, for her unfailing support.

Several graduate students at Columbia and Harvard have contributed to this book. They participated in seminars I taught organized around some of the themes of this book; they also read parts of the manuscript and gave me

helpful feedback. I thank Judy Chen, Kouros Esmaeli, Houman Sarshar, Aneesa Sen, and Jennifer Snow. Avi Rubin read the entire manuscript with the critical insight that I had come to expect of him.

Mana Kia and Sima Shakhsari provided me with insightful suggestions on the entire manuscript after it had gone to publishers. Though too late for revising this book, their generous commentaries have given me a new direction in which to move. In particular, Shakhsari's sharp critique—that the book is complicit in the amnesia that erases same-sex practices and desires of women—calls for an entire supplementary project, the kind of Derridian supplementarity that I recognize unwinds the whole fabric of this manuscript one more time. At the end, I decided to let go of this book and begin a new project.

In 1994–95 I was a fellow at the Princeton Institute for Advanced Study, where the Social Science faculty and fellows created a challenging and supportive intellectual atmosphere. Like many historians of gender, I owe a great deal to Joan Scott's books and articles. But the year at the Institute also gave me a unique opportunity for conversations with her that have continued since then and have sustained my thinking.

In 1995 Layla Diba invited me to contribute to a seminar at the Brooklyn Museum she organized in preparation for an exhibition she curated with Maryam Ehtiar, *Royal Persian Paintings: The Qajar Epoch, 1785–1925* (Brooklyn Museum, 23 October 1998 through 24 January 1999). Involvement in this project introduced me to the field of Qajar visual texts and led me ultimately to the central arguments of this book.

I presented early drafts of several chapters at workshops on modernity organized by Timothy Mitchell and Lila Abu-Lughod (Cairo, 1993; New York, 1996, 1999); at conferences organized in conjunction with the Brooklyn exhibition (at the Brooklyn Museum and at New York University in 1998 and at London University in 1999); at two workshops on Middle East historiography, organized by Ursula Wokoeck, Israel Gershoni, Hakan Erdem, and Amy Singer held at Bogazici University (1999, 2002); at a Belaggio conference organized by Joan W. Scott and Debra Keates (2000); at conferences at Ben Gurion University (1997, 1999); at the University of Aarhus, Denmark (1997); at the "Queer Middle Ages Conference" at New York University (1998); and at Harvard University, the University of Chicago, the University of Massachusetts (Amherst), Columbia University, the University of California (Davis and Berkeley), Georgetown University, New York University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the University of Michigan (Ann Arbor), the Institute of Fine Arts (New York University), and the Radcliffe Institute. I am thankful to organizers of these

events for the invaluable opportunities to discuss my work. In each case, questions and comments pushed me to go further in my arguments and in my archival research. Several participants at Belagio—Elizabeth Weed, Judith Butler, Rosi Bridotti, and Joan Scott—gave me useful comments on my paper. Some of the papers presented on these occasions were subsequently published, in *Iranian Studies* 26 (Winter/Spring 1993); *Feminist Studies* 19:3 (Fall 1993); *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 39:3 (July 1997); Gershoni, Erdem, and Woköck 2002; and *Iranian Studies* 34:1–4 (2001).

I spent the years 2001–2 as a fellow at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study at Harvard University, reworking the manuscript. I am deeply grateful to the Institute; to its Dean, Drew Faust; to the director of the fellowship program, Judith Vichniac; to its remarkable staff; and to all the fellows with whom I shared a marvelous year. I am also thankful to my new home institution, Harvard University, for providing additional support during my fellowship year.

My dear friend and colleague Kathryn Babayan read the entire manuscript. Her response helped me transform several parts of it. Other friends and colleagues, patient listeners and readers, have my eternal gratitude; they include R. Jackson Armstrong-Ingram, Ina Baghdiantz-McCabe, Beth Baron, Palmira Brummett, Houchang Chehabi, Dick Davis, Elizabeth Frierson, Yvonne Haddad, Suad Joseph, Ahmad Karimi-Hakkak, Jane Howard, Firoozeh Kashani-Sabet, Dina Al-Kassim, Alice Kessler-Harris, Caroline Jones, Frédéric Lagrange, Jayati Lal, Farzaneh Milani, Negar Mottahede, Carla Petievich, Mary Poovey, Sumathi Ramaswamy, Everett Rowson, Sunil Sharma, Boaz Shoshan, Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi, Kamala Visweswaran, and Heghnar Watenpaugh. I thank Houchang Chehabi for bringing to my attention a number of German-language sources and Heidi Walcher for translating them. Tara Kamangar, Parinaz Kermani, Aarti Khanolkar, and Bushra Makiya assisted me in preparing the many illustrations for this book.

John Emerson, Sunil Sharma, Jeff Spurr, and Azar Ashraf, librarians at Harvard University and Princeton University, helped me beyond any call of duty. Archival material from sources in Iran was generously made available to me by Ghulamriza Salami and Homa Hoodfar.

I have been fortunate to have the warm support of Lynne Withey at the University of California Press. The comments of the two anonymous readers of the manuscript were immensely helpful. My thanks also to Dr. Rose Glickman, whose skillful editing transformed my manuscript into a read-

able text, and to Stephanie Gauchel and Tanya Zakrevskaya for their cheerful technical support.

During my long journey from graduate school to this book, I have enjoyed the sustained and affectionate support of Margaret and Mohamad Makiya. Their trust and love saw me through difficult times.

Finally, two people, Kanan Makiya and Naghmeh Sohrabi, are in a category all their own. They have read this book in many shapes and forms; but perhaps more than their engagement with the text, their friendship and support kept me working on this project. I feel blessed for having them in my life.

# Introduction

Years ago, in the heat of a polemical exchange with a historian of Qajar Iran (1785–1925), who expressed regret and dismay that doing Qajar women’s history was impossible because few historical sources and solid extant records about women of that period existed, I retorted, “But if we use gender analytically, sources about men are also sources about women.” From the moment of its utterance, the sentence began to haunt me: How do we employ gender analytically so as to write history differently, to write history from which women are not absent and gender is not a missing category; one in which issues of gender and women are not afterthoughts and appendixes?

To consider gender as an analytical category (Scott 1988) poses questions different from those relevant for retrieving women’s history (Scott 2001). My questions became, What work did gender do in the making of Iranian modernity, and how did it perform this cultural labor? If central concepts of Iranian modernity were gendered, *how* were they gendered, and *what* effects did their genderedness produce for constitution of Iranian men and women of modernity (Felski 1995)?

From the late eighteenth century through the first decades of the twentieth century, Iranian modernity was shaped in the rearticulation of concepts like nation (*millat*), politics (*siasat*), homeland (*vatan*), and knowledge (*ilm*).<sup>1</sup> These reconceptualizations depended on notions of gender. Until the first decade of the twentieth century, when women began to claim their place as sisters-in-the-nation, nation was largely conceived and visualized as a brotherhood, and homeland as female, a beloved, and a mother. Closely linked to the maleness of nation and the femaleness of homeland was the concept of *namus* (honor). *Namus*, transported from its religious affiliation (*namus-i Islam*), was reclaimed as a national concern



(*namus-i Iran*), like *millat*, which also changed from a religious to a national community. Its meaning embraces the idea of a woman's purity (*'ismat*) and the integrity of the nation, *namus* was constituted as subject to male possession and protection in both domains; gender honor and national honor intimately informed each other.

The Iranian national emblem was a male lion holding a sword, with a (fe)male sun rising from behind his torso. But why (fe)male? In an earlier version of this manuscript, I used no parentheses in this word. Like so many modern Iranians, I grew up thinking of the sun as *khawrshid khanum*, lady sun. But as I was finishing my manuscript, I became uneasy, aware that something was amiss. In particular, I realized that my association of beautiful faces with femininity and femaleness, and thus my unquestioning reading of the sun in the national emblem as female, did not correspond to nineteenth-century Qajar sensibilities. In the Qajar period, a beautiful face could belong to either a young male or a female with identical features. My unease at this recognition was not incidental and localized. Sexuality and masculinity crept into several chapters of the book as haunting afterthoughts. For instance, when I looked at the genealogy of the nineteenth-century concepts of love and homeland, I ran into "sex trouble." Homeland had an unmistakable feminine genealogy through its double connection to soil and to womb. By the end of the nineteenth century, in the writings of male nationalists, love of homeland was evidently the heteroerotic love of male Iranians for a female homeland. But this love was rooted in Sufi (Islamic mystic) love, which was male homoerotic. How did a deeply male homoerotic concept become usable as a heteroerotic one? How did this sex change, so to speak, happen?

I had read Iran's "long nineteenth century" as a time shaped by the transformation of gender. Yet this change had depended on the transformation of sexuality. Like current historiographers of Iranian modernity, for example, I had assumed that the Iranian-European cultural encounter had pivoted on European gender heterosociality, with the public visibility of European women as the key signifier of cultural difference. This narrative, I came to conclude, was an already-heteronormalized narrative of the heteronormalization of love and the feminization of beauty. Part 1 explores this proposition.

This conclusion turned out to be more radical for my manuscript than I had anticipated. My project of writing a history of Iranian modernity in which issues of gender and women would not be afterthoughts and appendixes had produced its own afterthoughts and appendixes. In a tortuous and belabored way, through years of focusing exclusively on uncovering

"the gendered tropes of Iranian modernity," I came to appreciate that Eve Sedgwick's proposition that "an understanding of virtually any aspect of modern Western culture must be, *not merely incomplete, but damaged in its central substance* to the degree that it does not incorporate a critical analysis of modern homo/heterosexual definition" was highly pertinent to my study of Iranian modernity (Sedgwick 1990, 1, my emphasis). I ended up reconceptualizing and rewriting the entire manuscript. Indeed, I had to reread my sources.

This book began as a project on gender in the formation of Iranian modernity on iconic, narrative, metaphoric, and social levels. But I had overlooked another labor of gender: its production as a binary, man/woman. Thinking of gender as man/woman turned out to be a very modern imperative. I had overlooked the erasures that made this binary of gender possible in the first place. As I reread and rethought the entire project, I was first intrigued and then obsessed by a remarkable amnesia and the work of that amnesia in conceptualizing the gender of modernity. Simply put, the taken-for-granted man/woman binary has screened out other nineteenth-century gender positionalities and has ignored the interrelated transfigurations of sexuality in the same period. In part 1 and chapter 5, I confront the assumed normalcy of the man/woman binary by mapping modes of maleness in nineteenth-century Iran that were distinct from manhood.

Moreover, gender as a binary has since become a template for categories of modern sexuality. Our contemporary binary of gender translates any fractures of masculinity into effeminization. Nineteenth-century Iranian culture, however, had other ways of naming, such as *amrad* (young adolescent male) and *mukhannas* (an adult man desiring to be an object of desire for adult men), that were not equated with effeminacy. I suspect similar remapping is called for when thinking of women and females, although in this book I do not pursue this line of inquiry.

In the nineteenth century, homoeroticism and same-sex practices came to mark Iran as backward; heteronormalization of eros and sex became a condition of "achieving modernity," a project that called for heterosocialization of public space and a reconfiguration of family life. While we may consider a society in which men and women mix at all levels as less gender stratified, that very notion of mixing assumes a binary of the two kinds, men as one gender category and women as the other. In that sense, modern heterosocialization became, paradoxically, productive of gender as a binary.<sup>2</sup> For the past two centuries, Iranian (and Islamicate) modernity and its historiography have regarded the veil as the gender marker of cultural

difference between Iran (Islam) and Europe. This dominant view has ignored the veil's other cultural effect, namely, its work as a marker of homosocial homoerotic affectionate bonds among both women and men. The veil's backwardness, I will argue in chapter 5, stood for the backwardness of homosociality and homoerotic affectivity.

Before addressing these issues further, however, I would like to go back to the lion-and-sun, which I discuss in chapter 3.<sup>3</sup> That chapter focuses on gender's work for modernity on a symbolic level, the Iranian national emblem of lion-and-sun that was first formally adopted in 1836. In the course of the following century, it went through a period in which the sun burst into a magnificent Qajari (fe)male face, while the lion became more masculinized. By the early twentieth century, however, the sun lost most of its facial markings, and by the mid-1930s all such features were erased. The emblem was fully geometrized in the 1970s before it was finally discarded by the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979. Chapter 3 explores this history to unravel the sedimented levels of meaning that this trajectory reveals: What did the initial blossoming of the (fe)male sun signify, and how can we understand its subsequent erasure and the total masculinization of the national emblem?

Qajar Iran began with a concept of love embedded in Sufi allegorical associations. Love and desire in this discourse were intimately linked with beauty and could be generated in a man at least as easily by a beautiful young male as by a young female. In early Qajar art, for instance, beauty was not distinguished by gender. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, a highly gender-differentiated portrayal of beauty emerged, along with a concept of love that assumed heterosexuality as natural.

How did this enormous cultural transformation take place? One element, I suggest, is that in the nineteenth century Iranians became acutely aware that adult man–amrad love and sexual practices prevalent in Iran were considered vices by Europeans. As “another gaze” entered the scene of desire, Iranian men interacting with Europeans in Iran or abroad became highly sensitized to the idea that their desire was now under European scrutiny. Homoerotic desire had to be covered. One marker of modernity became the transformation of homoeroticism into masqueraded heteroeros.<sup>4</sup> Chapter 2 maps out this enormous cultural shift by studying iconic changes in Qajar paintings and the transformation of a particularly powerful popular narrative, the story of Shaykh San‘an.

The central argument in chapter 2 raises an important methodological problem for which I do not have a simple answer. During many presentations of material from this chapter, I was asked variations of the same

question: Am I suggesting that Europe was responsible for these transformations? Am I suggesting a causal link between the increasing interactions between Iran and Europe and the transformation of sexuality and gender in nineteenth-century Iran? What about “internal causes”? On one level, these questions are unanswerable. When dealing with the kind of radical historical transformations of genders and sexualities that I sketch out in this book, it is wise to remember that innumerable contingent events and concepts went into their making. Our historiography can never be a history of things as they really happened at their time. This implies that pinpointing causes could only be a historiographical effect.

I cannot answer the hypothetical question of what would have happened had Iran not profoundly interacted with Europe. Moreover, I find it difficult to make a separation between internal and external developments, as they become so intermeshed and progressively so as the century unfolds. Iranian-European cultural interactions go back at least to the sixteenth century. By the nineteenth century, they had become much more intense and involved a wider circle of Iranians beyond the Court. Much cultural hybridization was also mediated through the increasing interactions between Iran and the Indian subcontinent and the Ottoman Empire. I suspect that on the cultural level, more so than on the economic, administrative, and military levels, the interactions were a two-way street. Just as this cultural traffic transformed Iranian gender and sexual sensibilities, European gender and sexual mores were also changed through interactions with other societies that Europe “discovered” and, in some cases, colonized (Mendus and Randall 1989; Bleys 1995). The repeated question about European impact perhaps indicates “a fear of influence,” an anxiety that recognition of effects of European-Iranian interactions may translate into “denial of agency” for Iranians. I could not disagree with this idea more. Agency does not need a power vacuum to exist. On the contrary, agency would be meaningless outside a matrix of power. Nineteenth-century Iranians lived their cultural lives within a given world of power relations, within a cacophony of “hearing and overhearing” (Siegel 1997, 6). Neither Iranians nor Europeans invented themselves out of whole cloth.

My story of the nineteenth century is a contingent rather than a causal one. Agency and causation work in many directions. As Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi has suggested, “In the interplay of looks between Asians and Europeans, there was no steady position of spectatorship, no objective observer. . . . The field of vision and the making of meaning were perspectival, contestatory, and theatrical” (2001, 36). Power, of course, was not an even field, but that does not mean that cultural agency flowed in one

direction. That we worry about the question of agency in one direction but never consider the impact of “the East” on “the West” as an issue of denial of agency for Europe is a colonial/anticolonial legacy that continues to inform our current thinking.<sup>5</sup>

The first three chapters of this book depend heavily on visual texts for their main arguments. In 1994–95, when I was deeply puzzled over transformations of the sun of the national emblem, Layla Diba (then the Kevorkian curator of Islamic art at the Brooklyn Museum) generously invited me to join a group of scholars who were preparing the exhibition *Royal Persian Paintings: The Qajar Epoch, 1785–1925*.<sup>6</sup> The exhibition and the many symposia organized around it did more than give me an appreciation of Qajar art. I came to realize what a critical and powerfully rich source art historical resources provide for understanding a society’s history and culture.

Using visual texts as primary material for historical writing challenges the priority we usually accord to textual evidence over visual material. Historians often use visual material illustratively rather than analytically. Art historians, as well, sometimes draw a line between narrative and nonnarrative sources, accepting a level of interpretive speculativeness about the latter that is denied for the former.<sup>7</sup> When presenting an argument articulated through visual documentation, one is often asked to produce supporting texts. One is rarely asked to produce visual material to support an argument based on textual evidence. Written texts are often assumed to have an apparent self-sufficiency and transparency that visual texts are assumed to lack. The challenge for me was learning how to “read” visual texts historically and to use methods of visual interpretation to craft a historical argument.<sup>8</sup>

In the case of nineteenth-century Iran we have an abundance of representations of women. But, as I have argued elsewhere, these paintings cannot be assumed to represent actual women (Najmabadi 1998a). This can be a source of disappointment and frustration for a social historian, for Qajar art seems largely devoid of social information (Diba 1989). Using feminist theories of representation, however, can turn these visual texts into rich sources for studying gender and sexuality (Pollock 1988). This is especially critical for the earlier decades of the nineteenth century. In that century’s later decades, and of course even more so early in the twentieth century, issues of sexuality and gender become more explicit topics of political discourse and social critique, making the use of written texts as the main primary material more plausible.

Visual texts are in a sense similar to dreams: a sedimentation of some of the most significant cultural meanings that become accessible through

reading methods that feminist art historians, film theorists, and psychoanalytically informed cultural historians have developed.<sup>9</sup> In fact, working with visual texts made me more conscious of avoiding the presumption of transparency about textual sources, on which I depend more for the later chapters of this book.

The nineteenth-century heteronormalization of love was central to the shaping of a number of political and cultural transformations that signify Iranian modernity. Feminization of the category “beloved” made the figure of Iran as a female beloved available to the male national brotherhood. Heteronormalization of love thus performed patriotic labor, making the entire discourse of protection of woman—a body that needs to be defended against alien designs, intrusion, and penetration—and the defense of honor available to nationalism. Iran as a female beloved, in turn, consolidated love as heteroeros. It made the transformation of marriage from a procreative to a romantic contract possible, performing romantic labor for the production of the companionate wife. Such wives demanded that men do away with their same-sex affairs—leaving a birthmark of disavowal of male homosexuality on the modernist project of women’s emancipation.

Concomitantly, modernity held out the promise of opening the public space to women and treating the educated modernist woman as a citizen and a compatriot. Chapter 5 considers the politics of public visibility and the contest over the gender of space in Iran that ensued from these reconfigurations. It maps the effects of heterosocialization on women’s language, verbal and somatic, and on female homosocial space. The chapter concludes with a critical assessment of women’s disillusionment with important aspects of modernist heterosocial promise.

In chapter 6 I address the effects of heterosexualization of love for reimagining marriage as a romantic rather than a procreative contract. Romantic heteroerotic love entered the scene of Iranian modernity as a tragedy in which the ideal happy ending, the marriage between modern man and woman, was blocked by political and cultural forces, such as despotic government, ignorant people, unconscionable behavior by men of religion, and lawlessness of the country. Men’s and women’s writings on romantic marriage display a divergence. The proposition of marriage as a romantic contract demanded women to prioritize love and loyalty to husband over their female-female bonds. From the start, this was a high-risk proposition for women, and was perceived by them as such, especially when men advocated romanticization of marriage while still wishing to keep the prerogatives of marriage as a sexual/procreative contract, to be polygynous and divorce at will. All the early women’s writing on marriage centered on

the critique of polygyny and easy divorce by men. These critiques were combined with demands on men to disavow male homosexual practices that were seen to endanger the possibility of a companionate marriage.

As women were reimagined as companionate wives for the modern citizen-men, their procreativity was also reconfigured into new notions of motherhood, fueled by the modernist drive for progress and science. Chapter 7 examines the modern educational regimes and their regulatory and emancipatory impulses. Not only did educated motherhood enable women's quest for education but schools also provided a space within which women would claim citizenship. Yet women's claims as compatriots of men were contained by the protectionist prerogatives of the masculine over the feminine, real and allegorical. Chapter 8 describes the effects of these tensions for women's national claims.

The final chapter focuses on feminism's productive work of a different kind: screening away the sexuality of modernity. Issues of gender and sexuality were central to the formation of modernist and countermodernist discourses, and these contestations continue to be central to contemporary politics of Iran and many other Islamic societies of the Middle East (Paidar 1995). Yet the centrality of this marker of difference, and its current prized place in the revisionist historiography of modernity, has come to screen away the other category of difference: the figure of the *ghilman* (the young male object of desire) and the historical memory of male homoeroticism and same-sex practices. Feminist critique of Iranian modernity has focused on the disciplinary work of the figure of female excess—the “Westoxicated” woman, one who mindlessly imitates “the West.” In a troubling sense, this emphasis has complemented feminism's burden of birth—its disavowal of male homoeroticism.

This book began as a project of gendering historiography of Iranian modernity, by showing that the work of gender was not a “leftover” effect of the “traditional” but a central effect of modernity itself. Yet the project has ended in an elsewhere—of sexuality. If this book begins the work of making us uncomfortable with feminist complicities in modernist erasures, and moves to bring closer together studies of modern genders and sexualities in Iran, it will have achieved more than I could have hoped for.

PART I

Beauty, Love, and Sexuality





# 1 Early Qajar

Notions of beauty were largely undifferentiated by gender in early Qajar Iran (1785–1925); that is, beautiful men and women were depicted with very similar facial and bodily features. Sometimes only the style of headgear distinguishes male from female in visual representations.<sup>1</sup> Other times it remains very difficult to tell, as in figure 1, labeled “Amorous Couple.”

In written sources the same adjectives were used to describe male and female beauty. For example, Rustam al-Hukama describes the young men toward whom Tahmasb Mirza (Safavi) was sexually inclined in these terms: “young beardless men, rose-faced, silver-bodied, cypress-statured, narcissus-eyed, coquettish, with sugar lips, wine bearers with tulip cheeks, moon-faced, Venus-shaped, with crescent eyebrows, magic eyes, black-scented hair, and crystalline chin folds, and full of games and coquettishness” (1974, 199). Adjectives that today are more likely to evoke feminine beauty, in the nineteenth century were equally applicable to men and women.<sup>2</sup>

These literary and visual representations of male and female beauty were not confined to “objects of desire.” Descriptions and illustrations of real living persons of power, like kings, princes, and Sufis, were similar until the late Nasiri period.<sup>3</sup> Rustam al-Hukama’s account of kings (the Shah Sultan Husayn and Nadir Shah) were replete with descriptions such as sweet-featured, tall and well-proportioned, and sweet-scented. They are said to have large green eyes, wide connected eyebrows, red cheeks, narrow waists, slanted nose, thin lips, and long fingers (Rustam al-Hukama 1974, 85, 180). Riza Quli Khan Hidayat (1800–71) described Fath‘ali Shah on the occasion of his coronation in these verses:



FIGURE 1. Amorous couple, early nineteenth century.

His face like Canopus  
 A pansy borrowing two leaves from Jasmine;  
 Two narcissus black, eyebrows full of curls  
 the firmness of the two eyebrows like silver masts;  
 Like his stature no cypress is there in the garden  
 pleiades not as radiant as his face.<sup>4</sup>

Royal portraits closely mirrored these literary descriptions (figure 2). Qajar histories, through the late Nasiri period, retained these iconographies of royal beauty.

On the other end of the social scale, common people as well as prisoners captured in wars or enslaved in raids were described in very similar terms. Consider this verbal portrait of Murtizá 'Ali, the sixteen-year-old son of prayer leader Mulla Yar Muhammad Afghan: "Though sixteen in age, in face he was as the moon of the fourteenth night. Every day he had a thousand people ready to die for him, disheveled just like his locks of hair, in front of him and following him. From the love of Murtizá 'Ali, the Shi'ites became Sunni."<sup>5</sup> The author continues for another page in this vein, describing not only Murtizá 'Ali's cruel beauty but also the incredible grief of his lovers when he was murdered in 1758.

Turkoman slaves captured by Husaynquli Khan Qajar in a raid in 1777 are described as follows: "Among the captured, women were superior in facial beauty to girls, silver-bodied, well-proportioned, with attractive features and beautiful faces, outshining those of Khutan. Among the men, the eyes, hair, the first trace of a mustache [*khatt*], cheeks, and stature of the boys shamed narcissus, hyacinth, pansy, jasmine, and the cypress" (Saravi 1992, 56). The same author continues with more than two pages of elaborate metaphors to describe Yamut Turkomans captured by Aqa Muhammad Khan in 1792, concluding that they were the envy of the most beautiful on earth and of the *ghilman* and the *hur* (young female virgins) of paradise.<sup>6</sup>

*Ghilman* and *hur* are most commonly thought to have come from Qur'anic verses that describe paradisiacal pleasures (e.g., 44:51–54; 52:20–24; 56:17–24; 55:46–58, 70–74; 76:19–20) and generally are understood to refer to eternally young male and female beauties.<sup>7</sup> There is vast classical commentary on the meaning of these figures, though, as Everett Rowson has amply documented in his forthcoming manuscript, little discussion of *ghilman* and *wildan* (boys) as figures of sexual pleasure.<sup>8</sup> While the Qur'anic verses do not explicitly attribute any sexual role to the *ghilman*, the parallelisms of description and of services rendered by the *hur* and the *ghilman* opened up the interpretive opportunity for later literature. Sexual meanings were constituted for the *ghilman* as much as for the *hur*



FIGURE 2. Portrait of Fath'ali Shah. Mihr 'Ali. 1809–10.

in many genres of Persian and Arabic literature. This was definitely so in nineteenth-century writings.

#### MEN, AMRADS, AND WOMEN

The gardens portrayed in Persian poetry and painting are populated by the hur and more commonly by the ghilman (also referred to as *amrads* or *sadahs*, beautiful young beardless men) who often double as wine servers (*saqi*) (Meisami 1985). Today these figures are often translated as “boys,” and *amradparasti* (loving *amrads*) rendered as “boy-love.” I refuse to use this naming because of the close affiliation of “boy” with contemporary implications of pedophilia and our identification of “boy” as child. In pre-modern and early modern Persian male homoerotic culture, an *amrad* was more often a young male, in contemporary usage an adolescent, although he could be even in his early twenties, so long as he did not have a fully visible beard.<sup>9</sup> In fact, an adolescent with the first trace of a mustache (*nawkhatt*) and before the full growth of facial hair (a process that could take a number of years) was considered the most beautiful. At the same time, that hint of a mustache (*khatt*) heralded the beginning of the end of his status as object of desire for adult men and his own movement into adult manhood. It signaled the beginning of his lover’s loss. Meisami has observed that “the ultimate focus [of the refined sensuality incited by medieval Persian poetry] is not on the desired but on the desirer, who observes his beloved” (1995, 247). She suggests that paradise/garden in this poetry “is an emblem of a state of lost, or hoped-for, bliss” (271). The *nawkhatt* was simultaneously the most desired and a figure of imminent loss.<sup>10</sup> The first sign of a mustache is also called *mihrgiah*. Literally, “love-plant,” “growth of affection,” it provided a perfect metaphor for the intersection of garden and body. *Mihrgiah* is a plant with medicinal uses but can be fatal in excess, much like the love of the young, cruel adolescent that provided a central theme for poets’ verses of suffering.<sup>11</sup>

The growth of a full beard marked adult manhood, the adolescent male’s transition from an object of desire to a desiring subject. In the classical eleventh-century book of advice, *Qabusnamah*, a seventy-year-old ruler fears falling in love with a recently purchased ghulam. He orders his *vazir* (minister/adviser) to free the slave but to keep him indoors until his beard is fully grown (‘Unsur al-Ma’ali 1999, 83–84). The severe edicts in books of etiquette and moral behavior that prohibited men from shaving their beards were related to this critical transition from one state to the next. For a male adolescent, to be an object of desire of adult men was considered

unavoidable, if not acceptable or cherished by all. For an adult man that would constitute unmanliness. The manliness of the beard was not so much a sign distinguishing man from woman, as implied by the modern interpretation of beardless men as effeminate. In Persian texts of ethics and manners, woman and *mukhannas* (an adult man who made himself look like a young beardless man, displaying a wish to remain the object of desire of adult men) are often linked. For instance, the (presumably male) reader of these texts is told “not to move his body as woman and mukhannas do” (Tusi 1978, 232; Davvani 1866, 217). But the classical definition of mukhannas is decidedly *not* in relation to women, as this verse from Rumi’s *Masnavi* illustrates: “In men, their passion is directed to their anterior / in mukhannas to their posterior.”<sup>12</sup> To the extent that woman and mukhannas both defined nonmanhood, they are certainly affiliated categories. Yet the reduction of that neighborly affiliation to one of similitude is largely a modern phenomenon.<sup>13</sup> The ubiquitous designation of the beardless amrad or mukhannas as effeminate in our time reveals the depth of heteronormalization and the reduction of all gender and sexual categories to two: male and female, man and woman. Indeed, *amrad* and other words used for adolescent beardless men do not derive from words that connote femaleness. This is congruent with a concept of desire that did not consider same-sex desire as derivative from other-sex desire. Calling amrads effeminate traps authors, despite their intentions, into transcribing homoeroticism as frustrated heterosexual desire. Stephen Murray, for example, concludes a chapter on patterns of male homosexuality in Muslim societies as follows: “With females segregated and tightly controlled, young and/or effeminate males available for sexual penetration are tacitly accepted—and very carefully ignored in Muslim societies, past and present” (Murray and Roscoe 1997, 42). Earlier in the same chapter he refers to young men who wish to be desired by older men as “seek[ing] to preserve an androgynous appeal” or as “emulat[ing] female appearance” (21). But there is no reason to assume that these men want to appear female. Perhaps they simply wish to look like beardless male adolescents. In nineteenth-century Iran, adult men who shaved their beards were called *amradnuma* (looking like an amrad) and not *zan'numa* (looking like a woman). The edicts against shaving one’s beard thus express the cultural fear that young men may want to remain an object of desire rather than passing into the desiring man. As Rowson has noted, “The public badge of a dominant male was his beard,” for which reason shaving a man’s beard was used to publicly humiliate moral offenders of various sorts (Rowson 1991a, 58, 68).

An adult man who shaved his beard was thought to be declaring his desire to be desired by other men. This was linked to *'ubnah*, considered in medical discourse as an illness.<sup>14</sup> Socially, *ma'buns* were largely considered abject characters, subject to religio-cultural approbation and sometimes severe punishment. In some Muslim societies, however, social practices accommodated such figures through gender cross-dressing and integration in the margins of the world of women, and/or into professions such as music, dancing, and reciting poetry—another reason that sometimes they have been considered effeminate. Yet as the discussion of *khanith* of Oman (as well as al-Razi's medical discourse) suggests, *khanith* can be read as an intermediate category on a continuum between very feminine women and very masculine men.<sup>15</sup>

By the seventeenth century, however, some texts on ethics define an adult's man desire for the adolescent as an illness as well. Whereas the thirteenth-century *Akhlaq-i Nasiri* called such desire excessive attraction (Tusi 1978, 169), the seventeenth-century *Akhlaq-i 'alamara* transformed it into an illness (*maraz*) (Fani Kashmiri 1983, 75).<sup>16</sup> This, however, did not become a dominant mode of thinking.

Male love and desire, intimately linked with notions of beauty in the Persianate medieval discourse, could be generated at least as easily by a beautiful male face as by a female one.<sup>17</sup> Premodern Islamic literature considered gender irrelevant to love and beauty. Alternatively, male beauty and male homoeroticism were considered the superior sentiments.<sup>18</sup> As we have seen, in literature the same adjectives were used to describe beautiful male and female bodies, and in paintings the details of beauty were identical in male and female figures. Within Persian poetic tradition, *ghazal* became the most celebrated, though not exclusive, genre for the expression of male homoeroticism.

In Sufi practices, the figure of the young adolescent man as an object of desire was linked with the practice of gazing (*nazar*). As Rowson has summarized, the practice of gazing (and consequently falling in love with) was directed at young adolescent males: "From a relatively early period—probably the mid-ninth century—some Muslim mystics claimed to see in the beauty of adolescent boys a 'testimony' to the beauty and goodness of God, and initiated the practice of gazing at such a boy as a form of spiritual exercise. The boy was thus known in Sufi parlance as a 'witness' (*shahid*)."<sup>19</sup> Falling in love hopelessly and selflessly with such a figure became a familiar trope of Sufi tales.

Not only was it assumed that desire could be aroused by any beautiful face, male or female, but such desire was not considered improper or sinful



in itself. Sin belonged to the domain of deeds, for which reason there is plenty of literature of warning against gazing practices that might prompt a believer to engage in sinful acts. Warnings, and punishments of infractions, were directed equally against sexual acts with a woman not a man's own wife as against having sex, in particular anal intercourse, with young men. Pellat has argued that sodomy "is not explicitly condemned by the Holy Book, which indeed allows a certain ambiguity in passages where the believers are promised that in paradise they will be attended by menseservants (*ghilman*, LII, 24, *wildan*, LVI, 17, LXXVI, 19)." It is in the *tafsir* and *hadith* literature (respectively, interpretations of the Qur'an and narratives attributed to the prophet Muhammad) that the full condemnation is formulated, with similar punishments for *liwat* and *zina* (heterosexual intercourse outside marriage). Some hadith identify punishment for *sahq* (literally to pound, the most common word used for sexual practices among women) as the same as that for *zina*.<sup>20</sup>

Advice on how to control one's gaze and how to discipline the desire aroused by a beautiful face concerned gazing both at women and at young males: "Know that whenever a woman or boy approaches, Satan prompts, 'Look, and see what they are like.'"<sup>21</sup> The same manuscript, laying down the etiquette of engaging in *sama'*, instructs: "First, the singer must not be a woman or a child, for they are objects of lust, and this is unlawful. Since lust is innate in all created beings, when one's heart is absorbed in God's work and a beautiful face is observed, Satan gives aid and temptation appears."<sup>22</sup> In the interpretation of dream literature the two categories worked similarly (Meisami 1991, 288).

Yet it would be hazardous to draw general conclusions for the populace at large from Sufi practices or from poetic discourse. One is reminded of Judith Bennet's point (2000) about the ways in which social history haunts queer studies. Granted the gender-undifferentiated concept of beauty and desire, granted the dominance of male beloved in cultural sensibilities, poetic and visual, what does all this have to do with sexual practices in late eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century Iran? What connections, beyond the allegorical and transcendental, as many critics ask, do these concepts have with the actual sexual life of real men and women?

At present we do not have social histories for this period of Iran, but a number of personal narratives provide us with a point of departure. The overwhelming majority of these narratives were penned by men of the court and the political elite.<sup>23</sup> The one important more recent exception is the many works of Ja'far Shahri. Shahri's eleven volumes on the history of modern Tehran (1990, 1996) is a highly problematic work that presents the

coming of urban modernity, and in particular public heterosociality, as moral corruption. Spaces such as modern-style restaurants and cafés, cinemas, and public parks are invariably spaces of seduction and illicit sex (between men and women, between adult men and male adolescents).<sup>24</sup> Shahri objects that urban corruption has even spread to such domains as holy shrines. Spaces of male homosocialization, on the other hand, such as old-style coffeehouses, *zurkhanah* (male sports clubs), and the like, are celebrated and sympathetically, if at times nostalgically, described.<sup>25</sup> European influences on Tehran's urban life, narrated through new commodities in demand, such as bicycles, socks, umbrellas, and street carriages, are all associated with sexual license.<sup>26</sup> The volumes are saturated with misogynous tales as well as homophobic and anti-Jewish accounts.<sup>27</sup> The historian has to struggle to see the turn-of-the-century city beneath the weight of these perceptions that underwrite Shahri's history of urban Tehran.

The second challenge is more theoretical and methodological. It is the way Foucault haunts studies of the sexualities of "other places and other times." His bold proposal that the homosexual as a type did not exist before it was invented in nineteenth-century Europe was critical to the ensuing rich work on the history of sexualities. What sense, if any, however, would it make to speak of homosexuality for other times and places? Most writers are happy to speak of and accept homoeroticism for pre-modern Islamic cultures. Crossing from eros to sex seems to make everyone screech to a halt. Most would agree that we could talk about same-sex acts but not about homosexuality as a concept that defined particular notions of erotic desire, which we now associate with the Foucauldian "homosexual as a human type."

I generally share this reluctance to map later formations of desire onto those of earlier sociohistorical periods. Yet one needs to be aware of the current effects of pushing this argument to the limit of drawing lines of alterity. First, by locating same-sex identification in modern Euro-America, one renders homosexuality external to other places, an alien concept for formation of desire in these other cultures, an argument fully used by homophobic cultural nativists who are happy to (al)locate homosexuality in "the West."<sup>28</sup> Second, it introduces a radical alterity with the past, producing the premodern as a radically different time. It becomes difficult to distinguish historical specificity from unreproducible peculiarity. Identity categories, such as gay and lesbian, undeniably belong to a specific place and a period of history in which same-sex desire came to be scripted as "homosexual as a species." *Fixing* of types into homo- and heterosexual may not have existed before this moment in the history of sexuality, but it would be a

mistake to think that prior to that time there were no identifications whatsoever by desire types.<sup>29</sup>

In the case of Iran and much of the Islamic world, sexual practices were generally not considered fixed into lifelong patterns of sexual orientation. In particular, men, about whose sexual practices we know a great deal more than those among women, engaged in a variety of sexual acts. Vaginal intercourse with wives was aimed to fulfill procreative obligations, while other acts were linked to the pleasures of power, gender, age, class, and rank. It was (is) also the case that if men performed their procreative obligations, the larger community was generally not much concerned with the rest of their sex life—what Murray has aptly called “the will not to know” (Murray and Roscoe 1997, 14).<sup>30</sup>

Yet sexual preferences, at least for men, did not go unnoted. That sexual preference was not taken for granted (as heterosexual), or considered irrelevant to what constituted features of a man worthy of record for chroniclers and biographers, is evident by the fact that individual men were explicitly marked as woman-lovers or amrad-lovers. Shah Sultan Husayn Safavi (r. 1694–1722) is said to have been “fully inclined to women” (*bih nisvan mayl-i tamam dasht*) (Qazvini 1988, 79), whereas Shah Tahmasb II (r. 1722–32) is said to have “preferred one Joseph-faced to thousands of Zulaykhas and Laylis and Shirins” (Rustam al-Hukama 1974, 147). A mid-sixteenth-century source relates that the famous Safavi court painter Bihzad, “who reached the age of seventy, could not live a moment without ruby-red wine or the ruby-red lips of a wine-bearer” (Soudavar 1999, 51). Nadir Shah (r. 1736–47) is said to have been “remarkable for his love of women” (Hanway 1753, 2:268). Tancoigne, who had traveled to Iran in 1807–8, reported with delight Fath‘ali Shah’s love for women, adding in a footnote: “As I may here be accused of contradicting myself, after what I said in the nineteenth letter, on the little regard the Persians have for the fair sex, I am very happy in having this opportunity of declaring that Feth Ali Chah is free from the general accusation against that nation. It is even said, that he is passionately fond of women, and that he holds the infamous vice I have mentioned in detestation” (Tancoigne 1820, 182). Unlike Tancoigne, however, Fath‘ali Shah’s court poet, Fath‘ali Khan Saba, praised him for liking both young men and young women, and ‘Azud al-Dawlah recorded not only his many wives but also his extended engagements with *nazarbazi*, gazing at beautiful young men (Saba 1962, 156; ‘Azud al-Dawlah 1949, 70–72). My point here is not that Tancoigne got Fath‘ali Shah’s sexual preferences wrong but that Tancoigne and Saba had different sensibilities on this issue. Because Fath‘ali Shah had many wives and

children, Tancoigne concluded that he was heterosexual and homophobic. For Saba, on the other hand, procreation and sexual inclination belonged to separate domains; he could thus praise Fath‘ali Shah in both homo- and heteroerotic terms, without needing to mark the king either as a homosexual who was thus unable to fulfill his “procreative obligations” or as a heterosexual, proved by the number of his wives and children.<sup>31</sup>

Mirza ‘Abbas Furughi, a poet at the court of Muhammad Shah (r. 1834–48), allegedly spent most of his life enraptured by peri-faced amrads (I‘tizad al-Saltanah 1991, 562). Noting sexual preferences, as distinct from the modernist tendency to take heterosexuality for granted, continued into the late nineteenth century. ‘Ayn al-Saltanah (1995–2001) reported several men of the court as “not inclined toward women” or as “lovers of beautiful young boys” (1:793, 916; 2:1026, 1051; 4:3163; 6:4819; 7:5423–24). Such reports were not always neutral or approving. I‘tizad al-Saltanah clearly did not approve of Furughi’s proclivity and tells us that because of the latter’s reputation the moon-faced stayed away from him for fear of dishonor (I‘tizad al-Saltanah 1991, 562). Yet, compared with twentieth-century sources, the extent of nonjudgmental or even sympathetic recording in many nineteenth-century and earlier sources is remarkable.<sup>32</sup> When in 1873 Sani‘ al-Dawlah (later I‘timad al-Saltanah), outside Tiflis on his way back from Europe, noticed that some of his servants were taking young beautiful boys (*tifl*) back to Iran, his only concern was that they should have permission to take them (I‘timad al-Saltanah 1977, 23).

In fact, as the preceding example suggests, some recording of sexual preference and activities was merely incidental. Reporting on the appointment of Mirza Abu al-Qasim Khan to the governorship of Tehran in April 1898, ‘Abd al-Husayn Khan Sipihri praised his competence in rulership. At his last post, Mirza Abu al-Qasim Khan had astutely and expediently solved a murder case by inspecting carefully the body of the dead man and then asking for all town butchers to be brought to him, whereupon he confronted the nervous murderer. It turned out that the accused butcher had killed the man because the latter had seduced his beloved beautiful youth and had refused to give him up (Sipihri 1989, 241–42). Yet this story was recounted because of the clever way the governor had figured out a butcher must have been the murderer: a mark on the neck of the beheaded man indicated that the killer had wiped clean the bloody knife on the neck—a practice followed by butchers when they slaughtered animals. The account nonetheless offers glimpses into issues of sexual culture, indicating that the sexual activities and relationships between the two adult men and the young adolescent were not in themselves issues to be highlighted, nor that

a “crime of passion” of this type was some strange, particularly abominable, or noteworthy event.

More often, when sexual liaisons violated certain social norms or exhibited excessive passion, they were both noted and punished. For example, Abu al-Hasan Ghaffari Kashani (1990, 131–34) recounts the fate of three of Karim Khan Zand’s courtiers: one had loved in excess (*ta’ashshuqi mufrat*), and they all had love affairs with members of the inner court, thus transgressing the inner domain of the ruler. They were put to death. Similarly, Mahmud Mirza (1968, 159) tells of Akhtar, a poet, who had his tongue cut out as punishment for his liaison with a youth of Sulayman Khan Qajar’s inner circle (*yiki az khavass-i ghilman misal*). Mahmud Mirza also wrote disapprovingly of ‘Ali Naqi Hasrat, whose behavior broke all rules of propriety.<sup>33</sup>

Reports concerning sexual practices between older men and adolescent males indicate that the adult men were punished if the youth had been forced. The punishment was usually bastinado and sometimes cutting off an ear and parading the culprit in the market—a lighter punishment than for the rape of a virgin girl, for which the perpetrator might be castrated (Sa’idi Sirjani 1983, 95, 218, 276, 424). More severe punishments were meted out when a situation led to a crime, such as a stabbing or murder (318, 323, 327, 363–64, 537, 588–89). In one report, when the advances of one male cousin (paternal uncle’s son) were rejected by the other, the desiring cousin (*talib*) attempted to behead the other (*matlub*) while the latter was asleep (222). The greatest horror was reserved for a man who had sodomized a very young boy (four or five years old), although the punishment was not as severe as for assault and murder or rape of a girl.<sup>34</sup>

Falling in love in excess, becoming sick or dying of love, or loving exclusively young men provided the occasion for notice as well. Ghaffari, for instance, noted that the poet Aqa Yadgar Hajat was inclined absolutely (*mutlaqan*) toward *shahids* (literally witness [to divine beauty]) and did not think of getting married even though he lived into his seventies; another poet, Mirza Abu al-Qasim Hijri, had gone in his youth to Isfahan to study, “but most of the time he was afflicted with love and captive of beautiful rose-faced youth” (Ghaffari Kashani 1990, 404, 460). In his autobiography, Hazin Lahiji (1692–1766) recorded his intense love, while he was a student in Isfahan, that had led to a two-month illness (1954, 29–31). Mirza Mahmud wrote of a physician and a poet, Mirza Qurban‘ali Burhan, that he would practically die whenever he set eyes on a young boy and of another poet, Muhammad ‘Ali Mahjur, who actually died as a very young man himself for love of youth.<sup>35</sup> In one case (dated sometime in February

or March 1882), there is an actual report of attempted suicide when the brother of the beloved of a seminary student put a stop to the relationship (Sa'idi Sirjani 1983, 152).

Past a certain age, older men who continued to have sexual liaisons with male adolescents were noted and often subject to disapproval. Mirza Mahmud (1968, 543) wrote wittily of a blind poet, Mun'am, who could see an amrad from a hundred steps away. When asked how this was possible, the poet had said brilliance emanating from the young boys' faces helped him transcend his blindness. Majd al-Mulk (1809–72) criticized Mirza Hidayat, treasurer of the army, as “this sixty-seven-year-old youth who still mixes with adolescent boys and unlike Iranian men of the pen, closely shaves his beard” (1942, 40).

Older young men who were no longer beardless courted disapproval if they remained interested in older men. Of a young poet, Abu Talib Partaw, Mahmud Mirza wrote that he was “a Yusuf-looking youth of Nahavand; the dust of khatt had made the mirror of his face opaque and around the flower of his face the gardener of fate had planted bunches of thorns. Nonetheless, he was still loyal to his friends and surreptitiously satisfied his followers; he had remained beloved and wanted by gazers.”<sup>36</sup>

The nineteenth century was not without its own homoerotic lyrics and pornographic entertainment. In his many letters to I'tizad al-Saltanah (d. 1880 or 1881), Farhad Mirza Mu'tamid al-Dawlah (1818–88) wrote lyrically about a young servant of the court whom he endeared as 'Ali jan ('Ali, dear). Soon enough, he recorded with sadness and dismay how 'Ali jan's moon was losing its brightness and how eventually his mustache had grown.<sup>37</sup> In 1872, Vali Khan Gurjistani wrote *Risalah-i fujuriyah* (An Essay on Debauchery), in which he recorded his sexual adventures with twenty-eight Qajar princesses, sixty-five male and fifteen female prostitutes, and twenty-seven male and eighteen female servants. He was generous with descriptive detail, and his book appears to have been widely read.<sup>38</sup>

By the end of the nineteenth century, however, many of the accounts of male homosexual liaisons became embedded in the political critique of one's opponents, or within the moral critique of “a country in decay.” This more recent tradition informs Shahri's later history of Tehran. One of the major points that I'timad al-Saltanah held up against a number of Qajar statesmen was their many young male beloveds. Among his targets were Mirza Husayn Khan Sipahsalar (he called Sipahsalar's sexual proclivities among his “great treasonous acts against the Iranian kingship and nation”), Nayib al-Saltanah, and Amin al-Sultan. These men's beloveds included Qajar princes who themselves later became important men of state.<sup>39</sup> By the last

years of Muzaffar al-Din Shah's reign, as we will see in chapter 8, his homosexual practices became grounds for calling an end to his rule.

Amrads were indeed viewed as an identifiable social group. I do not mean that all male children went through a period of amradhood, so to speak, as a sort of rite of passage to adult malehood. From what we know, for many young male adolescents, and for their parents in particular (or more precisely for their fathers, who were in charge of honorable conduct), the possibility of the young males' being attractive to and open to seduction of adult men was a source of deep anxiety and fear.<sup>40</sup> Amrads' activities, similar to those of women, were at times regulated and the boundaries of their public presence marked. Yet the repeated attempts to set the boundaries of their public presence suggest that they were acceptable and acknowledged in other spaces of sociocultural life. The Code of Shah Tahmasb (r. 1524–76) forbade amrads and women, no matter how advanced in age, to loiter around the public performances by street entertainers (Danish'pazhuh 1972, 137). More than a century later, Shah Sultan Husayn (r. 1694–1722) and his chief cleric, Majlisi II, were still preoccupied with similar issues of control of public visibility (Babayan 1998, 358).

The Qajar police regulations (issued September 1879), on the other hand, criminalized forced abduction of married women as well as unmarried girls, whether of age of maturity or not, but they made no mention of boys or male adolescents. Only if "an irregular and transgressive act" between a man and a woman or a *bachchah* (literally child, commonly used to refer to young adolescent males) had taken place in a mosque was a light punishment imposed: eight days to a month of imprisonment and one to fifty *tumans* in fine to be donated to a religious fund.<sup>41</sup> Clearly the concern was the transgression of the sanctity of the space of worship, rather than punishment of a sexual behavior.

From Qajar Iran, we have extensive records of male same-sex activities, including what seems to have been a well-known practice of adult men keeping younger men as their companions, sometimes referred to as *adam'dari* (keeping a male). The older man was sometimes referred to as "the cover" (*milhaf*) of the younger one.<sup>42</sup> The 1921 city census of Tehran suggests that the practice of *adam'dari* continued into the twentieth century and perhaps continues to the present.<sup>43</sup>

That adult men's preference for amrads to women was not uncommon is demonstrated by women's concern, especially when this meant that the husbands did not have sex with their wives. It was a source of public embarrassment to women when they could not have children because of their husbands' preference for amrads. It also marked the women as undesirable.

The wives of men desirous of male adolescents (*amradkhvah*) performed various rituals designed to encourage their husbands to have sex with them and get them pregnant. One such ritual, called “untying the knot of the trousers,” became nationally and internationally known through Chardin’s report as well as through modern ethnography.<sup>44</sup> Many commentators have interpreted these as rituals of fertility. Yet a close reading of the verses that women sang suggests that childlessness was not an issue of fertility but absence of vaginal intercourse. The famous verse of the ritual reads “Miyun-i man dastah mikhvad / mard-i kamar bastah mikhvad” (My middle desires a handle / it desires a man with a tied belt), or alternately: “Havan-i man dastah mikhwad / mard-i kamar bastah mikhvad” (My mortar needs a pestle / it desires a man with a tied belt).<sup>45</sup> We will see that later in the nineteenth century, women demanded that men give up their relations with *amrads* if they expected their wives to be companionate spouses.

In the sociocultural world of the Qajars, despite theological condemnations and punitive actions aimed against same-sex practices, in particular against sodomy (*liwat*), the domain of paradisiacal pleasures was populated by the *ghilman* and the *hur*, and male love was focused on the beloved male. Ideas of beauty were ungendered. Within this cultural world, certain same-sex practices occurred in daily life, in spite of the edicts of kings and the clergy to the contrary. In fact, these relations were at times implicated in the construction of “relations of patronage, pedagogy, apprenticeship, and alliance.”<sup>46</sup> It is with this in mind that we must consider the enormous transformations of notions of beauty, love, and sexuality in the nineteenth century.



## 2 Nineteenth-Century Transformations

By the end of the nineteenth century, portrayal of beauty became differentiated by gender. Depictions of male beauty and male-male loving couples disappear. Royal portraits of men after the late Nasiri period no longer have the slim waists and facial features attributed to beautiful men in earlier decades.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, female figures have more individualized and distinct facial and bodily features. In other words, the language of representation underwent important shifts. As Ekhtiar and Adamova have observed, Qajar visual culture turned away from phantasmic painting to naturalism and realism.<sup>2</sup> Adamova (1998, 74) dates this shift to Muhammad Shah's period. Ekhtiar (1998) demonstrates the important influence of the camera and of photographs as models for realist painting.<sup>3</sup> The combined effect of these changes over the nineteenth century was that renditions of human figures in painting came to resemble representations of individual real men and women. Beautiful faces were no longer representations of beauty incarnate, carnal or divine. In this process, beauty became not simply gender differentiated but feminized. As in English, we now speak of handsome men but of beautiful women. As beauty became feminized, even abstract, previously ungendered figures, such as angels, became feminized. By the end of the century, all embodied representations, such as the nation or the homeland, acquired sexed bodies.<sup>4</sup>

The feminization of beauty, however, cannot be explained simply by the shift toward realism or the impact of the camera on the "truth referentiality" of portraiture. Perhaps the most significant of nineteenth-century aesthetic shifts in gender marking of beauty was the disappearance of the male object of desire from later Qajar paintings.

Representations of idealized (and idolized) young men in late Zand and early Qajar paintings include scenes of beautiful males, in particular

representations of Joseph, of young princes (figure 3), of the older man–younger man gaze, and of male-female couples (figure 4). From the Safavi period, we have both male-male and male-female embraces. By the late Zand and early Qajar period, however, we are left with only male-female couples, and as Diba (1998a) has noted, from early Qajar on, the depiction of amorous couples has disappeared altogether. This absence is accompanied by a veritable abundance of female objects of desire, most notably as entertainers of various types, ladies of male pleasure.<sup>5</sup>

Although it is tempting to read the disappearance of the male object of desire as a clear sign of heteroeroticization in nineteenth-century Iran, the process was more complex than the mere presence or absence of male homoeroticism. For one thing, how can we explain the disappearance of the female-male amorous couple? Surely, if Qajar art is read simply as representation of heterosexual pleasure, the depictions of such couples should have multiplied.

I suggest that previous interpretations of the female-male couples as an “amorous couple” may have been a misreading, or at least a missed reading. If we expand the field of representation beyond the visual (or literary) text itself by bringing in the eyes of the viewer and the painter, we have not simply a dyad but triangles of desire. What erotic desires did these triangles circulate and generate?

The notion of a triangle of desire recalls Sedgwick’s (1985) proposition that in English literature when two males contend for one female, the homosocial bond between the males is constructed through the “trafficking” female figure. Although my argument here is deeply indebted to Sedgwick’s, which works with erotic triangles within a text, I postulate erotic desire circulating in and out of the text. For example, the amorous female-male couple (see figure 4) encompasses a complex set of desires: first, the desire for the male in the painting (as expressed by the female in the painting) constructs the male figure as an object of desire whom the viewer (or painter) could also desire.<sup>6</sup> That is, the heteroerotic desire in the visual text can be generative of homoerotic pleasure and desire outside the text. The representation of heteroeroticism within the visual text cannot be assumed necessarily to mirror the painter’s heterosexual inclinations. Nor can we presume that it was meant to inspire heteroeroticism in the viewer. Not only may we imagine that the viewer/painter regards both male and female figures as objects of desire, but the viewer/painter might also identify him- or herself as the male or female figure’s object of desire.<sup>7</sup> This kind of masqueraded identification, I will argue shortly, may not have been necessary or dominant when male-male “amorous couples” were openly



FIGURE 3. Prince Yahyá, attributed to Muhammad Hasan, c. 1830.



FIGURE 4. Embracing lovers, attributed to Muhammad Sadiq, c. 1770–80.

represented and celebrated. It may have become an important development in nineteenth-century transformations.

Reading the female-male couple not simply as an “amorous couple” but as a scene of multiple desires is grounded in iconic points: the male figure in the male-female “amorous couple” is always a very young man, without a beard or a mustache, at most with a hint of a newly emerging down, that icon of young man’s beauty: he may be a *nawkhatt*, but never an adult man.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, as mentioned earlier, male and female beauties in these paintings have identical features. By contrast, when love scenes between a particular man and woman are depicted, the male figure bears the marks of an adult man: he has a pronounced mustache (rather than a *nawkhatt*), heavy sideburns, or a beard.<sup>9</sup>

This interpretive move can be supported even more forcefully for the late-eighteenth-century and early-nineteenth-century male-female scenes of desire-in-the-text. The figures in these paintings have a strong outward gaze, itself a seventeenth-century development in Iranian art. The outward invitational gaze has been noted by Layla Diba in her studies of art objects from the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.<sup>10</sup> She describes the lid of a casket; “a scene of a lady admiring herself in a mirror” (figure 5).<sup>11</sup> What is remarkable in this scene is that all the female figures—the central lady, her image in the mirror, and her attendants—with the exception of the old woman, are looking outward. The mirror thus does not work narcissistically, allowing the lady to look at herself (which is perspectively impossible in this position). The mirror inverts and reverts, providing a double image of the lady looking at the artist and the viewer, and being looked upon by them. The viewer/artist is thus implicated in the scene, sharing a position with the old woman.

The outward gaze in these works is equivalent to a well-studied literary move: directly addressing the reader. Robyn Warhol, studying fiction written by women in nineteenth-century England and America, calls this the “engaging strategy,” as distinct from a “distancing strategy”: “The engaging narrator’s frequent appeals to the reader’s imagination, her earnest requests to the reader to draw upon personal memories to fill in gaps in the narrative, prompt the actual reader to participate in creating the fictional world itself” (1989, 36). The direct outward gaze in a painting, similarly, invites the viewer to join in the meaning making of the visual text as if he or she is a participant in the scene. The implications of this shift become more evident when we compare it to the inward gaze of book illustrations, embedded within a written text, often framed by lines from the text. Here the reader follows the literary text into the visual field and back into the text. The act of viewing the illustration becomes an extension of the reading



FIGURE 5. Lid of casket with scene of ladies on a terrace, attributed to Muhammad ‘Ali ibn Zaman.

act, accentuating the meaning produced through the textual reading. In the close circulation between the text and illustration, the latter is a double telling of an episode in the former.

The outward gaze, in contrast, seems to be a feature of single paintings, not textually embedded, whether wall paintings, lacquer boxes, or other art objects. The release from the textual frame provided the opportunity to establish a different-from-readerly position for the viewer, making the gaze invitational. By the Qajar period, the outward gaze became so conventional that even narrative paintings, such as popular scenes from Shirin and Khusraw, Yusuf and Zulaykha, and from Shaykh San‘an’s love for the Christian maiden, are all painted with an outward gaze. What are the implications of this shift for the so-called amorous couples?

The direct gaze, like direct address in a text, is an invitation, but invitations are not all the same. It could be simply inviting the viewer to admire the artist’s accomplishment; it could be an invitation to the viewer to stand in awe of the subject, as in representations of power in royal portraiture (Diba 1998b). But it could also be inviting the viewer to be an accomplice in the pleasures of the visual text, to become actively engaged in the production and circulation of desire inside and outside of the visual text.

Bringing the viewer into the scene, the invitational gaze strongly tilts the triangle of desire between the “amorous couple” in the painting and the viewer. This outward tilt may account for the disappearance of the “amorous couple” in general and the male-male couple in particular. When the painting demands the viewer’s gaze, a desiring gaze internal to the painting itself becomes redundant. Moreover, it is possible that the determined outward gaze disrupted the internal homoeroticism of the male-male erotic paintings strongly in favor of the gaze between the painting and the (presumably male) viewer, making the simultaneous presence of two male points of reference in the painting redundantly disruptive of engendering desire between a male viewer and the text.<sup>12</sup>

The presence of a female figure in the text, however, would not pose similar challenges. In figure 4, it is remarkable that the female beauty is looking outward, but the male is not. Nor is he looking at her—as one might expect of a realistic rendering of an amorous couple. He is looking away both from her and from the viewer; his is an “averted gaze,” as if he is being coy with the viewer. The averted gaze perhaps speaks to the ambivalence of youthful masculinity, a transitional age when the young man became adult men’s most coveted object of desire. His gaze, facial features, and pose, including his coy smile, strongly resemble a female object of desire, as in the painting of the mandolin player, also by Muhammad Sadiq (figure 6). In other words, his features and poses put him in the same iconic position as that of a female object of desire rather than that of a desiring male subject.

In most scenes of an “amorous couple,” like the one under discussion here, there is a third sign of pleasure: a cup of wine. The cup of wine completes the paradisiacal scene of desire that promises the ghilman, hur, and wine. In other words, what has often been read as realism, that is, the male-female “amorous couple” as a spectacle of heterosexuality, I suggest is a spectacle of paradise; of hetero- and homoerotic desire, complete with the pleasure of wine drinking. The amour in the young amorous female and male couple could then be read as circulating between the viewer and the painting as spectacle of the hur and the ghilman.<sup>13</sup>

This possibility may have become consolidated through Iran’s increasingly frequent interactions with Europe. These interactions moved in two directions: European men (and later in the century women) traveling to Iran and publishing their travel accounts, and Iranian men traveling to Europe. In the nineteenth century these interactions intensified, and printed travelogues circulated widely.<sup>14</sup>

By the early nineteenth century, Iranian men had become acutely and increasingly aware that Europeans considered Iranian older man–younger



FIGURE 6. A girl playing a mandolin. Muhammad Sadiq, c. 1770–80.



man love and sexual practice a vice. This theme goes back at least to the seventeenth century. Thomas Herbert (1606–82), accompanying the English ambassador Dodmore Cotton to the Safavi court in 1627–29, observed:

And, albeit the men affect not to dance themselves, yet dancing is much esteemed there: the Ganimeds and Layesians (wanton Boyes and Girles) foot it most admirably and in order. . . . They are in this practise so elaborate, that each limb and member seemes to emulate, yea, to contend who may expresse the most taking motion; their hands, eyes, bums, gesticulating severally, swimming round, & conforming themselves to a Dorique stilnesse, the Ganimeds with incanting voices & extorted bodies sympathizing; nothing but poesie, mirth, wine & admiration condominating. But were this all, 'twere more excusable; for (though each has his severall Seraglio) these whores seldome goe without their wages: and in a higher degree of perfect basenesse, these Paederasts (by Hellish permission and the Alcurran) affect those painted, antick roab'd Youths or Catamites in a Sodomitic way (not till then compleating the Roman proverb *Persecos odi Puer apparatus*;) a vice so detestable, so damnable, so unnaturall as forces hell to shew its ugliness before its season. (Herbert 1638, 235)

Same-sex practices were often linked with young male dancers. To European eyes, these dancers were cross-dressed as female.<sup>15</sup> On occasion, especially by travelers familiar with Jean Chardin's late seventeenth-century account, same-sex practices were also linked to women's seclusion.<sup>16</sup>

Chardin's travelogue endured as the authoritative guide for Europeans who subsequently visited Iran. It seems to have been required reading before one went to Iran and a constant reference work when the traveler wrote his own travelogue.<sup>17</sup> Did subsequent travelers look for things as Chardin reported them and perhaps see what they had anticipated seeing? Could that explain the repeated "seeing" and reporting of the prevalence of male homosexuality linked to maltreatment of women in Iran? Tancoigne, for instance, in a journal entry written in Tehran on February 10, 1808, echoed Chardin closely:

I judge of them, therefore, as I see them, . . . I have, besides, still other vices to reproach them with; the most serious is their injustice and indifference to a sex which elsewhere forms all the charm and happiness of our existence. Women are merely, in the estimation of these men, beings created solely for their pleasure. Preserved by their education and habits from the pains and vicissitudes of love; incapable, on the other hand, by their religious prejudices, of appreciating its delights and enjoyments, they have degraded that sentiment to the excess of reserving it at times for their minions, and of turning it into a crime against nature. Many of

their poems turn entirely on this inconceivable degeneracy; and their moral depravity is such that far from making a mystery of this new species of amorous intrigue, they appear, on the contrary, to take pride in it; speak publicly of their minions, as if they were speaking of their mistresses. (1820, 174)

He ends this section with further negative characterizations and an allusion to the Greeks. He reports on women's dances and feasts in similarly strong language, attributing women's behavior to their maltreatment by men:

The women also employ female dancers in the harems: they are highly diverted with the indecency of their gestures and movements: such a taste, so contrary to all the rules of decorum, must be attributed to the slavery and constraint in which they are held: secluded from the society of men, having nothing to fear from their censure, and without the hope of pleasing them by modesty, they soon cease to blush at any thing; they are complete strangers to those sentiments of delicacy, which amongst us form the best of the fair sex to our esteem, and to which their discourse often turns on very indecent subjects. (211)

Both Tancoigne and Keppel express their deep disgust for young men dressed as female entertainers in men's festivities.<sup>18</sup> Similarly, William Ouseley (1767–1842), accompanying his ambassador brother Gore Ouseley to Qajar court in 1810–12, reported on a dance in Tabriz that was staged for his benefit (in June 1812) in these terms: "After the usual refreshments of coffee and *kaleans*, a dance was exhibited, the performer being a birish (بیریش) or beardless boy of fifteen or sixteen years, wearing the complete dress of a woman and imitating, with most disgusting effeminacy, the looks and attitudes of the dancing girls; sometimes turning round on one spot for several minutes to the sound of a *kemáncheh* or Persian violin, or moving slowly along the floor with much ungraceful distortion or dislocation with the musick. . . . Another boy, disguised likewise as a woman, then stood up to dance."<sup>19</sup> It is from this time that beardlessness and effeminacy were linked. In addition to young male dancers, William Ouseley also described many paintings of young beardless men, often paired with a similar female face, as effeminate.<sup>20</sup> Whereas European men read beardless Iranian male faces as effeminate, Iranian men read beardless European male faces as the ghilman (or as amrad).

Europeans were as anxious about how Iranians saw their mores as Iranians were about Europeans' opinions. In particular, they were aware of how Iranians interpreted beardless adult men. James Morier, in his *Adventures of Hajji Baba of Ispahan in England*, uses the Hajji as a ventriloquist

to express some of these anxieties: "I must not omit to mention here, that, out of compliment to us, he [the Englishman, presumably Morier himself]<sup>21</sup> permitted his beard to grow, and thus cleared up the question whether Franks ever could have beards? All those who visited our country looked as if they had been prepared for offices in our harems; but now that we were positive they possessed the seeds of a beard within the soil of their face, we were angry that they did themselves and their country such little justice in our eyes."<sup>22</sup> That Morier was quite aware of the many meanings of beardlessness in Iranians' eyes is also evident from another episode at a social gathering:

I perceived a strange looking *birish*, or "no beard," his clothes pasted tighter to his body than those of any other man present, as if he were in the deepest wo [*sic*]; his head flattened at the top, and curled out behind; his neck stiff, and in his deportment full of nothing but himself. . . . "Who can that personage be?" said I to my [English] companion; "in our country we should soon teach his mincing feet better manners, and he should limp for something."

"That sort of person now-a-days we call an exquisite, a dandy; formerly he would have been called a 'd——d buck,' so much does fashion even change our forms of speech." (Morier 1828, 2:9–10, deletion in original)

In a footnote to the word *birish*, Morier acts as a skillful cultural translator: "Youths, particularly effeminate-looking youths, are so called." Morier is perhaps the best-known and most influential writer on Iranian social customs of the early decades of the nineteenth century. Not only his travelogues but his many works of fiction inspired by the travels, in particular his famous *Hajji Baba*, were reportedly read (or heard) by Iranians. Many were hurt or angered by his portrayals,<sup>23</sup> like his various references to what he called "this rascally beggarly b——gg-rly country."<sup>24</sup> Writing in 1812 in his journal about the crown prince 'Abbas Mirza, he noted with approval, "[A strict Muslim, particularly with regard to wine, he is] equally temperate in the indulgences of the harem & strictly punishes that horrid offense against nature of which I have mentioned some abominable instances in the government of his effeminate, vicious brother of Shiraz" (Johnston 1998, 176).

Morier's travelogues had displeased Iranians in high circles sufficiently that when the Foreign Office was considering his appointment as a minister to Tehran in 1822, Iranians made it clear that he would not be welcome.<sup>25</sup> While Morier's travelogues closed off the possibility of a future official post in Iran, the publication of *The Adventures of Hajji Baba of Isfahan* in 1824 cost him his friendship with Mirza Abu al-Hasan Khan.<sup>26</sup>

In England *The Adventures of Hajji Baba of Ispahan* became a popular novel and the most authoritative “guidebook,” replacing Chardin’s writings for many traveling to Iran.<sup>27</sup> When the young English doctor C. J. Wills (1842–1912) applied for a post at the Telegraph Department in Iran, the director gave him a copy of the book, “saying, ‘When you read this you will know more of Persia and the Persians than you will if you had lived there with your eyes open for twenty years.’ This is going a long way; it is seventeen years since I went to Persia, and I read ‘Hadji Baba’ now, and still learn something new from it. As Persia was in Morier’s time so it is now, and, though one sees plenty of decay, there is very little change” (Wills 1883, 3).

European reports on Iranians’ sexual mores, in particular on male same-sex practices, continued throughout the nineteenth century and even into the twentieth.<sup>28</sup> Could this repetition have influenced Iranian men in contact with Europeans to dissimulate and disavow male-male sexual practices? Could it have contributed to the heteronormalization of male sexuality in Qajar Iran? Some Iranian men traveling to and writing about Europe used strong language to disavow European perceptions. Mirza Fattah Khan Garmrudi, traveling through Europe in 1838, wrote:

With all this corruption and the unseemly state [in Farang—Europe], they write books condemning and moralizing about people of Iran. In particular, Firayzir [Fraser] has insinuated and exaggerated a great deal. For instance: that Iranian people [men] are greatly inclined toward young beautiful boys and some commit evil acts with them. Yes, in all nations of the world, some deeply ignorant people, overcome by the spirit of lasciviousness and satanic temptations, commit some unacceptable practices. But the people of Farang are known for all kinds of ill reputes, and especially for this evil act. They have houses of young men [prostitutes—*amradkhanah*], similar to houses of prostitution [*qahbah'khanah*]. They go to these places all the time, pay money and commit this evil act. It is totally unfair that they, who are known to engage in this evil practice, should condemn the people of Iran and attribute this practice to us and write about it in their books.<sup>29</sup>

In retaliation, he told homophobic tales about English men (Garmrudi 1969, 962–64).

This anxiety over Europeans’ judgment of Iranian sexual mores and practices remained a preoccupation throughout the nineteenth century. Ibrahim Sahhafbashi, sight-seeing in London in 1897, reported, without moral outrage or disapprobation, that on two occasions he had been propositioned by English men. Rejecting their advances, he commented that it was a pity that Iranians had been defamed while the English

seemed to practice sodomy widely despite harsh laws against it (Sahhaf-bashi 1978, 50–52, 57–58).

The anger at European readings of Iranian social and sexual mores began to reconfigure structures of desire by introducing a demarcation to distinguish homosociality from homosexuality. Iranians began to find themselves “explaining” to European visitors that at least some of the practices that the latter read as homosexuality, such as men holding hands, embracing, and kissing each other in public, were not so: the Europeans were misreading homosociality for homosexuality. Disavowal of homosexuality out of homosociality—a cultural work that has continued into the present—set in motion two seemingly contradictory, yet in fact enabling, dynamics.<sup>30</sup> It marked homosociality as devoid of sexuality, thus making homosexuality “homeless,” endangered because denied. At the same time, by insisting on that exclusion, it provided homosexuality a homosocial home for masquerade. Were practices like vows of sisterhood, *siqah-i khvaharkhvandigi*, a celebration of homosocial bonds of women’s close friendships, or did they involve same-sex practices? The question is unanswerable not so much because lesbians have been erased from history or archives do not exist, but because it arises from a naming and categorizing of desire that is not relevant to the period in which a demarcation between homosociality and homosexuality did not yet exist. Did “the sisters” engage in bodily acts that we now name lesbian? Perhaps they did. Did they desire, name, or perceive their vows as similar to what the later dynamic of distinguishing homosociality from homosexuality implies? Most likely not. Naming through denial and disavowal was productive through negation: “What you see is *not* how you name *it* and categorize *it*” produces a particular *it* as a distinct form of desire. Formation of homosexuality through denial and disavowal becomes its condition of possibility and reproducibility. The denial of any overlap between the now separate domains of homosociality and homosexuality paradoxically provides a shelter, a masqueraded home, for homosexuality. We can continue to hold each other’s hand in public because we have declared it to be a sign of homosociality that is void of sexuality.

Denial and disavowal was only one response to coming under the European gaze.<sup>31</sup> Dissimulation and “cross-representation” was another: the disappearance of the male beloved from visual representation, like his disappearance from love poetry in the same period, may have been an alternative resolution to the moral and cultural challenges posed by European judgments. As “another gaze” entered the scene of desire, as if an intruder had entered one’s private chamber, the scene of homoerotic desire had to be disguised.<sup>32</sup>

The female-male loving couple could have now served as a masquerade of desire: the European viewer could read the male-female couple as a scene of heteroeroticism, while for the Iranian male viewer, the young male beauty could continue to stand for his *shahid*, his beautiful male testimony to divine perfection. The direct gaze particularly lent itself to this kind of masquerade.

One marker of Iranian modernity, then, became the transformation of homoeroticism into masqueraded heteroeros. By this I do not mean to imply a mere covering over of an already existing notion of homosexuality. Rather, this is itself the moment of constitution of homo- and heterosexuality. We will see that later in the century the modernist discourse marked heterosexuality as natural and homosexuality as unnatural. Yet the unnatural at once built its own home as a masquerade of the natural. As Europeans characterized Iran by homosocial and homosexual practices, Iranian modernity simultaneously identified itself with and disavowed this abject position, emerging through a triangular interaction of gender, sexuality, and nationalism with paradoxical effects.

This masquerade could not but affect homoeroticism itself. The initial masquerade of the male object of desire as a desiring subject in male-female "amorous couples"—one could think of it as "the brief occultation/closeting"—was followed by "the great occultation," his complete closeting. The disappearance of "the amorous male-female couple" now acquires a different meaning: it becomes the disappearance of the ghilman from the scene of male desire, or rather the conflation of the ghilman with the hur. As the ghilman in his own right disappears from visual representation, his place is usurped by the hur—thus the proliferation of female figures in nineteenth-century Qajar art. Human beauty and with it the beloved became irrevocably feminized.

In the same period another iconic feature of representations of women emerges in Qajar paintings: the bare breast.<sup>33</sup> Although nude females and females whose breasts are visible through transparent clothing do appear in Safavi and Zand art, the bare-breasted woman, or the woman with breasts emphatically displayed through style of dress or association with fetishistic objects (figure 7) is a heavily accented theme in Qajar painting. In Safavi art, for instance, an exaggerated décolletage is used for the representation of European women.<sup>34</sup> In addition to representations of European women and women of pleasure (dancers and acrobats, wine and food servers, musicians), other bare-breasted women in Qajar art include angels, as well as women reminiscent of Mary in paintings of Mary and the infant Jesus. The bare-breasted woman, in other words, constituted a "figure of repetition" in Qajar art.



FIGURE 7. Bare-breasted woman holding an apple.

In a previous essay (1998a), I argued that the Qajari bare-breasted woman emerged at the culmination of a process of eroticization of the breast linked with Iranian men's perceptions of women in Europe.<sup>35</sup> European woman as a site of paradisiacal eroticism was focalized on the breast, which in turn contributed to eroticization of the breast in Persian male imagination. I now want to propose that eroticization of woman's breast and the frequent portrayals of bare-breasted women were also linked with the disappearance of the ghilman. As we have seen, in many nineteenth-century European accounts, dancing scenes evoked disgust for male-male homosexual practices. If, as I have suggested, it became important for nineteenth-century Iranian men to disavow these practices, then the bare-breasted female entertainers of Qajar art acquire yet another layer of meaning: baring the breast became another way of emphasizing that these dancers were women and not young men; another way of making unambiguous that the figure of desire was feminine. Display of the breast, emphasized by arrangements of objects, flowers, or fruits, became a distinct mark of womanhood, at once intensifying eroticization of the breast and heterosexualization of eros.

Despite common features, the hur and the ghilman had been distinct figures of desire, both as objects of desire and as figures for narcissistic identification. The screening of the ghilman by the hur now made both positions feminized. To desire to be desired by a man, or to desire a man, both became positions that could be occupied exclusively by women. Homosexual desire became derivative, a substitute for heterosexual desire. The modernists could triumphantly proclaim that homoerotic practices were what men did in the old days because women were segregated and unavailable. The feminization of male homoeroticism meant scripting it as a version of heteroeros, a misaimed, an unnatural version.

Disappearance of the ghilman strongly consolidated feminization of beauty: The only representations of human beauty emerging by the end of the nineteenth century were representations of young women—a process facilitated by increasing possibility and acceptability of women coming into the field of public visibility in the same period.<sup>36</sup>

These cultural movements can also be read through other transformations in Qajar visual culture. For example, the episodes chosen from well-known popular tales for visual representation in the form of single-frame narrative paintings (not textually embedded) changed dramatically. An enormous number of nineteenth-century narrative paintings about the story of Joseph focused on the women-of-the-town scene, where Zulaykha invites the gossiping women of the town to "witness" Joseph's beauty for



themselves so that they will empathize with her love for him. By contrast, illuminated manuscripts frequently depicted other episodes, such as Joseph's rescue from the pit, his purchase by 'Aziz of Egypt, or his flight from Zulaykha's advances.<sup>37</sup> In the women-of-the-town scene, the beautiful young Joseph is the only male figure, the object of desire of an all-female group. Overwhelmed by the intense desire that Joseph's angelic beauty generates, the women cut their own hands instead of the fruits that Zulaykha had cleverly offered them just prior to bringing Joseph into the reception hall. In nineteenth-century depictions of this episode, Joseph's gaze (and often that of Zulaykha and some of the other women) is directed out toward the viewer (figure 8). The (male) viewer, invited by the direct gaze into this scene of collective female desire, would become implicated in desiring what the women desired: Joseph. The women-of-the-town scene was an especially suitable episode from this popular tale for masquerading representations: a scene of ostensible heteroeros, in which the overwhelming lust of women for a man invites the (male) viewer to desire a young beautiful man.

#### THAT FATEFUL/FAITHFUL CUP OF WINE

A significant shift in visual representations of the story of Shaykh San'an's legendary love for the Christian maiden of Rum can also be traced in this period. Iranian men's fascination with Europe made this classical Sufi tale a most popular story in Qajar Iran. The tale acted as a narrative from the past that told a present story. Writings of the period abound with references to the story, new versions of the tale were composed, and episodes from the story provided themes for many Qajar paintings and other artifacts. The story was reimagined as a tale of Iranian men falling in love with European women and of Iran falling in love with Europe as woman.<sup>38</sup> Further, this renarrativization occurred through a shift in the "navel" of the story—that point in the text with a condensed meaning, carrying a memory of a connection beyond itself to a genealogy of sedimented meanings—from the moment of sighting the woman to the moment of drinking a fateful/faithful cup of wine from her hand.<sup>39</sup>

Shaykh San'an, an old and highly respected Sufi leader, dreamed over and over that "to an idol [in Rum] he bowed down his head" (58). In search of the meaning of the dream, he and his followers set off for Rum, where he set eye on a Christian girl of unparalleled beauty "who knew the secrets of her faith's theology" (58). Upon the sight of her face, "A fire flashed through the old man's joints—he loved!" (59). "I have no faith," he cried,



FIGURE 8. Back of a mirror depicting the court women of Egypt, nineteenth century.

willing to do anything for her. "The heart I gave / Is useless now; I am the Christian's slave" (59).

Ignoring his followers remonstrations, "Till evening came he could not move but gazed" (60). He remained a whole month gazing at the girl before she took any notice of him. Hearing of his love, she played out her script of young, arrogant, and cruel beloved:

... "There are four things you must  
Perform to show that you deserve my trust:  
Burn the Koran, drink wine, seal up Faith's eye,  
Bow down to images." And in reply  
The sheikh declared: "Wine I will drink with you;  
The rest are things that I could never do." (64)

In his ecstasy, however, drunk on wine and on the wine of her love, "The abject sheikh had sunk to such a state / That he could not resist his wretched fate / He heard the Christian's wishes and obeyed" (66).<sup>40</sup>

As an impoverished old Sufi, he faced another obstacle: he had nothing to offer as bride-price. In its stead, the girl demanded that he look after her pigs for a year. He agreed.

One could hardly imagine a more abject figure than the old Sufi attending the despised and ritually unclean pigs for an entire year. Thus diminished, the Shaykh was abandoned by his followers, who returned to Mecca. There they told the story to the Shaykh's close friend, who reproached them for having abandoned him in the hour of his greatest need. To atone for the unmanly act of breaking their homosocial bond, his followers and the friend returned to the Shaykh and spent the next forty days and nights in prayer. Eventually, the friend dreamed of the Prophet, who outshone and defeated the Christian girl.

He saw the Prophet, lovely as the moon  
Whose face, Truth's shadow, was the sun at noon,  
Whose hair in two black heavy braids was curled—  
Each hair, a hundred times, outpriced the world.

The Prophet informed the friend that from times past there had been "Thick clouds of dust . . . / Between his sight and Truth—those clouds have gone" (71).

The Prophet's intercession enabled the Shaykh to disavow his love for the Christian female Other and return to the homosocial space of Muslim Sufi brotherhood. The disciples rushed to the Shaykh and found him in a turbulent state, shedding tears of shame, joyful for his return to the path of faith and truth. The Christian girl sees truth and converts to Islam too.

Like any great story, the multilayered meanings of this story have been put to different uses. Orthodox preachers often use it to point out the evil consequences of drinking wine. For Sufis, it is a paradoxical tale that can be read in at least two almost contradictory ways: as a story about the power of love and a test of faith, with the two themes competing, enabling, and undoing each other's work. The Christian maiden, *dukhtar-i tarsa*, is the sexual seductress luring men from their homosocial world of Sufi community and union with the divine. In contrast, the selfless love, the willingness to sacrifice everything for its fulfillment that her love inspired in Shaykh San'an, is a state that a Sufi aspires to, though for the divine. The love for the Christian girl stands for the most desired yet the most deeply feared love.

Significantly, however, in classical Sufi literature most narratives describe the old Sufi's love for a young male beloved, as I discussed in chapter 1. What, then, can we make of the fact that in the nineteenth century, Shaykh San'an's story became a privileged narrative? Paintings, pen boxes, and vases reproduce scenes from the story.<sup>41</sup> Travelogues written by Iranian men visiting Europe utilize themes and metaphors from the tale to write about the cultural site/sight of Europe. Sufis even engaged in a pastime called the "game of Shaykh San'an," which involved four impersonated characters—a dervish, Shaykh San'an, his bride, and a *dayeh* (the old nanny/companion to the young woman)—engaging in recitation and enacting of a versified comic play about the travail of the Shaykh going to Farang (Europe) (Jamalzadah 1955, 1:162–64). Finally, there are a number of new written and oral versions of the story from this period.<sup>42</sup> In some vernacular versions, frequently other figures of desire, such as *tarsabachchah* (Christian young male) and *mughbachchah* (Zoroastrian young male), replace *dukhtar-i tarsa* (Fayzi'zadah 1987, 28, 43, 44, 62). Alternatively, to emphasize the Shaykh's piety, amrads and beautiful maidens are equally disavowed (141). In other nineteenth-century versions, instead of going to Rum, the Shaykh goes to Tiflis (Georgia), recently acquired by Russia, making that lost part of Iranian territory the place of seduction and space of desire (194). One version, by Mulla 'Ali As'adi Hazin, dated 1808, invokes quintessentially Qajar themes. When the Christian maiden asks the Shaykh to drink wine, she suggests he drink in memory of kings of Kay and then burn the Qur'an, making the break with Islam a moment of connecting with pre-Islam.<sup>43</sup> When the Shaykh's master comes to his aid, attempting to win him back to the faith, the Shaykh responds that he would not give up one strand of the Christian maiden's hair for the Achaemenian domain (*mulk-i Hakhamanishi*) (Fayzi'zadah 1987, 236). In this version, not only the maiden but her

entire Christian community convert to Islam, and she and the Shaykh marry. The tale describes the conversion and the wedding ceremony and celebrations at some length (242–43), creating a fairy tale with a happy ending that resolves the national anxiety over who was going to emulate whom in the nineteenth-century “culture wars” between Iran/Islam and Europe/Christianity.

It has been argued that the nineteenth-century retellings of this classical fable narrated the threat as well as the attraction of European woman, herself standing for Europe.<sup>44</sup> It packed gender and national anxiety, the fear of pleasure and the pleasure of fear, into a single female figure. In the nineteenth-century transformations of the story and its visual depictions, the Christian maiden, *dukhtar-i tarsa*, is supplemented, if not displaced, by European woman, *zan-i farangi*.<sup>45</sup> This is a double displacement, a geopolitical displacement of Christendom by Europe, and of girl by woman. The female figure is thus more overtly sexual.<sup>46</sup> *Dukhtar-i tarsa* might have been a virginal figure; *zan-i farangi* was already a sexualized nonvirgin. Already contaminated by sexuality, she was more threatening and potentially more morally corruptive.

This reading of the nineteenth-century versions of the Shaykh San‘an story offers only partial insight. It is an already heteronormalized reading of the process of heteronormalization of love in Qajar Iran. At its center is the proposition that Iranian men visiting Europe “witnessed” paradise on earth and saw European women as the hur. What marks this reading as heteronormative is that in the nineteenth-century descriptions of Europe as earthly paradise, the hur is almost always flanked by the other figure of desire: the ghilman or the shahids.

As Tavakoli-Targhi (1990b) has argued, the nineteenth-century travelers’ naming of European women as the hur echoed classical Islamic descriptions of the pleasures of paradise. But where the travelers saw the hur, they also saw the ghilman and the shahid. Encouraging Muslim Iranian men to fight a holy war to expel the infidels (czarist Russia) from northwestern Iran, Qajar religious leaders reminded them that martyrs go to paradise, where “the hur decorated the paradise and the ghilman stand to serve you” (Qa’im ‘maqam Farahani 1980?, 19). Iranian men, however, were seeing the hur and the ghilman in an earthly paradise—Europe—without martyrdom. One did not have to go to Europe to see paradise. Traveling within Iran, travelers reported paradisiacal vistas: green meadows; tree-lined routes; clean, pleasant air; clear, running water; abundant fruits; or scents of wildflowers. What made Europe unique as a paradise, however, was the sight of the hur and the ghilman.

Mirza Abu al-Hasan Khan Shirazi, one of the earliest nineteenth-century Iranian travelers to Europe, described Saint James Park in London in December 1809:

In the park we saw some 100,000 men and women parading themselves on foot and on horseback. Elsewhere pretty girls *and handsome youth* [my emphasis] were admiring the gardens: although it was winter, the verdure of the park rivaled the Bagh-i Eram, the Garden of Eden. . . .

Indeed, it is a vast and delightful pleasure-ground—as exhilarating as a draught of wine. If a sorrowing soul traverse these heavenly fields, his head is crowned with flowers of joy. . . . In the gardens and on the paths, beauteous women shine like the sun and rouse the envy of the stars; and the houris [and ghilman—in Persian, but missing from English translation] of paradise blush with shame to look upon the rose-cheeked beauties of the earth below. In absolute amazement, I said to Sir Gore Ouseley:

If there be paradise on earth  
It is this, oh! it is this!<sup>47</sup>

Although Mirza Abu al-Hasan Khan disavowed the homosexual act of *liwat*, references to male and female beauties, moon-faced cypress-statured young men, and sun-faced fairy-bodied young women saturated the text.<sup>48</sup> Ironically, it is the disavowal of *liwat* that made it acceptable to praise male beauty. Like the descriptions of paradise in the Qur'an, the love of male beauty would not lead to sinful acts, and wine drinking would not numb one's faculties. Describing a party, Mirza Abu al-Hasan Khan wrote: "Then all the young ladies—fairy-figured, rose-cheeked, jasmine-scented—joined hands with the handsome and graceful, cypress-tall young men, and they began to dance in a friendly fashion: it might have been the Garden of Eden. They had all been drinking wine, but none of them was over-amorous or tipsy!"<sup>49</sup>

In previous readings, the repeated reporting of male and female public socializing has been interpreted as a spectacle of heterosociality. Such interpretations, which privilege heterosexuality as the desire that informed the cultural reading of the Iranian male travelers to Europe, are oblivious to a cultural sensibility that perceived both male and female beauties as objects of desire for the male viewer/reporter. Describing a reception at the house of the British consul in Beirut, on his way to England, Rizaquli Mirza described the consul's wife, who sat at his side, as "moon of England." On his other side sat a young man. "I did not know if I should look at the lady or pay attention to the youth. I was devastated from one side and wondrous about the other. I would enlighten my eye with the light of the lady for a

while and then give my heart's attention to the young man" (Rizaquli Mirza 1982, 271).

Frequent reporting of "handsome young men and beautiful young women" (*pisaran-i ra'na va dukhtaran-i ziba*) was in the first instance *not* about public heterosociality as a wondrously unfamiliar cultural practice that constituted the difference between us and them. Rather, a prior moment was a different wondrous experience: that of a paradisiacal fantasy of desire for male and female beauties come real. This phantasmic spectacle of homo- and heterosexual pleasure may indeed have informed the emergence of a desire for heterosociality in Iranian society.

Many nineteenth-century travelogues depicted Europe as paradise through the story of Shaykh San'an, invoking it explicitly or through recollection of particular themes.<sup>50</sup> But it is no longer a tale of gazing (*nazar*), love, abjection, redemption, and eventual unity with the divine. Nineteenth-century renditions told of a journey to paradise, of forbidden pleasures become available. The versions that end with the wedding of the elderly Shaykh and the young Christian woman, the collective conversion of her entire community to Islam, and even the more sentimental sad ending of their joint death and union in paradise in yet another version, indicate this newer meaning. The shift is indicated most acutely by a change from the scene of *nazar*, the sighting of the Christian maiden, to that of drinking the cup of wine from her hand—a shift expressed most dramatically in Qajar visual representations of this story.

Visual texts of the period (paintings, pen boxes, vases, book illustrations), often inspired by oral and written accounts of the early "eyewitnesses," depicted Europe as paradise through the story of Shaykh San'an even more vividly than travelogues. Pre-Qajar illustrations of the story, as illuminations of manuscripts of 'Attar's *Mantiq al-tayr* or of Bayqara's *Majalis al-'ushshaq*, focused on two scenes from the story: *the scene of nazar*, of the Shaykh's first sighting of and gazing at the Christian maiden (figure 9), and *the spectacle of abjection*, the Shaykh tending swine (figure 10).<sup>51</sup> Morier describes the paintings on the walls of the Haft'tan, a minor Sufi shrine outside Shiraz built by Karim Khan Zand (r. 1750–79), which included a scene of abjection: "The picture represents the coquette at her window, laughing at SHEIKH CHENAN, as he is driving his pigs before her" (1812, 105).

Nineteenth-century visual representations privileged the scene of the Shaykh receiving and drinking the fateful cup of wine from the young woman's hand (figure 11), the moment of seduction that initiated the fall. In pre-Qajar illustrations, the pivotal moment was when the Shaykh set



FIGURE 9. Shaykh San'an and the Christian maiden, from Husayn Bayquara, *Majalis al-'ushshaq*, sixteenth century.





FIGURE 10. Shaykh San'an looking after pigs, from a sixteenth-century *Majalis al-'ushshaq* manuscript.



FIGURE 11. Shaykh San'an and the Christian maiden, c. 1830.

eyes on the Christian girl, when the mere existence of a beautiful face produced an intense desire in the old man. In Qajar representations, however, the pivotal moment shifted to the Christian girl's seductive demands on the old man. Thus in the earlier works, it was the Shaykh's action, beholding the maiden and gazing for a whole month, that moved the plot. In the Qajar rendition, the act of the merciless maiden demanding that the Shaykh drink wine moves the narrative.

Correspondingly, in Qajar representations, the first point that catches the eye is the old man's mouth receiving wine from a cup in the hand of the Christian woman. One side of the painting often depicts an all-male group, the Shaykh's disciples, ranging from very young men (objects of homoerotic desire within the Sufi community) to very elderly men, signifying Shaykh San'an's homosocial group. On the other side, a mixed group of women and men often flank the Christian maiden.<sup>52</sup>

Following Tavakoli-Targhi's (1990b) textual analysis, I argued that this latter group signified the heterosociality of European society—a marker of cultural difference between “us” and “them” (Najmabadi 1998a). In this reading, the male and female group constituted a spectacle of heterosociality (which early Iranian travelers, in a mirror “misreading” of Europeans in Iran, often read as heterosexuality, thus presenting Europe as a land of rampant public heterosexual display). I suggest now that this scene represents the ghilman and the hur, centering on the critical cup of wine and presenting to the viewer a spectacle of paradise where the pleasures forbidden the male believer on earth were abundantly available. The Iranian cultural distinction between “them” and “us” was not only the issue of their naked women and our covered women, as Tavakoli-Targhi has amply documented (1990b, 1997). It was also focused on their men without beards and ours with full beards.<sup>53</sup> Morier had satirized European men's beardlessness as a shocking sight to Iranian men. Mir 'Abd al-Latif Shushtari, whose 1801 work provided one of the earliest references for later Persophone writers on Europe, noted that their “men shave their beard and mustache, and braid their hair.”<sup>54</sup> Mirza Salih Shirazi (1983, 178–80) marks to the day (“last day of July” [1816]) his own conflicted adoption of English dress and shaving of his beard as a way of fitting into the culture, as a sacrifice that would make his effort to study and learn in England possible. Even Nasir al-Din Shah (1964, 88, 224, 231, 239) continued to note meticulously the state of beards and mustaches of European men he met on his first visit in 1873. Pirzadah, in contrast, satirized those who considered shaving the beard a sign of irreligiosity.<sup>55</sup>

Visual representations of the wine-drinking episode from Shaykh San'an's story (see figure 11) included “bare-breasted” Farangi women and

beardless men.<sup>56</sup> The bearded man at the center of these depictions was every Iranian adult man, drinking wine from the hand of a huri. The frequent depiction of this scene on pen boxes and large oil paintings, in contrast to pre-Qajar manuscript illustrations, released it from its narrative framework. The Qajar artistic productions, as units independent from the text, privileged this scene of drinking on yet another level: earlier its meaning was largely determined by its location in the larger plot of the tale, by the physical proximity of the illustrated page to a particular point in the text. Now it was liberated from this larger textual "burden," becoming a condensed scene of paradise uninhibited by being embedded in a larger story.<sup>57</sup> Condensation of the tale to the moment of drinking a cup of wine from the hand of a beautiful woman made it also suitable for decoration of palaces (Sayf 1997, plate 89), of reception halls (recall Ouseley's description), and of private residences (Sayf 1997, plates 47, 67, 81). It became a wine-drinking scene, suitable for spaces of gaiety (*bazm*). The cup held by the young woman (Europe) and offered to the old man (ancient Iran) shifted the thrust of the narrative from the moment of gaze to the moment of drinking the fateful cup of wine from the hand of the seductress. A tale of love now doubled as a tale of the Fall. Yet it was a fall not out of but into paradise.<sup>58</sup>

The simultaneous presence of the hur and the ghilman in representations of Europe as paradise already signals an important cultural shift. Though the promised rewards in paradise included young creatures of both sexes, in a different genre, namely, in Persian (especially Sufi-inspired) love poetry, the beloved was almost always male. Ma'shuq and shahid of Persian love poetry were decidedly male, even though the grammatical gender neutrality of the Persian language has made it possible for later modernist literary critics to deny or neutralize it.<sup>59</sup>

In contrast to this tradition of male beloved, the actual embodiment of female hur in the persons of European women crucially shifted this gender configuration, producing actual females as subject of love lyrics, contributing to the feminization of the beloved. Tavakoli-Targhi (1997, 35–36) has argued convincingly that the travelogue as a literary genre brought forth an individualized specific figure for the beloved. But this process of individualization was simultaneously a sex change—it transformed the male beloved into a female beloved.<sup>60</sup> Though Mirza Abu Talib Khan composed at least one lyric for a young man—a young English captain he had named "heavenly youth"—the majority of love lyrics by him and other travelers were about young European women.<sup>61</sup>

How did this shift occur? How was a sense of pleasure, which saw both handsome young men and beautiful young women as objects of desire,

reeducated and disciplined into heteronormativity by the end of the nineteenth century? How was male-male love transformed from natural, even divine, to unnatural and abominable?

Mirza Abu Talib Khan's lyrics, largely composed for particular women and only exceptionally in praise of individual men, may give us a clue. Whereas Iranian male travelers took note of both male and female beauties, it was European women who courted them, surrounded them at parties, conversed and flirted with them, persistently invited them to dance, and took them to plays, operas, and other entertainments.<sup>62</sup> This was a kind of cultural interpellation that refashioned these travelers' senses and sensuality. European women hailed Iranian men as if the latter shared the emerging heteronormativity of European public culture, and Iranian men seem to have responded with minimal haggling.<sup>63</sup> In fact, later travelers anticipated their reeducation. On his way to England, Rizaquli Mirza asked the British general consul in Damascus to provide him with a manual on how to behave in Europe. The consul's handbook included sections on how to interact with women (Rizaquli Mirza 1982, 222–23).

To be surrounded by female company *in public* was a new and intense experience about which these men reported at great length and in minute detail. The first time Mirza Abu al-Hasan Khan had a long conversation with the wife of an ambassador (whom he found most beautiful and kind), he exclaimed, "O God, is this a dream or am I awake?" (1986, 83). Farhad Mirza Mu'tamid al-Dawlah, going to Mecca in 1875, was accompanied by family members, including his wife. Hosted by the governor of Baku, he found himself boarding the same carriage as his wife. He later wrote, "I would have never imagined in Tehran that one could sit in the same carriage with one's wife or sister and go to pay a visit to a shrine or go to Tajrish in public, facing relatives and strangers" (1991, 41). I'timad al-Saltanah recorded with approval that European husbands eat their meals together with their wives and children around the same table, and he soon began to invite his wife to lunch with him.<sup>64</sup>

The homosocial male spaces that Iranian men had experienced throughout their adult lives were replaced by heterosocial encounters everywhere in Europe and, later in the nineteenth century, by their encounters with Europeans in Iran. Ballrooms, streets and parks, royal audience halls, schools and workplaces, boats, trains, railroad stations, and ports were all public spaces populated by men and uncovered women. Heterosocial European cultural practices, in other words, heteronormalized Iranian men's sensibilities. Seeing handsome young men and beautiful young women dancing together was simultaneously the culturally familiar paradisiacal phantasm of the hur

and the ghilman *and* an unfamiliar spectacle of public heterosociality. The phantasmic familiarity of the former familiarized the strangeness of the latter. The voyeuristic pleasure generated by the paradisiacal sight worked to transform the unfamiliar heterosocial spectacle from one of *hayrat* (a sight wondrous) to one of admiration—seeing it as a social good—and finally to something desired. In other words, the desirable sight of the hur and the ghilman became productive of a desire for heterosociality. A young, beardless English man was at one moment a sight of the paradisiacal ghilman, but at the next moment this same young man was the husband of an English huri or an officer of the royal court. For an eye accustomed to seeing only men in and as public, the experience of seeing men *with* women in public profoundly transformed notions of gender and sexuality.

This profound heteronormalization of sensibilities was never fully “accomplished” at the level of either gender or sexuality. Its full accomplishment was blocked by the conservation of domestic social practices: of female and male homosociality, spousal relations, and child-rearing practices.<sup>65</sup> In Europe, Iranian men were courted by women and interrogated about “their women,” their marital arrangements, and even their sexual lives.<sup>66</sup> In these conversations, Iranian men began to imagine alternative gender relations and sexual orientations: if only Iranian women were more like European ones, then gender relations and sexualities could be reconfigured (Tavakoli-Targhi 1997).

It took a century for many of these sensibilities to change. By the end of the nineteenth century, male travelers continued to report beautiful women, but they no longer wrote about ghilman and shahids. In fact, they rarely referred to European women as the hur. By then European women had become defantasized from the earlier paradisiacal creatures.<sup>67</sup> Correspondingly, gender-differentiated notions of beauty became consolidated.

Modernity closeted the male beloved into the premodern and rendered Sufi love as transcendental. It redefined homosexual desire from natural to unnatural and abominable, blaming it on the undesirable social practice of women’s seclusion and gender segregation. Mirza Fath’ali Akhundzadah (1812–78), one of the most influential modernist sociocultural critics of Iranian society, wrote in 1865 that his criticism of Islamic edicts on women’s segregation did not mean that he condemned the Prophet’s love of women (*zan’parasti*). On the contrary, “if one acts against this attraction, he is either sick or intentionally wants to move outside the laws of creation” (Akhundzadah 1985, 131). He argued further that numerous ills ensued from the veiling edict, such as men’s rough character, shaped by socializing only with their own kind, and their deprivation of the most

pleasurable worldly blessing, intercourse with women.<sup>68</sup> This, he claimed, led to the spread of *liwat* among the men of the nation who openly publish poetry in praise of *amrads* and do not consider this terrible act as evil.<sup>69</sup> Similarly Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani (1853?–96) argued:

Men are naturally inclined toward socializing with and enjoying the companionship of women. This is so strongly evident that it needs no explication and proof. If a people is forbidden from this great blessing and is deprived of this great deliverance, then inevitably the problem of sexual acts with boys and young male slaves [*bachchah' bazi* and *ghulam' baragi*] is created, because boys without facial hair [*pisaran-i sadah*] resemble women and this is one of the errors of nature. It is for this reason that in the Iranian people/nation this grave condition has reached saturation. "You lust after men instead of women" can be witnessed in Iran.<sup>70</sup>

And the ground for this situation is the veiling of women that has become established in Iran. Since men's natural desire to see women is frustrated and they are deprived of that blessing, of necessity and inevitably, they turn to pederasty [*bachchah' bazi*] and making love with boys. Sa'di of Shiraz and the obscene and shameful Qa'ani and other Iranian poets have big collections of poetry that prove my word and relieve me of further explication. (*Sad khatabah*, ms. 137b; *Nimeye Digar*, 111)<sup>71</sup>

In his fictional travelogue, Zayn al-'Abidin Maraghah'i (1839–1910) criticized men of 'Urumiyah (Azarbaijan) for what he perceived as their womanliness: "Men, like women, put henna on their hands and feet" and "spend half their day in the bath engaging in womanly activities" (Maraghah'i 1985, 130–31). He deplored the open expression of men's love for beautiful youth, calling these men insane, suggesting that "Nature [*tabi'at*] has created men and women to love each other. I don't know why these ill-natured [*badfitrat*] men are not shamed by their ugly deeds. . . . One must run away from these remainders of the people of Lot before a catastrophe hits them" (134).

In secular modernist discourse, erotic desire—self-evidently heterosexual—became derailed to homosexual ends because veiling and segregation of women did not allow its natural fulfillment. This assumption produced the drive to reconfigure Sufi male homoeroticism as "purely" allegorical and transcendental—to be enjoyed metaphorically and not confused with the real, much as modern Islamists have argued that wine in that poetry stands for pleasure and ecstasy of communion with the divine.<sup>72</sup> The modern Islamist attitude toward homoeroticism is informed by similar moves of denial, disavowal, sanction, and approbation. The line of differentiation between the secular and the Islamist on this issue is drawn where homoeroticism and same-sex practices of the

Iranian past or present are translocated. Whereas Akhundzadah, Kirmani, and following them secular modernists have located the “vice” in the domain of Arabo-Islamic backwardness, contemporary Islamists locate it in the domain of Western secular corruption. They all agree that it is “vice.” The Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI) is set on eradicating homosexuality, especially male same-sex practices, in the name of eradicating Western cultural and secular moral corruption. Oblivious to the irony of its shared ground with secular modernists and with Orientalizing Europeans, the IRI depends on a concept of homosexuality—sexual deviancy, *inhiraf-i jinsi*—more akin to late nineteenth-century western European concepts than to anything from Islam’s own classical heritage.<sup>73</sup>

#### THE EFFECTS OF NORMATIVE HETEROSEXUALITY

The notion of same-sex desire as a derivative deviant desire, forced upon the natural as a consequence of the unfortunate social arrangement of sex segregation, distinguishes the process of modern heteronormalization in Iran from that of Western Europe, as proposed by Foucault. In Iran, the modernist project of compulsory heterosocialization was premised on the expectation was that once women became “available” to men, and men treated women fairly, homosexual practices would disappear. The success of this project could have produced a tendency to “type” men and women who “still” engaged in same-sex practices as anormal, if not abnormal, stricken with some sort of “illness.”<sup>74</sup> To be sure, a psychomedical discourse of male same-sex desire as illness (through the figure of *ma’bun*, and in particular in Ibn Sina’s discourse on *’ubna* as illness of will) was available. But the dominant regime of regulating sexuality has remained centered on practices rather than on inherent forms of desire. No notion of the homosexual as a type—a deviant, possibly criminal, type, produced in Europe through medical, educational, and legal discourses and disciplinary technologies in the mid-nineteenth century—has emerged as a dominant discourse, neither for disciplinary purposes nor for self-identification. Sexual acts between men continue to be seen as what men do before they settle into heterosexual procreative sex with wives (or even as they so settle, so long as they perform their reproductive obligations), rather than marking them as a particular human type. Yet one should ask: Is the notion that male-male sexual acts are what men do before they settle down into procreative sexuality with wives (or what women do when not satisfied with their husbands’ performance) not a deferral of recognition of homosexuality as an erotic preference? Is it not yet another form of denial and disavowal of



homosexuality? After all, we are assured that all men will eventually become practicing (if not believing!) heterosexuals. Is this not a cultural move to make homosexuality an “unreadable text,” at best a temporally containable phenomenon? It marginalizes same-sex desire through temporal boxing rather than through minoritization. Instead of considering homosexual men a minority of peculiar queer disposition, men are seen to engage in same-sex practices, but only for a marginal period of their life cycle. As modern Iran has become increasingly heterosocialized, temporal marginalization of same-sex practices has become less persuasive. Other marginalizing moves, such as effeminizing, typing, medicalizing, psychologizing, and exteriorizing (attribution to cultural disruptions of the West) have been crafted.

In this context, the initial masquerading resistance against the European gaze may have also worked as a defense against internal threats as Iranian modernity began to cast same-sex desire as unnatural vice and moral corruption, especially when faced with violent punishments as in the early years of the IRI and the terrorizing threat of the current penal code. Although legal punishment against female same-sex practices is less severe than for men, women come under harsher social scrutiny and familial control. Their intense friendships are often more suspect than men’s intimate and long-lasting friendships, unless given the formal cover of a vow of sisterhood (and even then) or if the two women choose to become co-wives to one man. Women continue to carry the load of being “objects of traffic among men,” and thus subject to the “protecting” power of men (fathers, brothers, husbands) and of the nation.

In more recent decades, perhaps in response to the IRI’s instatement of laws against male and female homosexuality and its brutal persecution and execution of men engaged in homosexual practices, perhaps as the discourse of gay and lesbian identities internationally has provided grounds for new hybridities, “typing” has been claimed by newly constituted gay and lesbian Iranian communities in Europe and the United States. Two journals, the short-lived *Hasha* and *Homan*, published in the United States and Europe, have become voices of these communities (Shakhsari 2002).

The historical processes that I have mapped in this chapter have profoundly transformed notions of the feminine and the masculine in the homoerotic domain itself, reversing some of the premodern ideal types and similitudes. For instance, Kirmani considered that young men approximated young women, “an error of nature,” whereas in premodern writings, the young male was absolute beauty. Indeed, it was often the young female who approximated that ideal. In Sufi tales of old man–young man love, the

young man is cruel and arrogant, the Shaykh a figure of perfection or, alternately, abjection. With the young beloved *amrad* closeted away in transcendental premodernity, the other figure associated with "homosexuality," the *ma'bun*—an adult man interested in being a "passive" partner—now came to stand for homosexuality as such. Homosexuality became marked with effeminacy and abjection.<sup>75</sup>

Some of the currently accepted "typologies" of male homosexuality in Islamicate cultures assume the hypermasculinity of "active" and the femininity of "passive" males involved in homosexual practices.<sup>76</sup> This typology is itself a consequence of the modernist heterosexualization of love. If the nineteenth century began with male and female beauties as desirable objects of male eroticism and ended with the female as the only acceptable object of desire of male eroticism, then all objects of male erotic desire had to become feminized. It is this momentum that created feminized passivity as the only position for the male homosexual object in modernist imagination.

I do not wish to script the premodern as some golden age of egalitarian homoeroticism. Rather, I suggest that concepts of masculine and feminine became centrally structuring categories for notions of beauty, desire, and love only when gender differentiation became pertinent to these categories. Masculine and feminine had been defining categories elsewhere: in the domain of the sexual contract of marriage and for the hierarchies of power in the family, but not in the domain of love and desire. In fact, love and marriage did not intersect in the first place. The heterosexualization of love and bringing love into the domain of marriage not only changed marriage from a sexual procreative contract into a romantic contract, as we will see in chapter 6, but also radically transformed love. Friendship/love/sexuality had been located in the homosocial domain (within which that of men could be publicly celebrated). Sexuality/procreation/family, in contrast, required heterosexual performance. Although sexuality was common to both domains, in the first, it was linked to love and friendship; in the second, to procreation. Once love was shifted from homosocial eroto-affectivity to procreative marriage, the strong link forged between love and sexuality would carry gender categories of femininity and masculinity from the domain of marriage and family onto the domain of love. The gender marking of male homoerotics was facilitated by this shift. The desiring subject became the male hyperheterosexual, who can have sex with both man and woman; the object of desire, woman and the feminized male. This meant that it was now the feminized male who approximated the female, a reversal of the previous typology. It also meant that he came to share the

position of abjection that belonged to woman. The male beloved, now feminized, became subject to ridicule and loathing, whereas the young male beloved of the classical text was an object of adoration.

The pressure to typologize sexuality has produced a long-lasting effect in the transformation of the notion of *bachchahbazi* and with it the concept of *bachchah*. Previously the word *bachchah*, in such combinations as *ghulambachchah* (young male servant), *tarsabachchah* (young Christian male), and *kafirbachchah* (infidel young male), as well as the general term *bachchahbazi* (liaison with a young male), had connoted older man–younger man sexual practices. The word *bachchah* was more like the contemporary meaning of a teenager. Once older man–younger man sexual practices became unnatural vice, *bachchah* was transformed into what we now name a child, and the sexual practices became what we now call pederasty.<sup>77</sup>

My point is not to defend pederasty, as any discussion of such a charged topic might be criticized for doing. But the very processes that named older man–younger man sexual practices as pederasty and transformed the *bachchah* into a child prevented these practices from acquiring a modern equivalent in Iranian society. Older man–younger woman sexual practices, as in many marriages in Qajar Iran (in a modernist sense also *bachchahbazi*), were recast into modern marriages in which man and woman were to be closer in age. No modern equivalent emerged for older man–younger man sexual relations. Marriages between an older man and a much younger woman (a woman in the same age range as the young man) may be considered unwise, but they are not banned or considered immoral.<sup>78</sup> These transformations of sexuality had enormous repercussions for many other cultural practices and concepts, such as marriage and the woman's veil, that will be considered in later chapters of this book.

PART II

Cultural Labor of  
Sexuality and Gender



### 3 The Eclipse of the (Fe)Male Sun

In 1836 Muhammad Shah Qajar (r. 1834–48) formally adopted the lion-and-sun as the official emblem of the Iranian state.<sup>1</sup> The lion was male, the sun was (fe)male (figure 12).<sup>2</sup> Over the following century the sun burst into a magnificent Qajari (fe)male face, and the lion became more masculinized (figure 13). By the early twentieth century, however, the sun gradually lost its hair and distinct facial features and was left with two dots for eyes and a few marks for a nose and mouth. These remaining features were permanently erased sometime in 1935–36, and by the late 1970s, the emblem was fully geometrized (figures 14 and 15). In the aftermath of the 1979 revolution, the lion-and-sun was finally abandoned as the state emblem, replaced by a calligraphic depiction of the sentence “There is no god but Allah.”

What can these transformations tell us about gender of modernity and modern notions of gender in Iran? What did the initial blossoming of the (fe)male sun signify? Why was it later effaced, leaving behind a completely masculinized national emblem? This tumultuous metamorphosis coincided with a period in which beauty was feminized, as we saw in chapter 2. The sun’s gender was correspondingly consolidated as female, as lady sun, *khawrshid khanum*. The sun’s effacement makes a paradoxical statement about the gender of modernity. During the same period (late nineteenth century to 1979), in which real women became more publicly visible in Iranian society, the symbolic sun of the national emblem was effaced as it became more identified as female. This effacement was linked with shifting “views of the cosmos,” from one in which the sun was most often linked with astrological symbolism to a cosmology that became more material, this-worldly, and nature-centered.<sup>3</sup>

This shift in mentality intersected with other cultural issues of modernity. In particular, while modernity demanded that national space be increasingly heterosocial, involving a certain kind of public visibility of

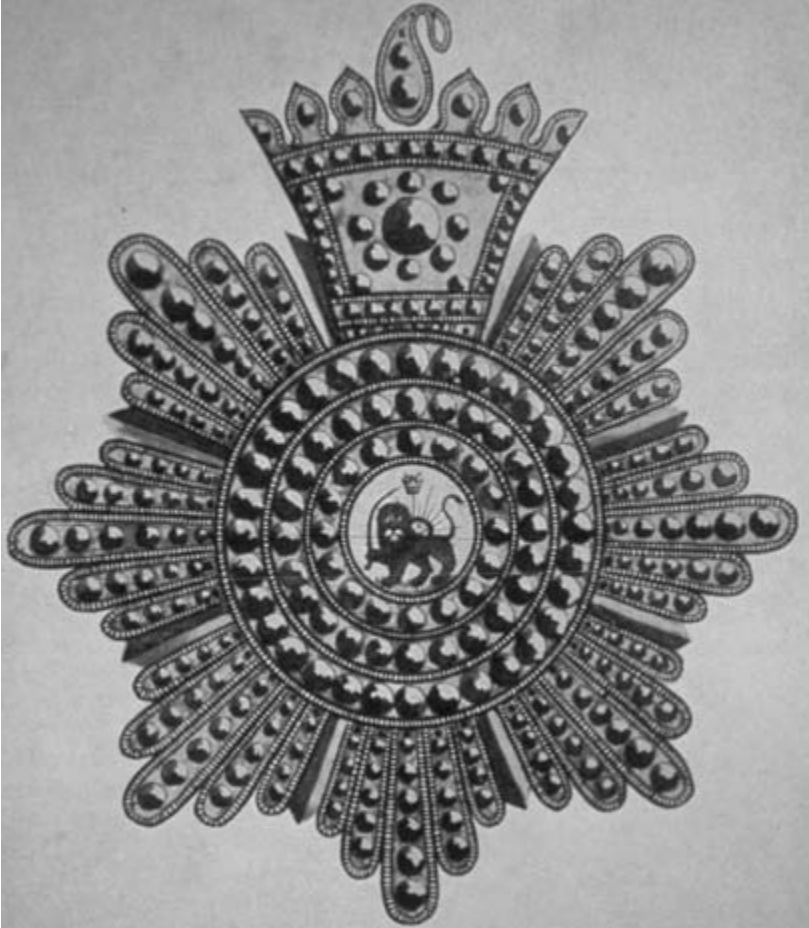


FIGURE 12. Order of Lion-and-Sun medallion, 1836.

woman, a key icon of modern national representation was masculinized.<sup>4</sup> In fact, Riza Shah's (r. 1926–41) order to erase the sun's facial features occurred within a year of his order for compulsory unveiling of women in public (1936).<sup>5</sup> What politics of public representability of gender do the high and low of the sun's symbolic life articulate?

#### A SIGN THREE THOUSAND YEARS OLD

The lion-and-sun belongs to many visual and textual fields in Islamic and Iranian cultures.<sup>6</sup> The emblem's genealogy is variously narrated as



FIGURE 13. Narinjistan, Shiraz, Qajar period building.

pre-Islamic (through the sun's meaning in Zoroastrianism) or as central Asian Turkic.<sup>7</sup> There is a plethora of explanations that cannot be substantiated and are historically implausible. The least likely story is that the sun is the emblem of the Armenian defeat by the lion of Shi'ite Iran under the Safavi ruler Shah 'Abbas I (r. 1587–1629) (Yahaqqi 1990, 281; Nayyirnuri 1965, 86). More romantically, it is said that the lion-and-sun originated in a coin minted by a thirteenth-century Saljuq ruler (of Anatolia) who expressed his love for his wife by representing her image.<sup>8</sup> The lion-and-sun is also affiliated with the sign system of astrological tables, and it stands for Shi'ite loyalty to 'Ali through one of his given names, Asadal-lah, God's lion. In the Qajar period, the emblem appears on Jewish wedding documents (*ketubas*) (figure 16) and on Shi'ite banners for Muharram processions (figure 17).<sup>9</sup> This enormous "traffic in signs between different sites of representation" (Tickner 1988, 94) accounts for the lion-and-sun's unique success as the sign of modern Iranianness. It is hard to find any other modern icon of Iranianness that belongs to as many domains of signification and in which Zoroastrian, Jewish, Shi'ite, Turkish, and Persian symbols have been brought together—a condensation that has produced it as a most powerfully *national* emblem.

Although the modern adoption of the lion-and-sun as a state emblem dates to the reign of Muhammad Shah, some combination of a lion and a sun was one of many Iranian state emblems as far back as the early Safavi period (1501–1722) (Ackermen, 1938–39; Shahbazi, EIr/b). Unlike the subsequent modernist urge to make one uniform iconic representation of the state, the Safavi state (and the early Qajar as well) had a variety of representations. Some coins, for instance, displayed varying shapes of lions and suns, others had only calligraphy or other figurative designs, such as





FIGURE 14. Official state emblem, 1907.

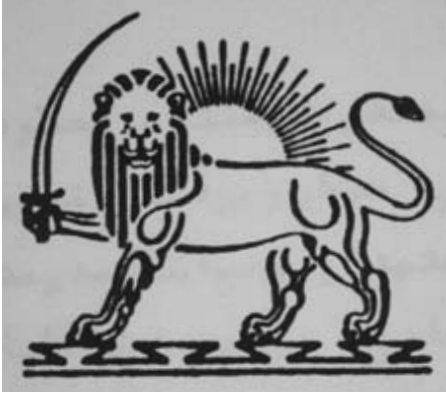


FIGURE 15. Official state emblem, early 1970s.

peacocks, whales, bulls, lion-and-deer, rabbits, horses, dogs, swords (including the double-edged sword, *Zu'l-faqar*, of 'Ali), and floral patterns (Turabi Tabataba'i 1971, 188–239; Poole 1887, plates XIII, XIV, XV, XVIII, XX, XXI, XXII, XXIII; Calmard, *Elr*).

Similarly, Safavi and early Qajar flags were not marked exclusively by the lion-and-sun. As late as the 1830s, flags with other figurative designs represented Iran. The best-known flag was that of *Zu'l-faqar*, which displayed the famous sword on a plain background. In 1835, when Fath'ali Shah's grandson Rizaquli Mirza was asked to display the Iranian flag on their boat as they approached Malta, he drew a *Zu'l-faqar* on a plain cloth (Rizaquli Mirza 1982, 301, 313). From the Safavi period onward, textual references and visual representations indicate that the lion-and-sun flag became a privileged sign of Iran's official identification. Thomas Herbert attributed the emblem of the lion-and-sun to Shaykh Safi: "That santoon of Ardaveil invented a new ensign, viz. Venus, a lion couchant, Sol, the sun orient in his face, of the same: minted also in their brass medals and (as a tie of amity) accepted of by the Great Mogul and other neighboring Princes in India" (1638, 231).<sup>10</sup>

As Kathryn Babayan (2003) has persuasively argued, once the Safavis transformed themselves from a marginalized heretical extremist (*ghuluww*) group into *ghuluww* triumphant, and became a state power, *shah* incorporated two meanings—king and holy man. This double meaning was underwritten by the articulation of a genealogy of Iranian kings that combined mythohistories and tales such as Firdawsi's *Shahnamah*, *Stories of Prophets*, and other Islamic sources. This genealogy became the foundational mythohistory of modern Iranian nationalism. Two male figures were



FIGURE 16. Jewish wedding document (*ketuba*), 1870.

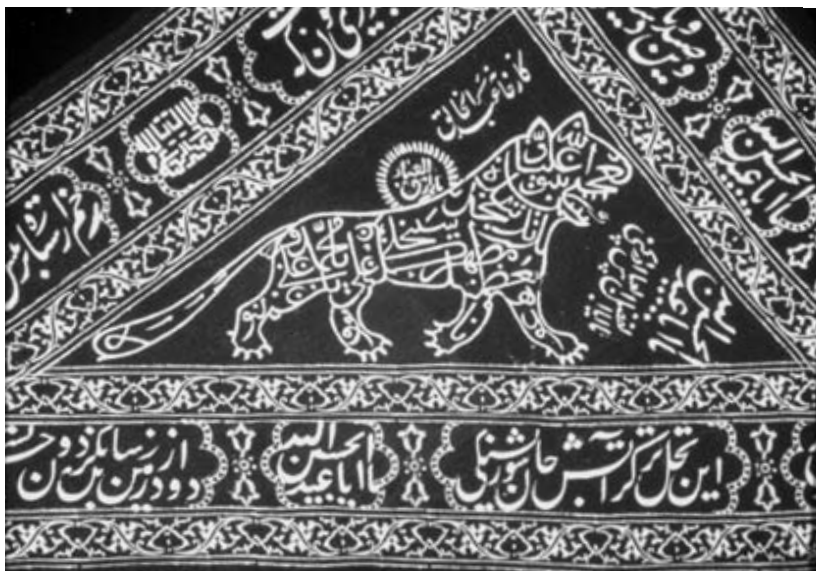


FIGURE 17. 'Ashura banner, c. 1900.

critical to this paternity: Jamshid (mythological king-founder of the ancient Persian kingdom), and 'Ali (Shi'ite first Imam), the first affiliated with the sun, the second with the lion (and Zu'l-faqar). As Babayan explains, the Safavi move from "Anatolia toward Fars signaled both the Iranianization and Imamification of the empire" (Babayan 2003, 352).

The sun entered the world of Safavi representation not only from its affiliation with Jamshid as the sun king, but also from two other sites: a sense of time organized around the solar system (as distinct from the Arabo-Islamic lunar system) and a sense of cosmos mediated through the astrological system (Babayan 2003, pt. 1) Within the astrological sign system, moreover, the sun was linked to Leo. The sign of lion-and-sun thus condensed the double meanings of *shah*—king and holy man, Jamshid and 'Ali—through the most auspicious sign of the sun in its preferred home of Leo, as expressed in astrological literature and made visible through many artistic productions such as manuscript drawings, etchings on metallic objects, glazing of ceramic artifacts, and tileworks of buildings. In both central Asian and Persianate visual and textual worlds, many suns were depicted in their preferred home of Leo, bringing together the cosmic-earthly pair (king and Imam). Here there was already an element of what

from a modern perspective would look like gender incongruity: whereas the king was almost always assumed to be an adult male (and only exceptionally and temporarily a female or a young, underage male), the sun of the astrological system was always a beautiful face, a young (fe)male. Pre-modern iconic sensibilities seemed oblivious or indifferent to this gender (and age) incongruity.

The Safavid configuration of the lion-and-sun stood for power of state and religion—*din va dawlat*, the two pillars of a just society. The Qajars appropriated it, modified it in important ways, and formalized it. Although many historians of Qajar Iran do not believe that a claim of continuity with the Safavis was important for the consolidation of the new dynastic rule (Amanat 1997, 8), that continuity was seen as an important legitimating move in the early histories of the nineteenth century. Rustam al-Hukama (1974), for instance, took great pains to establish and emphasize a double genealogy for the dynasty's founding ruler—a Timuri maternal descent and a Safavi paternal line.<sup>11</sup> With or without the continuity of kinship, however, the Safavid notion of power—drawing on combined conceptual genealogy of pre-Islamic Iranian monarchy and Shi'ite Islam, with Jamshid and 'Ali as the two privileged father figures of authority and loyalty—provided the conceptual and iconic material for Qajar rulership. The Qajar kings successfully and fully developed visual and literary representation of this genealogy through archaeological, artistic, literary, religious, and historical production on a vast scale.

The earliest known Qajar piece with the lion-and-sun motif is a coin minted in 1796 on the occasion of Aqa Muhammad Shah's coronation as the first Qajar king (figure 18). The sun invokes the name Muhammad (ya Muhammad), referring to the new monarch (making an allusion to the Prophet as well).<sup>12</sup> Underneath the lion's belly, the name of the first Shi'ite Imam, 'Ali (Asadallah, lion of God), is invoked (ya 'Ali). This early Qajar coin thus suggests that the lion-and-sun stood for the combined power of the king (sun) and religion (lion). "Iranianization and Imamification" of sovereignty, as Babayan calls it, is iconically transferred from the Safavis to the Qajars.

With Qajar's second king, Fath'ali Shah, however, we observe the beginning of a shift in political culture, a de-emphasis of, if not complete disaffiliation from, the Islamic component of the Safavi concept of rulership. Layla Diba has demonstrated that "the use of imagery [by Fath'ali Shah] was . . . the artistic component of a concerted policy . . . intended to equate the Qajar rulers with the glorious Persian past" (1998b, 31). This early Qajar reorientation coincided with European archaeological surveys in Iran



FIGURE 18. Twenty-tuman coin, 1796.

from the early nineteenth century. The archaeological and cartographic results of these surveys provided an “earthly materiality” for the pre-Islamic Persian politico-cultural affiliations that formerly were fashioned largely through poetry and prose.<sup>13</sup> As Diba notes, “Most strikingly, rock reliefs depicting Fath ‘Ali Shah, his sons, and his courtiers were also strategically sited in relation to similar rock carvings and reliefs from Iran’s Achaemenid (550–331 B.C.) and Sasanian (A.D. 221–642) past” (1998b, 32).

In addition, there was a vast program to build palaces and other structures in strategic locations, complete with life-size royal portraiture. For Fath ‘ali Shah’s subjects the visibility produced for the king made kingship a visually sensed power.<sup>14</sup> The visual display of sovereignty supplemented the older media, such as reading poetry aloud in public gatherings in praise of the king, minting coins with his name, and invoking him in public sermons. In an unprecedented move, Fath ‘ali Shah minted coins with his own image, either riding his horse in a hunt or sitting on his throne (Poole 1887, plate XIII, coin no. 476; plate XIV, coins Nos. 477 and 484).

In this intensified visual regime, the sun, evoking the sun king from the Persianate dominion, became intimately identified with the person of Fath ‘ali Shah. The sun as metaphor for the ruling monarchs (including non-Iranian ones) predates the Qajars, and the expression *khawrshidkulah* (sun-hatted person) was common. Although since the early Qajar period, this expression has been used to identify Catherine II (r. 1762–96) of Russia, in Safavi and early Qajar sources it was applied to any monarch.<sup>15</sup> Aqa Muhammad Qajar, the founder of the dynasty, was described through a number of sun-related metaphors, such as *khawrshid’ara* (adorning of the

sun) and *khawrshid'khassiyat* (having the same qualities as the sun) (Saravi 1992, 287, 298). But it was the poets and writers of Fath'ali Shah's court who saturated the metaphoric field with the sun king.<sup>16</sup>

Two figures in particular delighted in inventing and proliferating sun metaphors for Fath'ali Shah: the court poet Fath'ali Khan Saba and the historian Rustam al-Hukama. Many of Saba's panegyrics center on the notion of Fath'ali Shah as sun. One of his best-known and most eloquent panegyrics, composed for the occasion of welcoming the Persian new year (*nawruz*), was a comparison between the sun in the sky and the sun on earth, with the opening verse:

Two suns from which the earth and time turned afresh  
One entered the palace of hamal, the other the place of Kian.<sup>17</sup>

Sun metaphors for Fath'ali Shah occur throughout *Rustam al-tavarikh*. The sunlike qualities of the king also appear in political discourse: "A king, like a father who disciplines his children through encouragement, should similarly discipline his army and his subjects. This is because, in the same manner that the sun is the *murabbi* [manager/guide/disciplinarian] and the father of the Universe, the king, too, in fathering and in disciplining [his subjects], is like the sun."<sup>18</sup> The play on sun and Fath'ali Shah became common not only in prose and poetry but in design and art as well.<sup>19</sup>

Identifying Fath'ali Shah with the sun (sun king in affiliation with Jamshid) became so ubiquitous that the monarch himself used it self-referentially. When in 1819–20 Mirza Abu al-Hasan Khan Shirazi traveled to London as special envoy, Fath'ali Shah honored him by sending a dispatch of gifts, which reached him in Vienna: "A banner with the insignia of the empire, . . . a ribbon of an order with the picture of the sun; yes, with the portrait of the emperor himself. . . . This, however, is not all; poems are added, which in oriental fashion glorify banner, sun and royal portrait with brilliant metaphors and hyperbolas."<sup>20</sup> Fath'ali Shah composed two poems addressed to Abu al-Hasan Khan for this occasion as a gesture of royal honor. The first elaborated on the meaning of the Iranian banner; the second described the picture of the king and the sign of sun on a piece of cloth.<sup>21</sup> The second set of verses contains several sun metaphors, but the first set succinctly narrates Fath'ali Shah's notions of the country, himself, and the meaning of signs:

Fath'ali, the Turki Shah, the universe-enlightening Jamshid  
The Lord of country Iran, the universe-adorning sun;  
.....  
Iran, the gorge of lions, sun the Shah of Iran

It's for this that the lion-and-sun is marked on the banner of Dara;  
 The head of the wise envoy, that is, Abu al-Hasan Khan  
 Will touch the edge of the heavens from this solid banner;  
 From love, he [Fath'ali Shah] appointed him an envoy to London  
 Thus he bestowed glory and victory upon the king of Christians.<sup>22</sup>

Clearly Fath'ali Shah saw himself as a new Jamshid, almost divinity, when he calls himself *kishvar-khuda-yi Iran*, playing on the double meaning of *khuda* as boss and god. For the Iranian banner, he invokes the ancient *dirafsh-i Dara*, banner of Darius. The sun king Fath'ali Shah's divine affinity is no longer invoked through affiliation with an Imami lineage as it had been among the Safavid. We see a shift in kingly mentality from the Safavi Iranian/Imami concept to one more centered on ancient Iran, without reference to the Imami side of that duality. The dominance of the Persianate concept of sun king and the absence of affiliation with the Imami lineage de-emphasizes the lion's association with 'Ali, shifting the meaning of lion in the combined icon.

Histories such as *Rustam al-tavarikh* and Saba's *Shahanshahnamah*—which narrated early Qajar history in the style of Firdawsī's *Shahnamah*—were central to the production of this “Iran-centered” mentality. The very same texts, along with the ancient kings and their signs, provided the notion of Iranian men as lions and Iran as a land of lions.<sup>23</sup> The lion thus began to acquire a distinctly national meaning, though its religious association with Lion of God ('Ali) never disappeared, and frequently resurfaced and doubled the lion's signification. In fact, Lion of God continued to occasionally occupy “secular” spaces, such as the emblem of the first issue of the state gazette *Ruznamah-i akhbar-i dar al-khalafah-i Tihiran* (5 February 1851) (figure 19). It also appeared frequently on Muharram ta'zieh banners, such as in figure 17. Yet it would be misleading to categorize the latter as religious and the former as secular displays of the lion. In both sites, the lion's power arose from the condensed effect of its multiple belonging. The lion was a “trafficking sign.” The display of *Ya asadallah al-ghalib* (O victorious Lion of God) over the lion-and-sun in the emblem of the state gazette did not displace but supplemented its national meaning.

Similarly, through the popularity and spectacularity of *ta'zieh* (passion plays based on the Karbala' narrative) sponsored by Qajar shahs, the figure of lion acquired yet another meaning associated with *pahlavan* (paladin), a figure embedded in recitations of *Shahnamah* and most often associated with Rustam, the most important *pahlavan* in Iranian folklore. It is not accidental that Rustam al-Hukama called Iran a land of lions and Rustams, where a thousand Rustams would emerge in force from every corner of the



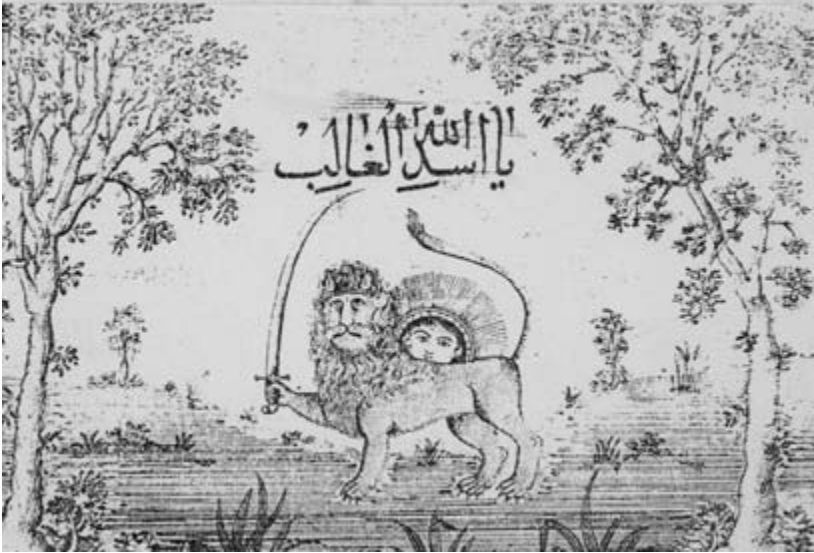


FIGURE 19. *Ruznamah-i akhbar-i dar al-khalafah-i Tihran*, 5 February 1851.

country to cause a cataclysmic world upheaval.<sup>24</sup> In his narrative the ancient male hero of *Shahnamah* represented the heroic masculinity that Iran needed to become prosperous, *Iran-i abad*. Portraits of Fath'ali Shah, the king of lions/Rustams, in martial pose are strikingly similar to those of Rustam in Qajar paintings.<sup>25</sup> The resemblance would transport the popular aura of Rustam's heroic chivalrous masculinity to the king-hero (*jahan'pahlavan-i jahan'sitan*) in his emergence from the king-holy man of the previous era.

Fath'ali Shah and later Qajar monarchs encouraged and sponsored spectacular public performances of Muharram processions to display the Shah's loyalty to the house of 'Ali. The subjects' loyalty to the monarch was fashioned through spectatorship when recitation of "poems in praise of the shah preceded the beginning of *sineh-zani* (beating of the chest) during the ceremonies."<sup>26</sup>

Moreover, ta'zieh actors and producers overlapped socioculturally with popular performers of masculinity in the *zurkhanah*.<sup>27</sup> The overlap between ta'zieh and zurkhanah enabled the pahlavan to represent both Asadallah (the Lion of God) and shirmard-i Iran (lion-man of Iran). The pahlavans' double performance in *takiyah* (space of performance of ta'zieh) and zurkhanah rituals brought together the Imami signification of the lion in the ta'zieh and the weight of ancient Iranian shirmard-i Iran. Like the pahlavan, the lion of

the national emblem drew its power from simultaneously belonging to both these domains, as is apparent in representations that combined the emblem with these thematics. Figure 20 shows the pavilion of a mid-nineteenth-century Qajar building, possibly Qasr-i Qajar (the Qajar Palace), which depicts "two lions face-to-face, symbols of the Persian state . . . and is enclosed by eight panels bearing an epigraph in *nasta'liq* characters" (Piemontese 1972, 283). The inscriptions, selected from a poem by Muhtasham Kashani eulogizing the twelve Shi'ite Imams, praise the prophet Muhammad and *shir-i khuda*, Lion of God, 'Ali (followed by one more line in praise of his first son, Hasan). Moreover, the verse exalting 'Ali appears directly above the two lions, both of which bear crowns, perhaps as Shah in its double religious and political meanings. An early-nineteenth-century Simnan city gate depicts the lion's affiliation with the ancient pahlavan Rustam (figure 21). The lion-and-sun appears in tilework on opposite sides of the upper section of the gate, both pointing to the gate's center. The large central arch depicts Rustam in a battle with the white giant (*div-i sipid*). Rustam's fighting pose, with a dagger in his hand, echoes that of the lions to his sides, which bear swords in their paws.<sup>28</sup>

The excerpts from Goethe that refer to the Order of the Sun should also be noted. In addition to a banner with the lion-and-sun, Fath'ali Shah had sent Mirza Abu al-Hasan Khan a cloth with the sign of a sun and the Shah's own image, which Goethe took to be the sash of an order. If Goethe's attribution is correct, then Fath'ali Shah honored Mirza Abu al-Hasan Khan by granting him a medallion of the sun. This is highly unlikely, since an honor at that level would have been noted by chroniclers of the time and in later reports. More likely, Goethe associated Mirza Abu al-Hasan Khan's royal gift (which included the images of the sun and the king) with an Order of Sun as it was known then in Europe.<sup>29</sup> The later formalization of state honors, from Muhammad Shah's 1836 decree onward, has influenced the assumption that the modern Iranian decoration of honor has been the *nishan* (honorific medal) of lion-and-sun (referred to as Order of the Lion-and-Sun in European sources), since at least the early Qajars if not before. During Fath 'Ali Shah's reign (and even the later Qajar period), however, we have numerous signs of honor with a variety of designs (Landau, *El*, 57–60). In fact, the Persian word *nishan*, which has been translated into the equivalent of *order*, literally means sign. Until the latter part of Fath'ali Shah's reign, and then with the 1836 decree, *nishan* had the same status as other gifts from the king. It signaled his appreciation of service, his generosity and benevolence toward one of his nobler subjects or foreign dignitaries, much in the same way that royal titles (such as *khan*) and other gifts,



FIGURE 20. Detail from pavilion of a Qajar building, mid-nineteenth century.

such as swords, robes, jewelry, or valuable cloths and artifacts would signal royal sentiment.<sup>30</sup> A nishan honored the recipient by virtue of the gifting transaction, as demonstrated by the granting of nishan to foreign dignitaries, especially in early Qajar. Fath‘ali Shah, for example, first sent robes (*khil‘at*) to General Gardane and members of his mission when they arrived in Tehran and later honored them with the medallion of the sun (*nishan-i khawrshid*) (Kavusi ‘Iraqi and Ahmadi 1997, xxxiii). The nishan, like other royal gifts, was accompanied by a *farman*, a written statement from the king stating the reason for the royal favor and listing the gifts. In his letter to General Gardane, Fath‘ali Shah refers to the nishan as a sign of royal dispensation (*marhimat-i shahanah*).<sup>31</sup> The two odes that Mirza Abu al-Hasan Khan received with his gifts were versified versions of gift edicts, revealing the recipient’s honored status and the Shah’s affection for him.

In late 1807, Fath‘ali Shah granted the medallion of the sun to General Gardane and his mission, representing the first recorded occasion in which a Qajar nishan was received as equivalent to a European-type order. He also sent such a medallion, along with other gifts, to the emperor Napoleon, an act that is usually considered the moment that the Order of the Sun was instituted (Landau, *EL*, 58; Wright 1979). But it is more likely that, rather than creating a formal order, the idea of nishan was modified to make it more culturally intelligible and acceptable to its European recipients. Wright has suggested that the nishan of the lion-and-sun was but a later refinement of the nishan of the sun. He argues that in 1810 John Malcolm’s refusal to accept an honor similar to that bestowed upon the French occasioned the sun’s modification into the lion-and-sun. However, the nishan



FIGURE 21. Simnan gate, early nineteenth century.

of the sun was bestowed on later occasions. More important, there was no unified sign for *nishan-i khawrshid* at this point. Some medallions displayed only suns, whereas others had lions *and* suns. Napoleon's *nishan* and that of General Trézel (a member of Gardane's mission) had no lion, yet others from the same mission, such as Talleyrand and Mir-Davoud-Zadour de Mélik Schahnazar, received *nishan-i khawrshids* that bore both lion and sun.<sup>32</sup> Although the *nishans'* accompanying Persian letters and edicts refer to them as *nishan-i khawrshid*, in later years many recipients took up the appellation of Order of the Lion-and-Sun, indicating the *nishan's* reception as an order and the growing dominance of the lion-and-sun as the privileged sign of Iran.<sup>33</sup> Mir-Davoud-Zadour de Mélik Schahnazar, for instance, is identified as "Chevalier des ordres du Soliel et du Lion" on the cover of his book. Calling him "Chevalier" brings the sign's meaning closer to that of European orders, since no equivalent Persian vocabulary existed for *nishan* recipients—they were simply referred to as holders (*sahib*) of *nishan*, which is how General Gardane was addressed in Fath'ali Shah's letter referred to earlier.

I suggest, then, that the lion-and-sun was not simply a refinement of an already existing order. The process of bestowing royal gifts and honors on foreign dignitaries, whose perception and definition of such honors were



FIGURE 22. Circular dish, gift of Fath'ali Shah to the East India Company.

structured by European orders, slowly yet surely changed the lion-and-sun from a sign that was similar in significance to robes, swords, artifacts, and jewelry into a privileged honor, a decoration akin to an order. Muhammad Shah's 1836 decree codified and institutionalized the process that overshadowed and eventually eliminated the sun (*khawrshid*) medallion on its own.<sup>34</sup> The lion-and-sun not only was used more and more frequently on medallions of honor but also began to appear on a host of other signs of royalty and statehood, including gifts from Fath'ali Shah to other leaders of states or prominent personalities and institutions, such as the circular dish presented in 1819 to the East India Company (figure 22). In 1838, Ajudanbashi, an Iranian envoy to Paris, made his personal manuscript copies of works of Sa'di and Firdawsi into an official gift for the king of France, having them gilt-bound in Vienna with a lion-and-sun embossed on the cover (Garmrudi 1969, 801). Moreover, the Iranian flag more and more often

began to display the same combined sign.<sup>35</sup> With increasing frequency European envoys arriving by sea were met by Iranian boats displaying a lion-and-sun flag; the Europeans dutifully recorded in their travelogues the sighting of the flag as the sign of official reception. Similarly, when Iranian officials and members of royalty traveled to Europe, welcoming parties displayed the lion-and-sun flag. This, too, was reported in Iranian travelogues. Iranians traveling officially to Europe came to expect the display of this particular flag and were offended by its absence.<sup>36</sup>

During Fath'ali Shah's reign, the crown prince 'Abbas Mirza also bestowed nishans (Mushiri 1972, 196–98; Nayyirnuri 1965, 124; Afshar 1970). 'Abbas Mirza's elder brother, Muhammad 'Ali Mirza Dawlatshah, reportedly instituted his own nishan with the design of two lions fighting over the crown (apparently sanctioned by the king himself), perhaps to challenge the legitimacy of 'Abbas Mirza's designation as heir apparent (Keppel 1827, 2:17–19).

The proliferation of nishans probably influenced Fath'ali Shah's successor, Muhammad Shah,<sup>37</sup> to institutionalize and codify the lion-and-sun into an official sign of the state. The 1836 decree made it clear that from that point on this honor would be granted only to those who had rendered a great service to the king (Iran 1916, 221).

#### TRANSFORMATION OF THE SUN KING INTO THE LADY SUN

Even as Fath'ali Shah was identified (and self-proclaimed) as the sun of the land, the sun acquired a differently recognizable face as a beautiful object of desire, especially on ornamental royal gifts for foreign dignitaries (see figure 22). On objects such as nishans the sun often has a human face that we now see as female, as *khawrshid khanum*, lady sun. In at least one instance, the sun bears a hint of a mustache, possibly, though not necessarily, representing a male.<sup>38</sup> In most other depictions, however, it bore facial features typical of human beauty in Qajar Iran, including arched, connected eyebrows, large eyes, locks of hair, and a small, closed mouth. What can we make of the apparent disjuncture between a metaphoric sun in the domain of desire and fantasy and its referent in the person of the king as the pinnacle of state power? What of the gender instability of the sun, female to our contemporary eyes, yet in its own visual culture either male or female?<sup>39</sup> Finally, how could a gender-ambiguous sun stand for a heroic chivalrous masculinity embodied by the king?

There are two possible sources for this disjuncture. In many sites of representation the sun had features, such as curly hair, that we now associate

with the female face. It often appeared this way, for example, in astrological tables produced on a variety of artifacts. It may be that already iconic elements of the sun from these sites bore on the meaning of the lion-and-sun of the national emblem.

The ambiguity of gender of the sun and the possible incongruity between its gender and the king imply that the most important thing about the sun representing Fath‘ali Shah was that it had to be radiant and most beautiful. But at this point in the Iranian cultural vision, beauty was not gendered: as we saw in chapter 1, beautiful young male or female faces were represented by identical features. The representation of a beautiful sun king could thus tolerate gender ambiguities of the type described earlier, a tolerance that disappeared by the end of the nineteenth century as beauty became feminized and human representation became increasingly realistic.

Muhammad Shah’s decree of 1836 was designed to put an end to the fluidity and ambiguity of the royal emblem, as well as to deal with how and to whom nishans bearing the emblem were to be issued. Given the increasing awareness of “the power of representation in representations of power,” to paraphrase Diba (1998b), it became crucial that royalty control royal representation.

The 1836 formal codification of a “sign of the state”—*nishan-i dawlat*—set in motion several important trends. It divided the nishans into two categories, one for military and the other for civic service. By far the most important was the military category, designated for holders of the sword (*shamshirbandan*), whether or not they belonged to the army (*ahl-i nizām*). In terms of numbers, detailing of specifications, rhetorical presentation, and textual space, it dominated the document. The military category was divided into eight ranks, and each rank was further subdivided. The military achievements for which these honors were bestowed were elaborately detailed, from conquering another country to lesser feats. The ranks were closely linked to army ranks. The lion-and-sun emblem thus became identified with the military might of the state (Iran 1916, 214–21).<sup>40</sup>

The second category of nishans was designated for foreign envoys and dignitaries, men of the pen, notables, and men of religion. It was divided into six categories, with no further subdivision. Nishans were to be granted for a variety of civic services, from managing city defenses in peacetime to working to establish peace between nations and to improve irrigation, agriculture, and industries. The decree said very little about the design of the nishans to be awarded in the second category, except to point out its differences from the military one, most significantly, that the lion would be in a seated position without a sword, as was the case with most of the medallions

from Fath‘ali Shah’s period. While throughout the nineteenth century both seated and standing lions appear, and even though this decree makes a pronounced connection between military might and a standing lion, the predominance of military medallions in this document helped the standing lion to increasingly invade and dominate the visual field in civic domains as well. In illustrations from Nasir al-Din Shah’s time, when in 1855 the civilian category was modified and new nishans created, the highest rank of civic honor is a standing lion with a sword, while the others display a sitting, swordless lion (Piemontese 1969b, figures 13–15). Other civilian honors of the early Nasiri period continued to use seated swordless lions,<sup>41</sup> while in 1870, new civilian honors established by Nasir al-Din Shah—*nishan-i aqdas*, *quds*, and *muqaddas*—all displayed the standing lion with the sword as well.<sup>42</sup>

Not only did the 1836 decree repeatedly emphasize that the lion must be standing erect with a sword in its paw (to make it explicitly stand for the military prowess of the state), but a crown was added as a symbol of royalty; finally, the emblem was explicitly and elaborately defined as standing for Iran, rather than for any particular Qajar monarch. It became at once the national, royal, and state emblem of Iran.

Some of these modifications had pre-Muhammad Shah precedents. Before 1836, lions occasionally were standing. Similarly, during Fath‘ali Shah’s reign, we occasionally come across the crown and the sword in the paw of the lion (Zuka’ 1965, pt. 1, 16–17). But the explicit emphasis on the lion holding a “bare sword in its right paw,” as well as the persistent mention of “the crown above the lion’s head,” originated in the 1836 royal decree. These codifications became productive of a set of cultural meanings for the subsequent development of the lion-and-sun, which I will consider shortly. First, however, the preamble of the decree merits consideration.

The preamble began with a reference to the classical philosophy of governance (*siasat-i mudun*), emphasizing the necessity for rulers and kings to guarantee social order. For the king to rule properly, the preamble argued, he had to distinguish between those who served him and the state and those who were traitors. The latter deserved to be punished. The former ought to be honored through grants of titles and positions, salaries and rewards, and state badges and medallions (*nishan va ‘alamat*). In that context, the decree proposed that the lion-and-sun symbolize the state: “Every state chooses a sign for this purpose. And the Iranian state has had the sign of the lion-and-sun for the past three thousand years, or perhaps even from the time of Zoroaster” (Iran 1916, 213).<sup>43</sup> Only recently, it stated, the sign had fallen out of use, until it was revived in Fath‘ali Shah’s later years for the purpose of awarding state honors. Singularly absent from the decree’s explication of



the symbolic meanings of the lion-and-sun was any reference to the Islamic significance of the lion and to 'Ali in particular. This absence is even more striking given that the decree was penned by Mirza Aqasi, a well-known Sufi. Perhaps it testifies to the strong urge of the Qajar state to be independent from the clerical domain, articulating its claim to power, including iconic power, by affiliation with pre-Islamic Iran and by embedding itself within the cosmological imagination.<sup>44</sup>

Piemontese finds that in the preamble "naive political considerations and anachronistic historical facts are mixed with curious astrological arguments" (1969b, 433). But these "anachronistic historical facts" and "curious astrological arguments" were the geohistorical and cultural material out of which a territorialized historical Iran was being "refashioned" in this very period. The anachronism was the stuff of the present. Iran was being crafted by imagining a history and inventing a geography.<sup>45</sup>

Emphasizing that it was the king's resolve to renew and delimit the lion-and sun as the emblem of the Iranian state, the decree proclaimed the need to precisely delineate the hierarchy of the ranks and degrees for every kind of state service and the signs that identified them. The decree was to be widely circulated in the land, so that everyone would immediately understand from each sign the kind of service its holder had performed. Violation of the contents of the document would provoke the king's anger. The violator would be interrogated, dismissed, fined, and punished (Iran 1916, 213–14).

The crown placed over the lion-and-sun configuration consolidated the symbolic association of the image with the monarchy while displacing the sun as the icon of kingship. This raises two questions: Why did the sun no longer stand for royalty? What did the sun now signify? I suggest that the overidentification of Fath'ali Shah as sun may have diminished its use as a symbol of royalty in general. Later the feminization of beauty and of the sun would entirely separate the latter from Iranian monarchy. Moreover, the placement of the crown was not merely a compensation for the loss of a now-inappropriate sun; the Kianid crown had become the primary icon of Qajar kingship. Joining the crown to the lion-and-sun on widely circulating objects, such as flags and coins, that simultaneously bore the name of the reigning monarch emphatically linked the royal genealogy of the Qajars to the ancient Persian monarchy. A single sign came to stand for Iran as a state, as a monarchy, and as a nation, providing all with a history going back to pre-Islamic times.

Once the sun ceased to be a royal icon, a recasting of its symbolism became possible. The astrological sun with a human face could now fill the

iconic void with new phantasmic meanings. No longer an icon of kingship the sun was increasingly associated with objects of desire, young male or female beauty. This sun-face sported Qajari eyebrows and plenty of curly hair and, coupled with the lion, became a pervasive icon.<sup>46</sup> Not only did the zodiac signs invariably portray a sun with a distinct face paired with the lion, but other displays of lion, for example, on a deck of playing cards (figure 23), also called forth the sun.<sup>47</sup>

This period, as we saw in chapter 2, coincided with the feminization of beauty, a process that invariably contributed to feminization of the symbolic sun of the national icon. The association of femaleness with the sun in the national emblem later became more pronounced with the design of the medallion of the sun, *nishan-i aftar* (figure 24), which was to be granted to women of royalty or women of exceptional service to the state. In February 1873, Nasir al-Din Shah issued a decree to establish *nishan-i aftar*, in time to be bestowed upon European royalty during his first European journey.<sup>48</sup>

Feminization of the sun into *khawrshid khanum* and masculinization of the lion into a *shirmard*, the lion-man, emphasized their gender difference in a pronounced way. In earlier signs the sun could have been a young male and the lion the more subdued seated, swordless friendly beast. The sword that was placed in the paw of the erect lion on various medals and cordons intended for *shamsirbandan* (sword carriers) masculinized the emblem. Not only were “people of the sword” (*ahl-i sayf*) exclusively men, but the metaphoric use of the sword for penis in Persian made the erect lion with a bare sword in its right paw an unmistakably phallic emblem.<sup>49</sup> The masculinization of the lion was further emphasized by what has been called its Africanization. While the sun was acquiring archetypal Qajar characteristics of beauty, like heavily connected eyebrows and curls of hair, the lion acquired a more pronounced mane. Yahyá Zuka’ has suggested that the lion’s mane was a modification influenced by contact with Europe. Pre-Qajar and early Qajar representations of male lions had distinctly smaller manes. Through the intermediary of European paintings of African lions, Persian lions became Africanized.<sup>50</sup> The significance of the Qajari (fe)male cannot be overestimated: when an object manufactured for royalty in Europe displayed an African lion and a pale European female face, it was sent back to be recast. Whereas the African lion was unobjectionable, the Qajar beauty was irreplaceable.

Despite the codification of the lion-and-sun emblem on nishans, the early Qajar lions and suns continued to take many different shapes. Much state-produced printed material was first calligraphed by state-employed artists—best known among them Abu al-Hasan Khan Ghaffari (Sani’ al-Mulk)—



FIGURE 23. Playing cards, early nineteenth century. Only the card with a figure of a lion has a sun face added to it.

and then lithographed. It did not seem important to have one uniform emblem. Any (fe)male sun with the erect lion with a bare sword in its paw would do as a sign. The state gazette that incorporated the lion and the sun in its logo varied its lions and suns from one issue to the next. Some lions were fierce, others despondent. Some suns smiled, some were demure, others sad. Some emblems point to the right, others to the left (figures 25 and 26). In some representations the logo was combined with elaborate representations of angels, plants, and animals—evidently European influences on Qajar painting (figure 27). But as mechanical reproduction became more common, the emblem grew simpler and more uniform, a process that proceeded in tandem with the consolidation of national identity. The ability to reproduce a uniform and recognizable national logo reinforced a sense of belonging to the nation, much in the same way as Anderson (1991, chap. 10)



FIGURE 24. Order of Aftab badge, given by Muzaffar al-Din Shah to Queen Mary in 1904.

has argued for the reproducibility of the national map. The widely circulating lion-and-sun evoked Iran as nation, homeland, and state. Through the crown, the emblem metonymically recalled the monarch as father of the nation, protector of the homeland, and head of the state. Traveling in Hamburg in the early 1860s, Hajj Sayyah wrote, "While on a promenade, I saw the lion-and-sun engraved on an entrance. I was happy to have had a scent of Iran" (Dihbashi 1984, 490). Many suns-and-lions have since provided Iranians, especially when not in Iran, with moments of national recognition and belonging.<sup>51</sup>

In 1838 coins were minted with "the sign of the state," and by 1894 coin production was centralized and uniform (Zuka' 1965, pt. 2, 21). Postage stamps with the same sign were issued in 1863.<sup>52</sup> The logo was also affixed to other official objects, in particular military hats in Nasir al-Din Shah's period. The national guards (*qarasuran*) had no uniforms but wore hats marked with the lion and the sun emblem; buttons and belt hooks were similarly marked (Qa'im'maqami 1976, 65, 116–17).

With the 1906 Constitutional Revolution, the lion-and-sun logo was codified in Article 5 of the Iranian constitution, which defined the colors and design of the tricolor national flag. A decree dated 4 September 1910 specified the exact size of each color band, the shape and position of the lion and the sun, the shape of the lion's tail ("like an italic s") and where it should be pointed, the direction of his gaze, and the position of the sword in his right paw.<sup>53</sup> Significantly, while a great deal of attention was paid to describing the lion, nothing was said about the sun. It was as if the sun could be taken for granted. Yet this silence spoke of the sun's symbolic meaning. The sun did not belong to the domain of public political visibility of the newly emerging modern state and nation. Its location in the domain of Qajar phantasmic imagination barred it from discursive elaboration in the political texts of the nation.

The many historical meanings embedded in this icon, while providing the basis for its symbolic power over the Iranian national imagination, have also provided the rich ground for competing symbols of Iranianness. Twice over the past seventy years, the hermeneutic disputes have framed the very survival of the icon. The first round was initiated by Iranian nationalists early in the twentieth century. In 1929 Muhtabá Minuvi, in a report prepared at the request of the Iranian embassy in London, insisted that the emblem was Turkic in origin. He recommended that the government replace it with a different national logo: "One cannot attribute a national historical story to the lion-and-sun emblem, for it has no connection to ancient pre-Islamic history, there is no evidence that Iranians designed or created it . . . . We might as well get rid of this remnant of the Turkish people and



FIGURE 25. Logo of official gazette, *Ruznamah-i vaqayi'-i ittifaqiyah*, 17 June 1851.

adopt the flag that best symbolizes our mythical grandeur, that is, *darafsh-i Kaviani*.”<sup>54</sup> His suggestion was ignored.

The second dispute proved fatal for the lion-and-sun. In the autumn of 1979 the Islamic Republic replaced that emblem with a calligraphic depiction of “*La ilaha illallah*” (there is no god but Allah) against the unanimous advice of a government-appointed panel of historians and artists.<sup>55</sup> Despite an elaborate historical narrative provided in defense of the emblem as national icon, for the new rulers the sign carried a burden of monarchy that was unbearable.

The success of the project of crafting a sense of nationhood through identification with a recognizable and reproducible logo, however, can be seen in the continued life of this emblem after its Islamic erasure. No one speaking of the nation is willing to give it up.

In a classic case of the return of the repressed—in this instance the national repressed—one can now see the lion-and-sun prominently displayed on the large, elaborate banners carried during ‘Ashura processions commemorating the battle of Karbala’. What, presumably for Islamic reasons, was expelled from the national flag has thus returned to religious symbolic display (figure 28). Although the nineteenth-century ‘Ashura banners also bore the lion (see figure 17), the late twentieth-century lion-and-sun bears an uncanny resemblance to the lion-and-sun of the national flag, with the lion’s “italic s” tail and the illumining sun.

Iranian communities in exile have embraced the emblem as a statement of opposition to the Islamic Republic. In fact, having been jettisoned from state artifacts, the lion-and-sun has captured a much larger commodified visual arena. In Los Angeles and other cities with large Iranian communities, Iranian flags, mugs, place mats, and other souvenirs carry the lion-and-sun



FIGURE 26. Logo of official gazette, *Ruznamah-i vaqayi'-i ittifaqiyah*, 25 October 1859.

emblem to an extent that far surpasses its display in the country itself during the years of monarchy. This mass appropriation has changed the lion-and-sun from a sign of the state, of national might, into a fetish of national loss (Naficy 1993, 131–37). But as Marilyn Ivy has argued for contemporary Japanese fetishization and reification of emblems of identity, “the process also reveals the presence of a wish: the wish to reanimate, not simply fix, the past at the moment of its apparent vanishing” (1995, 245). Lost at home, the lion-and-sun has been taken over for exilic citizenship. In addition to many visual appropriations, a number of essays about the logo’s history and significance have appeared in the émigré (Los Angeles) press.<sup>56</sup> On the political front, not only has the National Front continued to use the lion-and-sun as a national emblem, the People’s Mujahedin has readopted it as its logo.

#### ERASURE OF THE SUN’S FACIAL MARKERS

While initially the (fe)male sun of the national emblem displayed facial markers, the process of standardization and simplification of the national emblem coincided with its full masculinization; the democratization achieved through the medium of print and mass circulation produced an



FIGURE 27. Logo of official gazette, *Iran*, 20 May 1871.

unmistakable erasure of features of the sun that it shared with beauty incarnate. With the male lion determining the gender of its visual effect, an apparently multigendered sign became fully masculinized once it acquired official state and national meaning.

The masculinization of the emblem was particularly suitable for the emerging army-centered state of Riza Shah in the 1920s. If in the gendered construction of modernity the homeland was a female body, the military masculine was the protector of the female homeland.<sup>57</sup> The masculinity of the state and the femininity of the homeland were constructed symbolically in a number of large wall hangings (*pardah*) that combined these two gendered national notions. Produced after Riza Khan's successful coup in 1921 and before he took the throne and established a new dynasty (1925), one such wall hanging measures 155 by 300 centimeters, with the national logo, the lion and the sun, held up by Farvahar (the Zoroastrian symbol of divine power) in the center of the upper segment of the piece (figure 29). It depicts a conversation between Dariush, Shapur, Nadir Shah, Cyrus (with the exception of Nadir Shah, all pre-Islamic kings), motherland, and Riza Khan, who at the time was minister of war and chief of the army.<sup>58</sup> Motherland is a woman enveloped in a huge drapery that makes her shape look like a map of Iran, with the names of provinces written on the folds of her wrapping, holding the Kiani crown (presumably ready to deliver it to Riza Khan). She is leaning onto Riza Khan, who supports her with his left arm while holding a bare sword in his right. So posing, standing fiercely with a sword in his right hand, he resembles and becomes identified as the male lion—shirmard, the lion-man. As in the national logo, there is a counter image to Riza Khan's masculinity. In the national logo, the coy sun is





FIGURE 28. 'Ashura banner, Tehran, early 1990s.

supported on the back of the male lion. In the wall hanging, the lion-man carries the homeland/woman in his strong arm. The combination lion-and-sun and Riza Khan/mother homeland form parallel visual and symbolic pairs. The pairing is emphasized by the several depictions of the lion-and-sun: on the upper center of the piece, on the center stripe of the national flag, and at the center of Riza Khan's cap.

Each king addresses Riza Khan in turn. Each construes the lion-man as the male protector of the feeble and desperate female homeland through the transfer of the bravery of the lion and the might of his sword onto Riza Khan. The sign of might, the sword, is repeated in these verses over and over again. Here is what Nadir Shah says to Riza Khan:

Now that this desperate mother, with no one to support her, is leaning  
on you,  
you must with kindness embrace her as if she were sweet life itself;  
Strike fire from your sword like lightning on all enemies of Iran.

King Shapur similarly narrates a fallen mother and a savior son:

This mothervatan has fallen before you in sorrow and pain,  
the enemy has attacked her body on all four sides at once;  
You must save her from oppressive foreigners as I did.



FIGURE 29. Wall hanging, glorifying Riza Khan as the savior of Iran.

Dariush connects the symbolic power of the lion-and-sun to the military power of the sword, representing the king's army:

Now that God has entrusted to you this land and this army,  
 now that the flag of lion-and-sun has spread its shadow over your  
 head,  
 You must conquer the world with the power of the sword as I did.

Mothervatan herself appeals to Riza Khan to wield his blood-shedding sword:

Today, O my only child, on whose bosom I have laid my head,  
 my eyes and the eyes of children of Cyrus have turned, first to God,  
 then you.  
 I want you to take revenge on the ill-natured enemy with your  
 blood-shedding sword.

Riza Khan rises to the occasion and responds:

First with pure thought of God,  
 who is my supporter and helper;  
 Then with my own determined will  
 and the endeavors of the industrious nation;  
 I stand on my feet with sword in hand  
 to serve this blessed mother.<sup>59</sup>

The sword is a clear phallic symbol of military power that openly consolidates and celebrates the masculinity of the state. No longer held only by the erect lion, it is now a lion-man Riza Khan as minister of war who stands with the bare sword in his hand.

The symbolism of a masculinized state emblem need not be belabored. But what can we make of the disappearance of the sun's facial features?

I have not found a decree issued by Riza Shah for the final erasure of the sun's features.<sup>60</sup> At least three male writers display traces of embarrassment when discussing this erasure: Nayyirnuri (1965, 148) refers to a decree ordering that "eye, eyebrow, and hair" (*chishm va abru va zulf*) be eliminated. The word used for hair (*zulf*) in particular has sexual overtones.<sup>61</sup> It is used rarely in ordinary conversation but often in love poetry, to praise the beloved's hair or to describe hair that is displayed inappropriately. That is, it carries connotations of seductive and/or shameful display of hair. *Zulf* carried a trace that the previous century's cultural transformations had labored to screen away, referring not only to women's hair but most often to the side locks that many young adolescent males up to the age of full manhood wore in Qajar Iran.<sup>62</sup> It was thus associated with the

figure of male sexuality in whose erasure modernity was deeply invested. Under the pressure of erasure of public visibility and disavowal of male homoeroticism by Iranian modernity, even as a feminized lady sun, *khawrshid khanum*'s zulf was acutely unbearable.

Riza Shah's state was a re-formed military and bureaucratized state, even though it was centered around the individual figure of the king. Unlike Fath'ali Shah's manhood and kingship, Riza Shah's manhood and kingship did not tolerate frivolous and playful associations with what had now become signs of a despised manhood and womanliness. Historians' continued embarrassment over the eyes, nose, and hair of the sun of the national emblem betrays the fear of modern masculinity about the figure it had closeted in the course of its own emergence.

One can imagine that a feminized *khawrshid khanum* may have served some iconic purpose for Iran's national emblem. For instance, she might have represented Iran, the possessed and protected female figure. The tone of embarrassment I have noted may help us to understand the paradoxical erasure of a facialized sun from the sign of Iranian modern national identity, even as the modernist project worked for integration of women into national life. What traces, other than its affiliation with male adolescent beauty, did the feminized sun carry that connoted impropriety?

To answer this question, we need to look again at the representational domain to which the sun belonged. The (fe)male sun face of the emblem belonged to a particular set of (fe)male representations in Qajar court paintings, from the sun of the zodiac symbols to the faces of dancers, musicians, wine servers, and other male and female entertainers in Qajar court paintings (S. J. Falk 1972; Diba and Ekhtiar 1998). S/he is also to be found as the male and female faces in the drawings made for the famous illustrated version of *One Thousand and One Nights* by a group of craftsmen under the supervision of the same Sani' al-Mulk who drew the suns of the official gazette for so many years (Semsar and Emami 2000).

In this visual world, the (fe)male face represented not "real women" but women (and men) of male artistic, and more particularly male sexual, fantasy (Najmabadi 1998a). Displaying abundant curls of hair, s/he fulfilled adult male desire for music, wine, dance, homo/heterosex, or just plain voyeuristic pleasure. In addition to *One Thousand and One Nights*, s/he illustrated such books as *Lizzat al-nisa'* (Pleasures of Women) and popular romances and classical stories (such as *Amir Arsalan*, *Rumuz-i Hamzah*, *Yusuf va Zulaykha*) that we have for the first time in printed form in mid-nineteenth-century Qajar Iran. All were illustrated for a readership presumed to be male. S/he belonged to the world of adult male fantasy.

For a figure of male fantasy to be the main feature of the national emblem posed a problem. First, the artistic fantasy was denigrated by the reproducibility of an emblem in many media (newspapers, official state signs and stationery, stamps, coins, flags, etc.). The language of representation increasingly relied on mimicking the camera and attributing authenticity to the photograph (Mottahedeh 1998b). More important, the place of artistic re-presentation, the shift from private chambers and books read in private to publicly displayed state signs, created an element of conflict between the private nature of fantasies of pleasure and the public nature of its new location.<sup>63</sup> Third, while the purpose of (fe)male representations in the private chambers or even the printed books of the nineteenth century was to provide pleasure to men, public display of the national emblem was a serious matter of national politics and state power. Whether as a medalion to be granted for services to the state or as a logo printed on the masthead of the official state gazette, on letterheads, stamps, coins, and flags, this (fe)male sun was not there for the voyeuristic pleasure of male viewers. It was designed to inspire awe and respect, allegiance and identification. Fourth, the incongruity became progressively more pronounced as the project of building a modern Iranian nation increasingly included real women in the public sphere. This latter process brought the modernist embarrassment to a head by the first decades of the twentieth century as women became readers of gazettes, users of stamps, and viewers of the flag. Although the court painter Sani' al-Mulk took the (fe)male sun of the gazette from the same artistic world of representation as his drawings of *One Thousand and One Nights*, these incongruities forced a gradual yet unmistakable eclipse of the sun.

As we saw in chapter 2, the nineteenth century marked a shift in Iranian male sensibilities. The young, beautiful male adolescent to whom the adult man was attached had turned from a figure of celebration into one of abjection. Modernity marked its own time of arrival with this shift: he belonged to times past. Coincidental with this process, real women moved into the public sphere, pushing the woman of male fantasy out of public view as well. Public display of the women of male sexual fantasy became a source of modernist anxiety and embarrassment. The more public the medium, the more the facial features of the sun would fade. We can almost trace the gradual setting of the sun as the century progressed and as the emblem was reproduced on widely circulating artifacts, until its eventual formal elimination.

In his account of Riza Shah's decree to erase the sun's features, Yahyá Zuka' refers to an order to erase the human marks from a sun that used to be portrayed as a "beautiful woman" (Zuka' 1965, pt. 5, 36). By the time

this decree was issued, however, the sun, with a couple of small circles for eyes, hardly looked anything like a “beautiful woman.” Evidently those dotted eyes had continued to stand metonymically for the beautiful male and female figures of the male fantasy of several decades earlier—though by then remembered only as female. Khawrshid khanum continued to circulate in the larger culture as a full woman, in literature, folktales, zodiac signs, and paintings. She also served as a masquerade for the male figure of desire, who by then had been fully “closeted.” She would transfer this double weight to the tiny circles-as-eyes of the sun of the national emblem. Despite their lightness, the eyes had continued to carry an unbearable weight of sexual fantasy displayed in public, and thus they had to be removed. The double erotic belonging of khawrshid khanum seems to have been so powerful that the faintest traces of her seductivity had to be erased. The eyes were the kind of detail that had acted as memory, seeming inessentials standing for essential elements, “everywhere trivials” multiply invested.<sup>64</sup> They reminded the viewer of desires that belonged to a private domain, not to the public domain of state power and national interests. Even as an empty semicircle, one could argue, the sun continued to carry traces of a memory, memory of its (fe)maleness, ever there to become re-eroticized and intrude back into political symbols of the nation-state. In this sense, Riza Shah’s order to remove those “eyes, eyebrows, and hair” has all the markings of clearing out something uncanny about the national emblem—something “secretly familiar, which has undergone repression and then returns from it” (Freud 1955, 245).

Notwithstanding representation of Riza Khan as the lion-man erect with his bare sword—soon to become the crowned father—supporting/holding up the feeble female mother-Iran, the double erotic belongings of the coy sun, even as a female figure, as khawrshid khanum, accounts for why it could not become a representation of a motherly homeland. Perhaps the eventual demise of the sign in the first year of the Islamic Republic was also an attempt to fully ward off the ever-present threat that this erotic possibility would erupt into the public domain.

With the erasure of the sun’s dual genders, the symbolics of the modern Iranian state became completely masculine and remained so. The flourishing, decline, and eventual eradication of gendered markings of the sun speak to the shifting terms of (fe)male representability in nineteenth-century Iran. Earlier in the century, the sun had been linked to the zodiac figure and the phantasmic male and female figures of Qajar male desire. Thus, it was presentable in elite domains of representation (such as private palaces, privately owned and circulated art objects and manuscripts). As the

century progressed, the sun's sites of presentation shifted to increasingly more public arenas (gazettes, public buildings, flags, coins, and stamps). The language of representation changed as well, deeply influenced by realism and the rise of "photographic imagination." What had been presentable became unrepresentable, although paradoxically other female figures that were to signify modern Iranianness and Iranian modernity, namely, homeland and woman, demanded public representability.

## 4 Vatan, the Beloved; Vatan, the Mother

Although to modernist Iranian sensibilities, thoroughly imbued with the notion of *vatan* (homeland) as a female beloved or as a mother, it may sound radically dissonant, if not offensive, there is no inherent reason why *vatan* could not have been a male beloved.<sup>1</sup> As Meisami has observed about medieval love poetry, “Doubtless the strong homoerotic convention of love poetry, which is also seen in the *qasidahs* of the Ghaznavid poets, further facilitated the use of *ghazal* for encomiastic purposes, making the transference from beloved to lord even easier because of the absence of what I may be excused for calling a gender gap” (1987, 277). Moreover, some of the features of the *ghazal*—recalling old attachments, searching for the cause of separation, lamenting over the present state of abjection and misery—offered remarkable tropes that later became the central features of the story of love of Iran in patriotic discourse. But patriotic love in its modern form was born in nineteenth-century Iran with the feminization of the beloved already in process; in turn, it became a most important site for the working of the heteronormalizing impulse of Iranian modernity.

Recent literature has probed the productive work of gender and sexuality in generating modern nationalism, but it has paid less attention to the reverse work of nationalism and patriotism for the binarization of gender and the heteronormalization of sexuality.<sup>2</sup> My own earlier writing on Iranian nationalism, for instance, assumed heterosexuality of love and argued that this love was put to the cultural work of producing patriotism (Najmabadi 1997a). Once we discard the presumption of heterosexuality, then the whole thing operates in reverse as well: *vatan* and her love become productive of the heterosexualization of eros.

Iranian nationalism was formed around *khak-i pak-i vatan* (the pure soil of homeland), which reconfigured *vatan* from its earlier Perso-Islamic



meaning as one's birthplace to a modern territorialized homeland imagined as a female body.<sup>3</sup> This new vatan was a territory with clear borders, within which the collectivity of national brothers (*baradaran-i vatani*) resided.<sup>4</sup> The boundedness of this geobody was not only produced by the new science of geography and the numerous mappings and descriptions of the land;<sup>5</sup> it was not only delineated as a result of the nineteenth-century border wars with czarist Russia, the Ottoman Empire, and British India whose treaties defined the borders of Iran; it was also envisaged as the outlines of a female body: one to love and be devoted to, to possess and protect, to kill and die for.

This concept of love of vatan emerged in the later decades of the nineteenth century and quickly acquired unprecedented cultural hegemony in courtly and dissident discourses alike. Centered on a female beloved, it indicates the depth of the transformations already taking place in Iranian erotic sensibilities. The overpowering love of a female vatan mediated between homeland and heterosexuality, between nation and gender; it thus solidified the femaleness of the beloved, further contributing to erasure of the ghilman from scene of desire.

#### VATAN: A LAND WITH A NAME

The older conception of vatan embraced many meanings.<sup>6</sup> The simplest territorial meaning referred to one's birthplace, the town or the vaguely larger province. The rich literature about vatan by poets and writers recalled and celebrated the homeland's scents and scenes, a sensuality of vision and smell that proved productive for the later eroticization of vatan. Although by the turn of the twentieth century the new concept of vatan had become dominant in political discourse, the older notion of vatan as hometown remained influential. At the turn of the twentieth century, Napier Malcolm wrote from Yazd, "In the vocabulary of the common people it is difficult to find an intelligible word for *country*. There is a word for *empire*, but the natural equivalent in the Persian mind to our expression *country*, meaning fatherland, is *shahr*, which denotes a town, or *vatan*, which is the home-district, and is used in very much the same way" (1905, 39). This meaning of *vatan* as "hometown" was not limited to "the common people." On his way to Europe in 1900, Muzaffar al-Din Shah expressed overwhelming joy in Tabriz, "as this city had become like a vatan because of our residency of thirty-eight years there" (1901, 38). Even the writings of modernists display this usage. Muhamad Baqir Khusravi (1850–1919), the author of the one of earliest modern novels, referred to

Kirmanshah as his vatan (Khusravi 1950, 9). Taj al-Saltanah (1884–1936), a daughter of Nasir al-Din Shah, wrote lyrically about Iran as her vatan, at the same time referring to Tehran as her vatan and to Gilan as the vatan of one of her teachers (Taj al-Saltanah 1982, 20, 89, 92).

Framed within patriotic prose, *vatan* meant national homeland, but its emotive force still depended on one's affiliation with and affection for the land of one's birth. The sentiment associated with the known, tangible soil of one's birthplace was transferred to the larger more mediated *Iran'za-min* (*terra iranica*). 'Abd al-Rahim Talibuf (1834–1910), a political essayist who produced some of the most important modernist and nationalist writings, could also proclaim: "Glory to God! The name of Tabriz is so respected and precious for this old servant that whenever it is uttered, from my longing for that pure soil [*khak-i pak*] and for seeing its talented and brave people, from my desire for breathing its joyous air . . . tears flow from my eyes" (1978, 38).

Whereas the sentiments for vatan as birthplace and as national homeland coexisted and built upon each other in the nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century discourse, later in the twentieth century, the sentiment for *khak-i vatan* is almost always attached to Iran. Longing and desire, articulated here by Talibuf for *khak-i Tabriz*, would now invariably be expressed for *khak-i Iran*.

Iranian nationalists were keenly aware that for the larger vatan to become "loved" (*dust dashtan*) and "worshiped" (*parastidan*), it had to be explicitly reconfigured. In a 1906 article, starting with the question "What is vatan?" the writer (possibly the court historian 'Abd al-Husayn Lisan al-Saltanah Malik al-Muvarrikhin) argued, "One should not consider the city in which one was born his particular vatan. For instance, the person who was born in Isfahan should not consider Isfahan his vatan and the other provinces of Iran as foreign. The Isfahan-born person is a brother to people of other provinces of Iran, and must regard them like his own real and full brothers, loving them and wishing for their welfare." He proposed that love of vatan was second only to love of God, coming before love of family (*khanivadah va ahl-i bayt*—the expression is inclusive of wives and children), love of one's beloved, and love of one's creed.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, in calling for the unity of all Iranians, "the children of the estranged mother vatan and the real brothers of this pure soil," *Habl al-matin*, the Iranian reformist paper published in Calcutta, argued that Irani'gari (Iranianism) not only included Muslims, Zoroastrians, Jews, and Armenians, but also required that Iranians "do away with such labels as Shirazi, Isfahani, Kirmani, Tehrani, Baluchi, Bakhtiari, Luri, Kurdi and even Iraqi and Azarbayjani." Instead they must

"all become Irani and vatani brothers."<sup>8</sup> Nationalists were also keenly aware that the notion of worship belonged to the domain of God. The task was to mobilize the power of this sentiment without conflicting with one's religious affiliation. As an article in *Nida-yi vatan* argued in response to a hypothetical challenge ("Everyone is saying *vatanparasti* [worshiping the homeland], but *parastidan* [worship] is God's due. How could one worship vatan? Is that not polytheism [*shirk*]?" ), "Such thoughts come from a lack of knowledge . . . when we say so-and-so is vatanparast, it means that person would not withhold anything for the sake of vatan . . . like those who have given their lives to protect their vatan."<sup>9</sup>

Historians of the modern Middle East have often noted that the modern meaning of vatan was informed by the French notion of *la patrie* (Lewis 1988, 40–41).<sup>10</sup> But this was not simply a process of transplanting an exotic alien plant into an empty soil. It was more akin to a grafting operation. In Iran's case, for instance, translating *la patrie* into vatan drew on a number of Perso-Islamic cultural resources. The point is not to deny the intertextuality of Iranian modernist discourse with Europe. Rather, I want to bring out the inventiveness of cultural grafting, the originality of the copy. Mirza Fath'ali Akhundzadah (1812–78), a vehemently antireligious nineteenth-century thinker, defined the word *patriut* (patriot), along with other European concepts such as *disput* (despot), *sivilizasiun* (civilization), *rivulusiun* (revolution), *piruqrah* (progress), *pulitik* (politics), and *libiral* (liberal), in the following terms: "Patriut is one who for the sake of adoring the homeland [*vatan'parasti*] and love of the nation [*hubb-i millat*] will not withhold his property and his life. He will strive and suffer in the interests and liberty of *vatan* and *millat*. Zealous men [*mardan-i ghayratmand*] always have this characteristic. Among them is our prophet Muhammad PBUH [peace be upon him] who, for the sake of the prosperity of his vatan Arabia and especially for Mecca where his tribe Quraysh resided, engaged in great deeds and took on difficult tasks" (Akhundzadah 1985, 11).<sup>11</sup>

To transform Muhammad into a modern-day patriot who thought of the homeland as both territorial and tribal is a "passing" move that familiarizes patriotism through unfamiliarizing Muhammad. Searches for Persian and/or Islamic origins of European concepts was an important rhetorical technique of nineteenth-century writers. This was not simply a matter of camouflaging a foreign concept with a familiar cover, a cultural cross-dressing. The modernist notion of vatan was formed by simultaneously integrating and rejecting the Sufi meaning of the word. Vatan in Sufi thought, particularly as developed in works of Shihab al-Din Suhrah'vardi (1154–91) and Jalal al-Din Rumi (1207–73), was an allegorical concept

denoting the world beyond the material and the mundane, the spiritual world, the abode of unity with the divine (Shafi'i Kadkani, n.d., 8–12). Some defined it as the otherworld. Others wrote of the grave as one's vatan: the return to earth, to one's original substance, marking the beginning of return to the divine. Here the Sufi concept touched the concept of vatan as mother. The grave/earth denoted the mother to which one returned. In this view, a fetus was reluctant to be born; the Angel of Suffering (*malik al-zajir*) had to violently and forcefully pull the fetus out of the mother's womb. While in the womb, united with the mother's body, the fetus was uncontaminated by this world. The Sufi desire to reach the grave and to unite with the divine expressed a desire to return to the mother's womb, to that original state of uncontaminated existence.<sup>12</sup> The grave was thus vatan as one's second mother (*umm al-thania*). Sufi writings interpreted *hubb al-watan min al-iman* (love of homeland is of the faith), a narrative attributed to the prophet Muhammad, as referring to the Sufi love to reach unity with the divine.<sup>13</sup> In a famous poem, Shaykh Baha' al-Din Muhammad al-'Amili (1547–1621), better known as Shaykh Baha'i, offered the following interpretation of this hadith:

The treasure of our knowledge transpires from what is hidden.  
 He [Muhammad] said: of faith is love of vatan.  
 This vatan is not Egypt, Iraq, or Syria.  
 This vatan is a land that has no name.  
 All those vatans belong to this world.  
 Would the best of mankind sing the praise of this world?  
 .....  
 You have been imprisoned within the bodily land for so long,  
 that the other vatan has all but left your innermost conscience.  
 Turn away from the body and make your soul happy!  
 Remember your very original mawtin. (Shaykh Baha' al-Din  
 Muhammad al-'Amili 1958, 23)

Early nineteenth-century sources continued to use *vatan* to mean both the land of one's birth and the world beyond the material.<sup>14</sup> The modernist notion, while appropriating love from this discourse, explicitly rejected its Sufi otherworldly meaning and insisted on its concrete, earthly materiality. Unlike "the land with no name," the modern vatan was to be the actual territory of Iran.<sup>15</sup> Referring to these very verses, Talibuf exhorted Iranians to repudiate this otherworldly idea: "We Iranians . . . have become alien from the holy love of vatan. The time is past for the old wisdom that 'This vatan is not Egypt, Iraq, or Syria / This vatan is a land that has no name.' We must understand that this vatan, for whose protection and progress we

are obliged to make every necessary sacrifice, is 'Iran,' and its famous cities are Shiraz, Isfahan, Yazd, Kerman, Kashan, Tehran, Khurasan, Qazvin, Rasht, Tabriz, Khuy, and other places" (1977, 93).<sup>16</sup>

The shift away from mother earth to mother/beloved Iran, from Sufi allegory to a territorial entity, was achieved by naming Iran as well as a series of towns and provinces. Shaykh Baha'i had named provinces in the abode of Islam. Talibuf's cities and provinces, by contrast, were all located within the Qajar state's domain of military and political authority. Explicitly including towns and provinces also marked this vatan from the older territorial meaning limited to one's birthplace. Iran was now imagined as a community larger than one's own kin, acquaintances, and town residents. Talibuf defined vatan specifically as the bordered area in which the *millat* resided (Talibuf 1977, 127). In a poetic rendition, entitled "The Meaning of Vatan," he further redefined the Sufi concept of *tawhid* in national terms:

The meaning of One [*wahid*], Unity [*tawhid*] and Union [*wahdat*],  
Is the multiplicity from which the nation [*millat*] is constituted.  
Homeland [*vatan*] is that which is inhabited by the nation;  
All sons of the homeland [*abna'-i vatan*] are one from that  
multiplicity.<sup>17</sup>

Similarly, an article in *Habl al-matin* opened with the prophetic narrative about love of vatan and then asked, "What is vatan?" The author briefly dispensed with the otherworldly definition of vatan as the eternal world to which one returned upon death and the definition as one's place of birth. The rest of the article elaborated on the definition of vatan as the territorial abode of a society with a six-thousand-year history. This, he argued, was one's real vatan whose service was everyone's obligation. If a foreigner transgressed its boundaries, one felt the loss of one's own honor. People who understood vatan in these terms, united as one soul against invasions, would sacrifice all that was dear to them to regain their rights and reclaim their honor.<sup>18</sup>

As Anderson (1991) has elegantly argued, unlike one's immediate community, which is knowable and in which the inhabitants know one another, the nation is a community of people one has never seen and would never see. One knows this larger national community through construction of new histories, maps, artistic and architectural artifacts, logos—all the while narrating these new concepts as ancient history and memory. The nineteenth-century construction of *khak-i Iran/Iran'-zamin* (*terra iranica*/land of Iran) as vatan coincided with a shift in meaning of *millat* from a religiously defined to a nationally imagined community. As Tavakoli-Targhi

has argued, "The selective remembrance of things pre-Islamic made possible the dissociation of Iran from Islam and the articulation of a new national identity and political discourse . . . that refashioned the *millat* from a religious collectivity (*millat-i Shi'i*) into a national collectivity (*millat-i Iran*)" (1990c, 77–78). Central to this process were new interpretations of Firdawsi's mythohistorical *Shahnamah* as the history of pre-Islamic Iran. Iran/Iranshahr of the *Shahnamah* was reconceived as coterminous with modern Iran (Tavakoli-Targhi 1990c, 80–82).<sup>19</sup>

Firdawsi's Iran provided the geographic genealogy, a land of origins. The modern nationalist appropriation of Firdawsi's *Shahnamah* has been widely discussed. Less has been said about its royal appropriation, *Shahan-shahnamah*, commissioned by Fath'ali Shah Qajar and composed by his poet laureate Fath'ali Khan Saba to glorify and celebrate his dynastic establishment (Saba, 1867). The two kinds of appropriation of *Shahnamah* in the nineteenth century were in competition. The nationalist appropriation centered on a story about the land, Iran'zamin. It aimed to produce a sense of persons belonging to a common land with a common history. The royal appropriation emphasized persons as subjects of a king who reigned over that land. By the twentieth century, *Shahnamah* was accepted as a national rather than a royal epic, signifying the triumph of modern nationalism over monarchic legitimacy. The Iranian had been transformed from a subject of an Iranian king to a citizen of Iran'zamin.<sup>20</sup>

Bert Fragner (2001) has made a convincing case for a chronology of the territorial concept of Iran that dates to the emergence of a politically unified rule under the Mongols in the thirteenth century. From this moment, Iran'shahr/Iran'zamin was no longer a historical memory as narrated by Tabari or Firdawsi. Already in Hamdallah Mustawfi's fourteenth-century *Nuzhat al-qulub*, it was narrated as a political reality connecting a given territory to a given ruler/king. Fragner calls this *protonationalist* to distinguish it from nineteenth-century nationalism. In protonationalism, however, the individual's relationship to *terra iranica* was mediated through the state, whose embodiment was the ruler/king. An Iranian (within or outside the boundaries of the kingdom) considered himself a subject of the king. The nineteenth-century version of Iran shifted the Iranian's self-definition and loyalty radically from the king to a claim of rights over *terra iranica*. *Ahl-i Iran*, the people of Iran, who paid allegiance to the king, became *citizens* of Iran. It was now vatan, not the king, who had the right to demand service, and for whom one would sacrifice all that was dear. At the same time, one now made claims of citizenship upon this land. Previously a subject claimed justice from the king. The emerging concept of

Iranian as citizen was articulated through a language of rights. The king was transfigured from shepherd of his subjects to the person responsible for protection of vatani rights. The emergence of a concept of Iranianness grounded in land underwrote the notion of soil as mother of nation.

"Fashioning the nation of Iran" also created the modern concept of ethnonational and religious "minorities." One's allegiance to the king did not depend on some homogeneous notion of Iranianness. Tribal and ethnic affiliations, in fact, mediated one's allegiance to the king. It is this sense of Iranianness mediated through loyalty to the king that perhaps explains how inhabitants of lands formerly belonging to the Qajar domains and lost to Russia in early nineteenth-century wars continued to consider themselves as Iranians. Mumtahn al-Dawlah (1845–1921) wrote about his strong impression in 1867 on his way back from France that "the Muslims of the Caucasus, even though over fifty years has passed since they became subjects of Russia still consider themselves Iranian and exhibit Iranian patriotism [*'asbiyat*]" (Mumtahn al-Dawlah 1983, 136).<sup>21</sup> Similarly the notion of "religious minority" arose from the modern moment of the nation. In the earlier period, the distinct inequivalence of a Muslim and a non-Muslim precluded numerical comparison. The inclusivity of the new concept of Iranian made numbers matter (thus the concept of minority): the relative numbers of Muslims and non-Muslims, as with Persians and non-Persians, signified the privileges that the term *Iranian* covered over. Though Iranian was to include all ethnicities and religions, from the start one ethnicity and one religious affiliation were privileged terms.

Once Iran was reconfigured as a unified Persian/Shi'ite nation, non-Persian and non-Shi'ite signified the subordinate minority. The fraternal national parity of Iranians of different ethnic and religious affiliations was dependent on privilege of one ethnicity (Persian) and one religion (Shi'i Islam) over all others. As Iranianness became dependent on a notion of territorial integrity (*tamamiyat-i arzi*), "separatism" became a politically expedient concept with which to discipline dissidence among non-Persian Iranians.<sup>22</sup>

Unlike the allegorical Sufi vatan and Iran'zamin of premodern geographies, modern Iran was above all a physically defined geobody. In the course of the nineteenth century, its borders were defined through many wars and disputes. In this period of border wars and boundary formations, deep national anxiety was displayed over boundary-crossing tribal people, like the Turkomans in the northeast, the Kurds in the northwest, and the Baluchis in the southeast. Before this period, a traveler would mark a

particular town as the last town in Iran and his arrival in the first Ottoman town as his entry into the Ottoman domain. The land in between was often populated by nomadic tribes, whose political allegiance to one or the other state proved critical to delineating the borders of Iran and its neighboring countries. Were a tribe to switch allegiance from one monarch or ruler to another, large tracts of territory could be transferred from one sovereign to another. Mirza Ja'far Khan Muhandis'bashi (Mushir al-Dawlah, d. 1879), a member of the 1849 boundary commission to delineate the Ottoman-Iranian border, noted the number of months that various tribes spent in what would be considered Iranian territory compared with the time they spent in Ottoman territory. More important, he recorded letters from the inhabitants of many localities who declared themselves loyal to the Iranian state. These declarations were critical in defining which land belonged to which state.<sup>23</sup> The migrations of the tribes created much territorial confusion and ambiguity and produced deep national anxiety. As a sense of Iranianness emerged, these people became marked as figures of suspicion, of non-Iranianness, whose crossings became linked with foreign interventions and loss of national body.

Iranian patriotism was shaped by a prolonged process of loss of territory in nineteenth-century wars with Russia and Britain. Earlier in that century, territory taken over by Russia was viewed as a loss for the Iranian kingdom. By the end of the century, the same was renarrativized as a loss to the integrity of a naturally coded body of Iran.<sup>24</sup> Thus the nationalist lore was shaped from the very beginning by a deeply felt sentiment of loss, and the modernist reconstitution of *vatan* was a grieving moment. The nineteenth-century territorial losses became the subject of a huge literature of grief and mourning over the sufferings of *vatan*. By the end of the century the prominent Qajar statesman Amin al-Dawlah (1845–1907) lamented:

My purpose in writing this book is to give a brief description of the disposition of our dear *vatan* and the happenings of our times. . . . We must diagnose the illness in order to know the cure . . . and nurse the sick person. First let us spell out where Iran is. From ancient times, our *vatan* has been the honorable abode of good upbringing and the center of politics, a bastion of humanism and a school for civility. It has today been diminished, its natural borders reduced through repeated amputations and cuts. It is now bordered in the north by the Caspian Sea, "Abiskun," and the Caucasus and the coasts of that sea inhabited by the Turkomen, in the south by the Persian Gulf, on the east by Afghanistan and Baluchistan, and on the west by Armenia, Ottoman Kurdistan, and some of the territories occupied by Russia.<sup>25</sup>



Although Iran's nineteenth-century borders were in part defined by treaties in the wake of military defeats (Kazemzadeh 1968), this geobody was also subject to other kinds of mappings. During his long reign, Nasir al-Din Shah (r. 1848–96), in particular, sent engineers to border provinces to map and measure the royal domain.<sup>26</sup> The reports were published in the state gazette, and some were integrated in I'timad al-Saltanah's *Mir'at al-Buldan*.<sup>27</sup> This was a new kind of geohistory. As Tavakoli-Targhi (1990c, 78–79) has discussed, in the introduction to the first volume (1989, 1:3), I'timad al-Saltanah described his work as a “historical and geographical biography of Iran, which is my vatan and the country in which I reside.” He proudly concluded that he had “indeed given life to some towns and places which had been dead and in ruin and the passage of time had erased these places from memory. . . . For this reason, I believe, I have rendered a great service to the nation of Iran and to the Iranian state” (1989, 1:5).

Territorial Iran was also constructed through nineteenth-century travelogues, which described and marked the within and without of the homeland. Nasir al-Din Shah himself traveled widely and wrote about the land.<sup>28</sup> The nineteenth-century “geographical biographies” and travelogues worked to define the reader as a person belonging to a land, reconstructing Iran from the domain of a king to the national land of its people.

Our story of the emergence of Iran as a modern homeland would lack a crucial dimension if we did not look at its erotic mapping. Drawing on the classical literature of love and longing, Iran was narrated as a female body to love and possess, to protect and defend, to fight and die for. Depicting Iran as a female beloved is not rhetorical “embellishment which adds interest and flavor” to nationalist discourse.<sup>29</sup> It is the central trope of a discourse that produced gendered notions of nation and modern citizenship. Moreover, if we do not examine this dimension, we cannot understand the emotional charge of Iranian nationalism or fully appreciate the fetishistic work that the concept of *khak-i pak-i vatan* (pure soil of homeland) has come to perform.

#### VATAN IS MY BELOVED

The reconceptualization of a particular geospace as a national homeland was achieved in Iranian modernity by rearticulation of the concept of *hubb al-watan*, love of homeland. In other words, a sentiment of love was reconfigured for the modern notion of homeland to become possible.

One's love of vatan in the older territorial sense, the place of one's birth and immediate familial affiliation, was the love of the familiarity, stability, and safety of home. For the larger Islamic vatan, and for the Sufi's allegor-

ical vatan, love of vatan was informed by the hadith attributed to the prophet Muhammad, "love of vatan is of the faith." This love was the desire to belong to a community of faith, or the passion for unity with the divine. This hadith was renarrativized in the last quarter of the nineteenth century to produce a new concept of vatan and to invoke the love for it. Nationalist writers sought familiar terms of love to explain what loving one's country would mean. A serialized article in the émigré journal *Akhtar*, published in Istanbul, was entitled "Love of Vatan Is of the Faith."<sup>30</sup> The article began with a concept of love heavily rooted in the Sufi tradition and concluded by analogizing *hubb-i vatan* with the love of mother and children for each other.

By the beginning of the twentieth century, *hubb al-watan* of the prophetic narrative had become love of Iran. The Constitutionalist newspaper *Nida-yi vatan* (Call of Homeland), which began publication in December 1906, ran the words *hubb al-watan min al-iman* above its title in every issue, and the narrative was frequently quoted in the constitutionalist press to invoke readers' patriotism. Thus a sentiment once connected to Islamic faith and the divine had been thoroughly transformed into a passion for a national homeland. How did this transformation of the "object of desire" and aim of passion take place?

Classical Persian mysto-erotic love literature served as the affective medium for patriotic transformation of vatan. Writers described Iran as the beloved and their own sentiments and predicaments as the lover in terms taken verbatim from that literature. Indeed, I initially came across the idea of Iran as beloved when looking for texts of modern romance. While reading a serialized dialogue between two men about the agonies of love, I was struck by the physicality of the descriptions of the beloved. Only in the third installment did I realize that the beloved was Iran. I had been looking for woman as beloved; I had found the country as a beloved (wo)man.<sup>31</sup> An initially gender-ambiguous beloved was eventually made transparent as a woman through the narrative development of a patriotic conversation that mapped homeland as the beloved. The gender-disambiguating labor of this emplotment recurs frequently in patriotic discourse and in no small sense contributed to the heteroeroticization of love.

Much of the metaphoric language of this and other patriotic essays came directly from classical male homoerotic poetry and would evoke in a familiar reader strong eroto-affective associations. For instance, in this dialogue, the beloved is referred to as "a heart-stealing shahid" and described in familiar terms of a young male beauty. The beloved's appearing in a dream *khawy'kardah* (sweating, in a state of ecstasy) recalls a famous verse from

Hafiz (1980, 60). Even though in classical Persian literature female and male figures of beauty and love are inscribed in similar bodily terms, the use of such words as *shahid* and *khawy'kardah* strongly scripts the figure of the beloved as male. It is striking that by 1900 male homoerotic literary tropes were employed to describe what turns out to be a female beloved.

The male figures in this dialogue alternately address each other and address vatan. Vatan thus has a central presence between the two men, forming the kind of triangle of desire in which the love of the two men for the single female figure produces a patriotic bond between them. In addition to explicitly female images for vatan, such as "the lady of the age," Joseph the most perfect beauty is often invoked in patriotic literature: "Why are we selling this dear one of Egypt [Yusuf], our vatan, so cheap?"<sup>32</sup> The use of Yusuf to stand for a female beloved, Iran, is a sign of the continued fluidity of gender coding of the beloved. Though vatan was already a female body by the turn of the twentieth century, to incite a love for her, a most dear male beloved comes to stand in for her. Yusuf's metaphoric entry into patriotic discourse among men allows national love to be constructed in a thoroughly male homoerotic space. The slippage between male and female beloveds, moreover, indicates how our present sharp distinction between the two was not as determinate at this time. It also indicates how male homoerotic love was put to work to produce patriotic love for what became firmly a female "object of desire." It is this "labor of love" that in reverse worked to consolidate feminization of the beloved more generally. Indeed, some of the earliest modern uses of *mahbubah* and *ma'shuqah* (grammatically feminized words for "beloved") appear in patriotic writings addressed to Iran, as in "Iran! Iran! Iran! O the beloved [*mahbubah*] of honorable people! O the beloved [*ma'shuqah*] of patriots."<sup>33</sup>

But what accounts for this gender transformation of the beloved in patriotic dialogues? The political dynamic of these dialogues called for a vatan that was in need of care, protection, and sometimes cure. It is this position of vatan as subject to male supervision that demanded femaleness of this beloved. Recall that the male beloved of premodern classical Persian literature, including the Sufi tales, was perhaps cruel, but not abject. In those tales the abject position was that of the male lover. But the position of a beleaguered homeland demanded an abject beloved, and the conflicting demands of this position pushed the gender of the beloved to that of a female.

In the *Parvarish* dialogue, for instance, the femaleness of vatan is transcribed not only by explicitly female attributes; more significantly, it is occasioned through a relationship with (un)manliness: Vatan's present

condition is a failure of Iranian masculinity; in place of caring for and protecting her, Iranian men had abandoned and abused her.

In addition to drawing upon metaphoric language of mysto-erotic love, *hubb-i vatan* was produced rhetorically by explicitly comparing the two sentiments of love. Zayn al-'Abidin Maraghah'i (1839–1910) encouraged poets and writers to produce a different kind of love literature:

So far in our dear vatan . . . no one speaks of love of the homeland [*hubb-i vatan*] . . . Instead, one writes about the dreamy love of nightingale and flower and butterfly and candle. . . . Our compatriots [*hamvatanan-i ma*] must learn that aside from the love of Majnun and Layla, Farhad and Shirin, and Mahmud and Ayaz, which is so popular with Iranian poets and literati, there is another love. . . . This is the love that the Prophet (PBUH) has admired and pronounced part of the faith. . . . Iranian literati . . . must now write prose and poetry . . . about love of the homeland for the popular and the elite [*'amm va khass*]. (Maraghah'i 1985, 431–32)

*Siahatnamah*, which is an example of such literary production about vatan, is imbued with the language of *hubb-i vatan*. Ibrahim Bayg is a young man, deeply in love with vatan and distressed about its conditions of decay. When he is asked to say a few good words about vatan, he begins to tell how he has journeyed to different parts of the homeland, finding all the gardens in disrepair, all the gardeners asleep, and all the flowers wilting and withered. Recollections of a neglected garden contrasts with the paradisiacal image of the garden in classical literature. Yet this is not the garden's fault. The gardeners are to blame. As Ibrahim Bayg emphasizes: "Never will I feel hurt by my beloved. How could I do that? I brag of love [*'ishq*].<sup>34</sup> My life depends on a handful of the soil of this pure land [*mushti az khak-i an zamin-i pak*]. The pain of my distressed heart is from the gardener's negligence. . . . Everywhere the soil of vatan [*khak-i vatan*] is crying out, 'O Iranians! O my disloyal children! Do not abandon me in negligence!' " (Maraghah'i 1985, 179–80).

The slippage from the sentiment of love for a beloved to the love of sons for their mother and the demands of a mother on her children that we see in this passage is very common in patriotic literature. When Ibrahim Bayg describes his own individual sentiment for vatan, he uses the language of mysto-erotic love. When he shifts into the space of a brotherhood of compatriots, of Iranians, a different female figure, the mother, is evoked. The slippage between the two carries back and forth the combined power of erotic and maternal love. Yet it does more: through that slippage, the mother figure not only transports with her the sentiment just expressed for a beloved but also offers the possibility of a fraternal relation between

the many lovers of vatan as brothers, as sons of a single female figure. The transfiguration of erotic love onto love of mother thus avoids a disruption of the fraternal bonding of male citizens. Moreover, this transfiguration also provides a more comfortable place within the fraternity for Iranian men who continued to be homoerotically oriented and unmoved by the love of a female beloved.

The expression "a handful of the soil of this pure land" in its many variations has become centrally important for Iranian patriotism.<sup>35</sup> The concept of *khak* worked as a powerful "trafficking sign" between several domains, coinciding with the Islamic/Sufi concept of *khak* as one's original mother, from whom one was separated by force, and to whom one would eventually return. Identified with the geobody of Iranian territory, vatan as the maternal womb opened up to become the national *khak-i pak-i vatan* (pure soil of homeland). The demarcation of the indeterminate universal soil/maternal womb within the emerging patriotic discourse as the soil of Iran transferred the sanctity associated with one's original belonging to *khak* to the national soil. Nationalists' accounts of reaching Iran from abroad invariably included expressions like *ziarat-i khak-i pak-i vatan* (visiting/making a pilgrimage to the pure soil of homeland) and *vatan-i muqaddas* (the holy homeland) and reported ritual prostration onto *khak-i vatan* upon crossing the border.<sup>36</sup> When an Ottoman constitutionalist visited Iran in 1907, he took away with him a sample of Iranian soil. He planned to visit Talibuf on his return journey and could think of no better gift for him than a handful of his vatan's soil.<sup>37</sup> Often the reports included shedding of tears at familiar sights, scents, and sounds.<sup>38</sup> When the fictional Ibrahim Bayg reached Iran through 'Ishqabad for the first time, he demanded that the carriage driver stop. He disembarked and took a handful of "that pure soil" (*khak-i pak*), kissing and smelling it; he rubbed it over his eyes, addressing it as "O pure soil" (*turbat-i pak*).<sup>39</sup> *Turbat* (and *khak* as well) recalls for Shi'ites first and foremost *turbat-i Karbala'*, the soil of Karbala' purified forever by the blood of Husayn and his companions. A devote Shi'ite's most cherished wish was to be buried in Karbala' or, short of that good fortune, to have a handful of soil/*khak/turbat* from Karbala' thrown on his grave. Later, nationalists would also borrow the concept of soil purified by the blood of the chosen.<sup>40</sup> In the same manner that a handful of *khak* from Karbala' on one's grave could substitute for being buried in Karbala', possession of a handful of soil from *khak-i vatan* came to stand for a union with the homeland. The fetishistic quality that *khak* acquired in Iranian national imagination was linked in part with the historical fact that modern territorial Iran was consolidated in the nineteenth

century not through conquest and consolidation but through successive losses. The memory of these losses was painfully and tragically recalled in much of the turn-of-the-century patriotic literature. Although Iranian nationalism was not directly shaped by colonial conquests, it forever lived in fear of that possibility. Khak as Iranian nationalism took charge of it was already marked by a loss that could not be recovered. In Iranian nationalist discourse the loss was "already repetitive, encountered after the fact and, more important, as something already repeated."<sup>41</sup> In order to narrate what was lost to colonial powers in the nineteenth century, one had to recount a series of Iran's prior losses to the Arabs/Islam, to the Mongols, to the Tatars, and so forth. *Terra iranica* became vatan through the nineteenth-century narration of loss. The ever-present fear of further loss of territory underwrote the fetishistic quality that khak acquired within that discourse. Yet it was loss that also created a sense of territoriality in the first place. As Apter has suggested (1991, 120–23), fetish as a stand-in, as a memorial, as a memory of something lost, is linked to grief and sentimentality. Yet "a handful of soil of vatan" does not represent an already constituted national territory; it operates "entirely in the realm of the simulacrum, generating a copy or surrogate . . . for an original that never was there in the first place" (13). *Khak-i vatan* demanded to be remembered as the soil from which we had all come and as the land that we had lost. Remembering and grieving for loss gave birth to the very notion of vatan as a national homeland.

In time, a handful of soil evoked a different kind of loss: losing the homeland to exile. Having, holding, seeing, and smelling that bit of soil substituted for the pleasures that one was denied with the loss of the totality of the land of Iran. The ritual of kissing the land on departure and taking a handful of soil became a public performance attesting to loss and memory. Most recently, the international press reported that Muhammad Riza Shah kissed the ground and took with him a handful of soil before leaving Tehran in January 1979.<sup>42</sup> His father is said to have done the same in 1941.<sup>43</sup> Twenty years later, in an interview with Jackie Lyden on National Public Radio, Farah Diba, Iran's former empress, said that one of her fondest memories was of accidentally swallowing sand in her tea in Iran; she knew that Iran's soil had been between her teeth and inside her. Many Iranian nationalists in exile boast of the handful of *khak-i pak-i Iran* that they brought with them. This soil has a fetishistic quality; it is an inadequate substitute, inciting the holder to imagine the totality of land of vatan while also reminding him or her of its loss. It invokes the desire for vatan that the inadequacy of the handful proscribes as forever unfulfillable.

The sentiment of an unfulfillable love became increasingly earthly and heteroerotic. Affective comparability of earthly heteroerotic love of vatan with that for a female beloved is particularly sharply established in stories in which the love of *terra iranica* competes for the affection and loyalty of the male hero with his love for a human female beloved. The novella 'Arusi-i Mihrangiz is a good example.<sup>44</sup> Written in 1908, the story is set in 1888 in the reign of Nasir al-Din Shah. It features a "triangle of love," with the male hero Hushang simultaneously in love with his friend's sister Mihrangiz and with his homeland, Iran. Through loving Hushang, Mihrangiz also comes to love Iran. In a scene after Hushang drafts a protest leaflet about Iran's problems and dispatches a letter to Mihrangiz, he addresses God in these words: "O Lord! It is said that one cannot have two beloveds in one heart. . . . Today I have written letters to both my beloveds. I have told the secrets of my heart to my two loves. I love them both more than my own life and I wish to sacrifice my life for either of them; the sooner the better. I adore both my beloveds, the first my vatan, the second Mihrangiz. I have transgressed the general rule and despite what poets and mystics have said I have placed two true loves in my one heart."<sup>45</sup>

The general rule of the Sufi love to which Hushang is referring is the exclusive character of one's affective bonding with the true beloved. In Sufi biographical dictionaries, this is expressed in narratives in which the Sufi is torn between the pursuit of truth and an earthly affectionate connection, often to a child. In one such narrative, Farid al-Din 'Attar (d. ca. 1230), a Sufi, tells the story of Fuzayl 'Iyaz, who one day had his four-year-old child next to him. He kissed the child "on the mouth, as fathers do." The child said, "Father! Do you love me?" He answered affirmatively. The child said, "Do you love God?" He answered, "Yes." The child said, "How many hearts do you have?" He answered, "One." The child said, "Can one have two loves in one heart?" The father realized that the child was right and gave up the love of the child for the love of God ('Attar, 1991, 82). Nationalist writers drew attention to this tradition and explicitly argued that "sons of vatan must bond stronger with *khak-i vatan* than the love they have for their children. They must consider preservation of vatan as incumbent a task as preservation of religion. Only thus would they have implemented 'love of vatan is of faith' " (Maraghah'i 1985, 68). In Sufi tradition the only earthly love for a woman that is not seen as conflicting with love of God is the Sufi's love for his mother. Being devoted to and caring for one's mother is viewed as a service to God. Nationalist transcription of *vatan* as mother fully benefited from this connection to Sufi love as well. Here the male patriot did not face a test of choice. Perhaps this

also accounts for the eventual dominance of vatan-as-mother over vatan-as-beloved in patriotic discourse.

Unlike the Sufi, however, neither of the two loves of the modernist man was divine. Although Hushang addressed his meditation to God, his heart held two earthly beloveds, which, through competing comparatively homologous desires, transcode each other's gender and sexuality: the human beloved's femaleness marks vatan as female; in turn, vatan's femaleness consolidates the affection of the man for the woman as the same passion that had once belonged to the domain of male homoerotics. This mutual labor of the two categories makes the different endings of the two narratives possible: in contrast to the necessity of the rupture posed in Sufi tests of true love, the love of homeland is projected as compatible with the love of a woman. In fact, as we will see in chapter 6, the travail of one love (for a woman) is put to the work of generating the love for the country. Yet the generative compatibility is predicated upon a hierarchy: love of vatan will take precedence over love of woman.

The new sentiment of love was explicitly seen as grander than the older love of vatan grounded in Islamic faith. Moreover, national love was to supersede/incorporate love of Islam. In Talibuf's words:

O vatan! I have no *qibla* but your direction,  
I will not worship *Ka'ba*, I swear to God, if it is not your place,  
The Universal Wisdom has put a value on your love by that of faith,  
That is a good price, but it doesn't match the price of one strand of  
your hair.<sup>46</sup>

The rearticulation of erotic love as love of vatan carved a literary space for patriotic poetry (*shi'r-i vatani*) that enlisted love in the work of producing patriotic sentiment. Ramaswamy has argued that genres of poetry previously reserved for deities or sovereigns were invoked to praise the Tamil language; she considers such poetry "one of the principal technologies through which devotion to Tamilttay is produced and circulated" (Ramaswamy 1997a, 81). A very similar reinscription of literature of praise, love, and devotion produced the sentiments of modern love of Iran. The *qasidah*, classically used to eulogize men of power, was now used to eulogize vatan.<sup>47</sup> The *ghazal*, a form most often associated with love poetry, was similarly taken over.

By the first decade of the twentieth century, constitutionalist journals, such as *Azarbayjan*, *Habl al-matin*, *Adab*, and *Nida-yi vatan*, and later the literary journal *Gul-i zard*, routinely published vatani poetry.<sup>48</sup> Patriotic poets of this period, such as Adib al-Mamalik, and later ones, such as Bahar,



‘Ishqi, Lahuti, and Farrukhi, produced some memorable pieces of patriotic poetry. Ashraf al-Din Husayni and ‘Arif, on the other hand, became masters of transforming another genre: that of *tasnif*, popular lyrics whose short stanzas and musicality easily lent themselves to becoming carriers of street slogans.<sup>49</sup> ‘Arif would in fact consider his vatani tasnifs critical for popularizing vatan as a national homeland: “If I rendered no other service to Iranian literature and music, [I achieved one thing]: When I composed vatani tasnifs, one out of ten thousand Iranian did not know what vatan meant; they would only think of the city or village in which they were born as vatan” (‘Arif Qazvini 1980, 334). In a later period (the 1920s and 1930s), ‘Alinaqi Vaziri’s nationalist songs and marches, composed for the school curriculum as well as for the military, continued ‘Arif’s popularization of vatan through interweaving nationalist sentiment with the disciplinary work of army training and sports in schools. Vaziri’s presentations of songs, pantomimes, and musicals interlaced performance of Hafiz’s homoerotic poetry with a serenade for Iran.<sup>50</sup> By this time Hafiz’s homoerotics were already being read as heteroerotics. Vaziri, for instance, in a piece entitled “The Unfulfilled Girl,” made the tragic female character on her deathbed serenade to her fiancé, who had abandoned her and was about to marry an Englishwoman, a love poem by Hafiz addressed to “O king of the beautiful” (*Ay padishah-i khuban*).<sup>51</sup>

#### VATAN: FEVERED, TORMENTED, AND GRIEVED

The trope of beloved was not the only mediating category between gender and nation. The emerging sense of Iranians as a brotherhood delineated *vatan* as a geobody that distinguished them from other emerging national brotherhoods, the Arabs, the Ottoman Turks, the Japanese, the Indians, and of course the nations of *farangistan* (Europe). Within the territorial boundaries, the nation was to override internal differences of religion, language, and ethnicity. National cohesion was gained by evoking affection of kinship among unrelated individuals, as articulated in an article entitled “We Are a Single Nation! ”:

Autocracy, under various pretexts and under different names, had separated us from each other and had made us each other’s enemy. . . . A unified Iranian body, whose members were brought up in the same land, . . . imagined their own brothers as their enemies. . . . In the same manner that autocracy separated us from each other . . . liberty and the present constitutional rule . . . should inspire affection [*muhibbat*] and unity [*ittihad*] among us. . . . Today our *vatan*, that suffering dear mother of all

Iranians—be they Muslims, Jews, Armenians, Zoroastrians, Turks, or Persians—is calling upon all her children . . . to unite. . . . Iranians constitute a single nation, a nation that speaks in different dialects and worships God in different ways.<sup>52</sup>

A unified Iran is constituted not only politically but also affectively. Liberty and constitutional rule bring “affection among us.” The affective sentiment—that of bonding among differing brothers, sons of the same mother—produces political bonds of national unity and was associatively linked with other desires. Perhaps foremost was the desire to care for and defend the mother, in particular her bodily integrity. The same words were commonly used to discuss territory and the female body. Laura Mulvey calls these words keys “that could turn either way between the psychoanalytic and the social” (1989, 180). They are not “just words” that open up to either domain; they mediate between these domains, taking power of desire from one to the other. More appropriately, they should be considered cultural nodes of psychosocial condensation. *Tajavuz*, literally meaning transgression, expresses both rape and the invasion of territory. Another effective expression, as already noted, was *khak-i pak-i vatan*, the pure soil of the homeland. The word used for “pure,” *pak*, is saturated with connotations of sexual purity. Linked to the idea of the purity of a female *vatan* was the metaphoric notion of the “skirt of chastity” (*daman-i iffat*) and its purity—whether it was stained or not. It was the duty of Iranian men to protect that skirt. The weak and sometimes dying figure of motherland pleaded to her dishonorable sons to arise and cut the hands of foreigners from her skirt.<sup>53</sup> Expressing hope for the success of the new constitutional regime by recalling and wishing away the horrors of previous years, an article in *Sur-i Israfil* addressed Iran in the following terms: “O Iran! O our mother! You who have given us milk from the blood of your veins for many long years, and who have fed us with the tissues of your own body! Will we ever live to see your unworthy children entrust your skirt of chastity to the hands of foreigners? Will our eyes ever see foreigners tear away the veil of your chastity?”<sup>54</sup>

There was often a slippage between mother and beloved, particularly in the domain of defense of integrity and honor.<sup>55</sup> A lead article entitled “Vatan,” published in 1911, asked: “O wonders! What is this vatan that has intoxicated us all? What is this vatan that has mesmerized us all? What is this vatan who is everyone’s beloved? What is this vatan who is loved by all? Vatan is matter, vatan is life, vatan is soul, vatan is spirit, vatan is reason, vatan is mind, vatan is eye, vatan is ear, vatan is family, vatan is wife, vatan is children, vatan is property, vatan is the gate [*bab*], vatan is mother,

vatan is the reason for tranquillity, vatan is the cause of prosperity" (*Amuzgar*, 14 [31 August 1911]: 1).

Elevating vatan to all that matters and is dear, the author grounds it in a geo/material conception. He perceives the differences between the "sons of Adam" as differences of creation and appearance and of temperament and inner qualities. The latter fall along national lines: "The inhabitants of France love science, seek pleasures of life and demand equality. The Germans are industrious and seek uplifting. The Japanese are courageous, zealous and love their vatan. The English are intriguing, arrogant and love trade" (*Amuzgar*, 14 [31 August 1911]: 2). Possibly influenced by Montesquieu's *Spirit of the Laws*, he further attributes these differences to variations in soil and climate. "So it is not a lie or poetic exaggeration when we say vatan is matter, vatan is life, vatan is soul, vatan is spirit, vatan is all" (*Amuzgar*, 14 [31 August 1911]: 3). Concluding, therefore, that we are of vatan in a material, bodily sense, the author recalls that religion exhorts us to respect and obey our mother and father because we are bodily *of* our mothers and father. For this reason, respect and sacrifice for vatan are obligatory (*Amuzgar*, 14 [31 August 1911]: 4). The trope of vatan as mother thus rearticulated the duties of children toward their parents into duties of (male) citizens toward mother vatan: "It is of course very difficult and painful for zealous children to witness the hands of foreigners transgressing the skirt of chastity of their mother. It is very hard to hear one's mother's cry for help and not show any zeal. Standing up for one's mother and father is instinctive. No matter how mean and base a person may be, he cannot tolerate seeing his dear mother trodden under the feet of his enemy" (*Amuzgar*, 15 [7 September 1911]: 1).

To fail in one's patriotic duty was equated with failing in duty toward one's mother, and in particular with a failure of male honor in defense of the mother's chastity. *Nida-yi vatan* drew the power of its title not only from the prophetic hadith arched over the masthead of every issue. It posed itself as a *maternal* command.<sup>56</sup> In a series of articles in its first three issues, titled "Call of the Homeland," the call came from a mother, now threatening her undutiful children, now pleading with them not to give up their mother to her enemies.

The discourse of family occasionally raised the specter of the father. Who was the father in this vatani family? In one familial metaphor, Iranians were said to be Persian (Parsi) on their mother's side, and Arab (Tazi) on their father's side, claiming Shahrbanu and Husayn for a nationalist genealogy that reconfigured the Safavi "Iranianization and Imamification" (see chapter 3) in a new way (*Adab* 3, 30 [14 November 1904]: 8). Instead of Jamshid

and 'Ali providing two male lines of descent, the modernist national family had a maternal and paternal lineage, a Persian and Shi'ite genealogy. Comparing Iranians with Chinese, Americans, Africans, and Europeans, one author asked why they had all advanced, while "we whose father is Islam and mother is Iran, and thus noble on both sides, should languish alone in the desert of ignorance?" (*Hadid* 1, 36 [15 March 1906]: 1–2). Often the bond between the king and his subjects was written as that between a father and his children: "The king and the subjects are like father and children in managing the state, which metaphorically is the home of this household. . . . Every individual subject, when necessary, like a member of the household sacrifices life and property for the prosperity of vatan."<sup>57</sup>

Alternatively, religious leaders were referred to as father of the nation, "'ulama-yi vatan who are the spiritual father of vatan" (Talibuf 1977, 92). In a later period Yahya Dawlat'abadi (1864–1939) would recall the problem of a country with two heads. In a conversation in 1907 he reportedly advised Amin al-Sultan, recently returned from Europe to become prime minister, about the two-headed country of Iran, especially under conditions in which the nation was challenging both heads (the Shah and the ulama). The nation, he argued, would do away with both heads if they do not act in the nation's interest (Dawlat'abadi 1983, 2:122). Within two years of this conversation, the king was replaced by his young son, and a clerical leader of anti-Constitutionalist forces was executed. Perhaps the resolution of the problem of a double-headed household was also part of the symbolic significance of the execution of Shaykh Fazl'allah Nuri on 28 July 1909.<sup>58</sup> Eliminating the religious father of the new family, similar to the beheading of the royal father of the French nation, was part of redefining that nation; in one case as a republican nation, in the other as a secularly defined nation of Iranians, bonded by affective sentiment of love of vatan arising from eroto-mystical Persian literary-inspired love rather than from faith.

In his essay "Going Public," Tavakoli-Targhi draws a distinction between a patriotic official discourse and a matriotic counterofficial discourse in the following terms: "In the official nationalist discourse, *vatan* was imagined as a 'home headed by the crowned-father.' This was contested by a counter-official matriotic discourse that imagined *vatan* as a dying 6000-year-old mother. The engendering of the national body as a mother symbolically eliminated the father-Shah as the guardian of the nation and contributed to the emergence of the public sphere and popular sovereignty—the participation of the 'nation's children' (both male and female) in determining the future of the 'motherland' (*madar-i/mam-i vatan*)" (Tavakoli-Targhi 2000, 175; see also 183).

There are several problems with this proposition. A sharp delineation between an official and an oppositional nationalist discourse is hard to sustain on the basis of nineteenth-century sources. Such a dividing line does not reflect the fluidity of both persons and ideas that connected the broad spectrum of statesmen, intellectuals, and reformers of various political shades, both religious and secular, in Qajar Iran. Reformers considered that the king and the statesmen ought to consider vatan their home/mother and children of vatan as their own children.<sup>59</sup> There was a great deal of overlap between these two presumably opposing social and political forces. Iranian statesmen of various ranks and political shades frequently met with (and commented positively about) critical Iranian intellectuals living and writing in Istanbul, Cairo, or the Caucasus. On his way back to Iran from Europe in 1900, Muzaffar al-Din Shah met with a group of “learned and notable Iranians” in Baku, which included Mirza ‘Abd al-Rahim Talibuf (Muzaffar al-Din Shah 1901, 244). Nayib al-Sadr Shirazi (1853–1926) in 1887 met Aqa Mirza Tahir, publisher of the dissident paper *Akhtar* in Istanbul, and noted that the latter wished the state well and that, like a true patriot, he loved Iran and the Iranian people (Nayib al-Sadr Shirazi 1983, 93).

More important, the discourse of *Iran-i viran* (Iran-in-disrepair) and one’s regret and grief over its state of decay was common to the oppositional and official discourses.<sup>60</sup> Even the unpopular, if not detested, prince Mas‘ud Mirza Zill al-Sultan (1849–1918), describing the former expanse of Iranian territory, expressed sadness and depression “as a true Muslim and an honorable patriot” over its current diminished size (Zill al-Sultan 1983, 124–25). Both discourses shared the notion of a national family in which the king figured as a protective father, vatan as a mother, and the nation as the children, more specifically and most frequently as the sons. In other words, in the “counterofficial” discourse, a kingly father complemented mothervatan to form the national family. A long vatani essay, written in 1904 during the reign of Muzaffar al-Din Shah, entitled “The National Song and the Vatani Lyric,” is initially addressed to Iran, the beloved, the object of adoration, and then to the mother. Iran is the land of lions and place of tigers; her children are male lions (*narrāh shir*) who are in deep agony over her present destitute and ailing condition. After the familiar account of her former glories, the essay switches to addressing the king as the father of the children and the shepherd of the sheep, who look to him to change the current situation by taking a number of reform measures.<sup>61</sup> Even the anti-Constitutionalist monarch Muhammad ‘Ali Shah was frequently addressed by the Constitutionalists as the father of Iranians.<sup>62</sup> He

also designated himself as the father of the nation, his duties toward the people as those of father for his dear children and he referred to Iran as "our dear vatan, . . . this kind mother."<sup>63</sup>

Moreover, the dominant family trope was the sons of vatan, not the children of vatan. The nation was overwhelmingly transcribed as *sons* (*abna'*) of Iran, a male brotherhood of vatani *brothers* (*baradaran-i vatan*). Not only is the word *sons* most frequently used, but socially the nation was so constituted. Contrary to Tavakoli-Targhi's mistranslation of *abna'-i vatan* as the descendants of vatan, the constitutionalists meant sons of vatan (Tavakoli-Targhi 2000, 181). This is most evident in texts where a contrast appears between *bunat* (daughters/girls) and *abna'* or *banin* (sons/boys). Discussing the need to educate the nation's girls (*tarbiat va tahsil-i bunat-i millat-i ma*), the author expresses hope that Anjuman-i Ma'arif (the Association for Education) would establish schools for girls, the future mothers and teachers of sons of the country (*ummahat va murabbiat-i abna'-i mamlikat*) (*Ma'arif* 2, 34 [3 March 1900]: 3). Reporting on the opening ceremony of a new boys' school for Iranians in Ashkabad (Turkmenistan), Muhammad Isma'il 'Ata'allah-'uf Mazandarani pleaded, "O zealous Muslims. . . Is it not time that according to the narrative 'Seeking knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim man and woman,' we must take measures for education of girls [*bunat*] similar to those for boys [*banin*]?" (*Habl al-matin* [Tehran] 1, 158 [11 November 1907]: 3). Even when grammatically gender-neutral terms were used in Persian, such as *farzandan* (children), the term usually connoted sons.<sup>64</sup> In later years, vatani sisters (a concept initiated by women to insert themselves into the national family) made occasional fleeting entries into male-authored texts. An article in *Habl al-matin*, entitled "To the Attention of All Brothers of Vatan," opens by calling upon "O brothers! O sisters!" This is the last we hear of sisters; the text reverts to exclusively addressing men, concluding by calling for brotherly unity.<sup>65</sup> The meaning of gender-neutral words emerges from discursive contexts of the period, not from dictionary definitions of a later time. The kind of gender inclusiveness argued by Tavakoli-Targhi inadvertently covers up the historical gender asymmetries of citizenship in modernist discourse. When sisters appeared in men's discourse, they were constituted as objects of their brothers' honorable possession and zealous protection.<sup>66</sup>

The daughters of vatan were not authorized to contribute to popular sovereignty. They had to struggle to gain even the right to form associations and establish girls' schools, and they were barred from the electorate even by the radical second Majlis. The quest for women's social and political

inclusion in the national family continued well into the twentieth century and, in fact, continues to this very day.

Iranian nation as a brotherhood not only was consistently scripted through such notions as sons of vatan and vatani brothers but also was achieved by representation of the nation as a male body-building athlete (*pahlavan*) (figure 30). *Millat* not only is represented as male but also, more important, is iconically the figure of popular masculinity linked with local all-male religious associations (*hay'at*). The heroic male figure was critical to the discourse of protecting both vatan as female and the actual females of vatan. A nation passed out into unconsciousness in need of educated and concerned male experts, a nation in deep sleep with men of the press attempting to wake him up from the slumber of negligence, a nation watching rival politicians sharpening their arms for an electoral battle, and a nation bereft among the great powers and nations of Germany, England, China, Japan, Russia, and America—all these *millats* are depicted as male (figure 31).

What the family romance of Iranian nationhood provided was the possibility of rearticulation of the Perso-Islamic discourse of parental obligations and rights (more specifically motherhood) into the language of *vatani* rights and responsibilities. Invoking the discourse of children's obligation toward mother produced obligations of citizens toward the country as maternal prerogatives and expectations. *Huquq-i vatan* (prerogatives of the homeland), though conceived as the duties of the sons toward the mother, were at once reconceived as rights of citizens over vatan and put to another ideological work: production of the equality of rights of (male) citizens consequent upon the equal obligations of sons toward the mother. These obligations/rights, referred to as *huquq-i farzandi*, though at this point still an ambiguous and shifting concept, pertained equally to all Iranians, regardless of social rank: "In terms of rights that *ab va khak* [water and soil—homeland] has over her inhabitants—rights that vatan has over her sons—all individuals are obligated in fulfilling those duties—none is exempt from this rule. In being sons of *vatan* all are equal. The same right that the sultan has over this *ab va khak*, other Iranians have, be he a Kashani vazir or a Mazandarani shepherd, a court amir or a street pauper. Equally? Yes! In obligations of children [*huquq-i farzandi*] [toward *vatan*]" (*al-Jamal*, 29 [1 January 1908]: 1–2).

An ambiguous slippage is at work here. In the premodern ethical discourse, *huquq-i farzandi* meant the child's fulfillment of parental expectations. In its modernist political rearticulation, the fulfillment of obligations was made productive of particular political claims; it proved such men

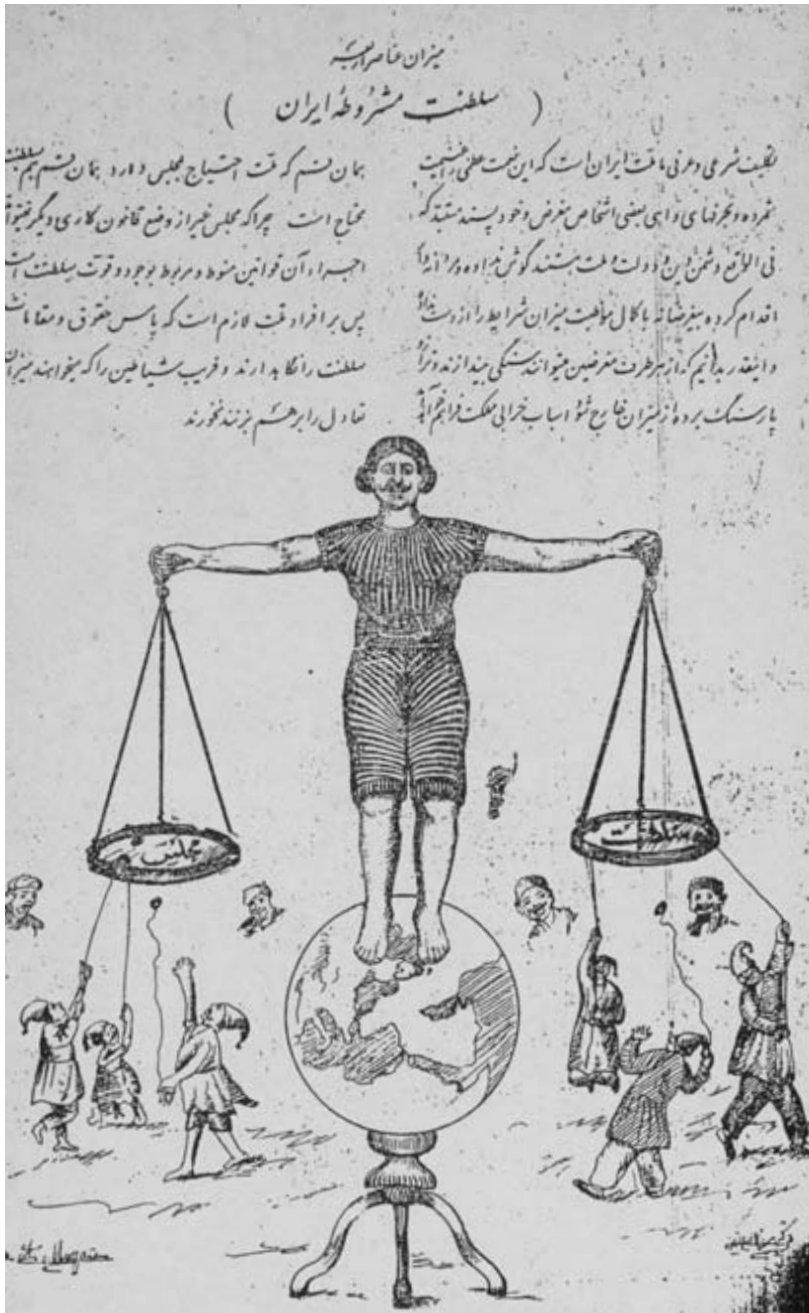


FIGURE 30. Iran, the nation, as a pahlavan, *Kashkul*, 8 June 1907.





FIGURE 31. Iran as a male nation, *Tanbih*, clockwise from top left: 26 June 1907, 19 July 1911, 10 June 1913, 15 December 1913.

deserved certain “rights within the domain of humanity and deserve[d] the privileges of humanity” (*Habl al-matin* 15, 18 [25 November 1907]: 15). Through this shift in the meaning of *haqq* (right) in the Constitutionalist discourse, the equality of the children in fulfillment of this obligation was translated into the equality of claims of the sons over the benefits of the homeland. This shift eventually made the dominant meaning of *haqq* as right of citizens rather than as prerogative of vatan.<sup>67</sup> In other words, one of the central concepts in the Constitutionalist discourse, equality of king

and pauper (*tasavi-i shah va gida*), was in part mediated through the figure of mother and her rights.<sup>68</sup>

In many genres produced by the constitutionalists, such as poems, dialogues, essays, and dream literature, the trope of mother was invoked in the language of "warning and awakening." Mother vatan is portrayed as a sick body in need of diagnosis, cure, and care, as a neglected, weak female figure in need of her sons' medical and emotional attention.<sup>69</sup> Particularly during the critical years of the Constitutional Revolution, the civil war, and restoration of the parliament (1906–11), the mother's fevered and tormented body was invoked to incite fear and panic and to arouse the uncaring sons from their slumber.

The trope of the sick mother, abandoned by her uncaring sons, and most powerfully employed in the political dream literature, provided a voice for Iran.<sup>70</sup> In all patriotic writings, Iran as a beloved is always the mute object of male adoration and love, with no claim on her lover. As a mother, Iran becomes endowed both with maternal rights and with a voice to express her claims over her sons. The contrast between the silent beloved and the articulate mother is glaringly displayed in those pieces where Iran is first addressed as a beloved, but later she speaks back to the author as an often angry or contemptuous mother.<sup>71</sup>

The various invocations of vatan put the reader (listener) in different positions and worked through different sentiments to recruit him into the community of patriotic brothers and dutiful sons for the sake of political action. Many were written in a fraternal register, as one brother calling upon the national brotherhood, describing the alarming condition of their common mother (vatan). The shared theme of these essays, often so titled, was "vatan is in danger" (*vatan dar khatar ast*), where the author ventriloquizes the maternal voice. The maternal direct address exhorts the reader to act as an honorable son and builds bonds of fraternal patriotism between him, the author, and other presumed readers of the text. Other essays were addressed to mother vatan in an effort to invoke other Iranians' sense of empathy. Once the mother vatan is directly addressed, the reader must occupy another place, hopefully the space of the collective of her children.

The most effective and popular essays were by far those in the voice of mother vatan herself, now addressing her undutiful sons in anger, threatening them with her curse; now addressing her dear ones, pleading with them to rise up and rescue her. The power of the maternal voice that put the reader in the position of a called-upon son conscripted him into a patriotic community of *abna'-i vatan* (sons of homeland).<sup>72</sup>

The trope of vatan as mother also made the notion of *mother tongue* (*zaban-i madari*) equivalent to *national language*. No longer simply the language through which one's mother introduced one to the "symbolic order," it became the language through which Iranian national brotherhood was to become distinguished from an Islamic past when the language of religion and science was Arabic. Persian as the privileged mother tongue of the nation would simultaneously distinguish Iran from the neighboring Turkish-speaking and Arabic-speaking national formations and act to suppress the internal diversities.<sup>73</sup>

#### DAUGHTERS OF VATAN

Vatan as mother provided not only a narrative voice for Iran but also the possibility for women to enter the patriotic family romance. It was through love of a mother, in need of her daughters' care, that the daughters of vatan made their way into the national family space. As I argued earlier, the male patriotic discourse was firmly centered on a homosocial/erotic brotherhood of sons of vatan. As women entered the political arena and began to publish patriotic letters and essays, a new family member emerged: *khvahar-i vatani* (patriotic sister), *dukhtar-i vatan* (daughter of homeland). The trope of daughter of vatan was particularly useful for women to claim citizenship. As one woman noted:

My dear ladies! You should not imagine that vatan belongs to men and that women have no rights in it. . . . The love between mother and daughter far exceeds the love between son and mother. . . . A mother always expects her daughter to be kind to her and look after her. . . . As you know, our mothervatan is very sick and we should not think that it will be the sons who will nurse her. . . . This dear vatan is like a kind mother to us. We must make efforts to ensure that our kind mother will not be hurt by our lack of care; otherwise we will not be happy in this or the other world.<sup>74</sup>

In this essay the author creates a competitive comparison between sons and daughters of vatan, but on other occasions women spoke as *vatani* sisters, appealing to their national brothers. Men addressed them in similar terms.<sup>75</sup> The analogy between family and nation was occasionally explicit, but it was also implicitly constructed by scripting the affective bonding between men and women unrelated by kinship as the affection of brothers and sisters, nurtured by a common mother: "Knowledgeable people consider [vatan] as a mother who nurtures the people of a country like her children and therefore these children are all brothers and sisters."<sup>76</sup>

Whereas male authors wrote of Iran as a female in danger, needing to be protected by her sons, the women's discourse crafted a sense of commonality between vatan and Iranian women's own state. Writing in *Iran-i naw*, the woman principal of 'Umm al-Madaris, a girls' school, warned:

Vatan is in critical condition, awaiting cure. . . . Why do you not think of the predicament of our Ardabili and Tabrizi sisters? Their men were killed by the cruelty of absolutists; they died for the sake of mothervatan. Is Iran not our vatan? . . . It is incumbent upon everyone to do service for the sake of vatan. For instance, we members of the community of schools can devote our lives to the upbringing of the young of our dear mother. . . . It is necessary and incumbent upon all of us not to let mothervatan and her honor [*namus*] fall into the hands of foreigners. . . . If the hand of foreigners is extended over this pure soil, it will be far worse for us women than for men, because of the spread of dishonor and unchastity.<sup>77</sup>

Although her discourse shared with that of her national brothers the concern for mother's honor, it differed in the sense of common gender danger. By recalling "the predicament of our Ardabili and Tabrizi sisters," who faced dishonor when Russian troops were reported to have invaded women's public baths, the writer shaped a sisterhood of women in danger, including the female figure of homeland: they all face similar threats unless women begin to serve their mother. She encouraged women to contribute to the national efforts, which would make Iranian women as well known globally as the women of Japan and would set an example for men who would have to contend with "what man is less than a woman!"<sup>78</sup>

The expression *khvaharan-i vatanti* (sisters of the homeland) not only implied an affective bond between female and male citizens but also distinguished the bonds of citizenship from other sisterly bonds. Women used two other expressions to address women: *khvaharan-i dini* (sisters-in-religion) and *khvaharan-i naw'i* (gender sisters). *Vatani* sisterhood, therefore, was a new kind of bond between women themselves, distinct from religious solidarity and from homosociality. *Vatani* sisterhood was at once a distinct homosocial bond with other women and a heterosocial bond with male citizens. A *vatani* sister, not a member of a man's household (*ahl va 'ayal*), was not a female possessed by him. This implied a move toward parity, with national brothers and sisters on a par as children of the same mother. Yet the Iranian familial gender hierarchy continued to haunt the national family, putting brothers in charge of sisters' honor and well-being.

Once vatan was embodied as a mother, woman's body was also transfigured.<sup>79</sup> Dedicated sons would emerge from the homeland's pure soil, the nation's originary womb. A woman's womb would exude *vataniyat*

(patriotism) and produce a new kind of Iranian. One article on the importance of the "science of child-rearing" proclaimed: "No country will progress until it has educated and knowledgeable women. . . . A well-educated woman gives birth to ministers, scribes, philosophers, and professors, not to mean porters and fortune-tellers."<sup>80</sup>

Educated and vatani herself, she would produce milk that would nourish her children with knowledge, expertise, and love of vatan. A woman, asking the new parliament to establish schools for girls, argued that the secret of Europeans' progress, in particular their advanced state of scientific development, lay in the fact that they educated their women: "European women, because of science, knew the meaning of social body and knew for what purpose they should bring up their children. . . . Children who drink milk from the breast of such mothers become managers of the world."<sup>81</sup>

A letter from the daughters of Shams al-Ma'ali informed the readers of the establishment of two schools for "daughters of vatan so that in future every household will be headed by a knowledgeable woman who well knows home-management, education of children, sewing, cooking and hygiene and from her breast the milk of love of homeland [*shir-i hubb-i vatan*] will be fed to her newborns such that they will be prepared to offer their services and sacrifice [their lives]."<sup>82</sup>

*Shir-i hubb-i vatan* would produce children of vatan as milk-siblings (*riza'i*). This would provide yet another mediation for production of unrelated men and women as brothers and sisters, making public heterosociality conceivable.<sup>83</sup>

Another essay stated that women's education was necessary "so that sons and daughters can grow up in the bosom of knowledge and science and feed and grow on the breast of sciences and education."<sup>84</sup> Emphasizing the influence of mothers on children's upbringing, another author asks, "Don't you know that good moral behavior as well as bad habits enter the veins and blood of children from the mother's milk and habits?"<sup>85</sup>

The trope of vatan as mother made the reverse trope of mother as vatan—from which the patriotic trope had originally been derived—available for new political claims by women. Women expressed their expectations of men in terms of maternal rights. In a challenging essay, a woman called Ta'irah discussed the undesirable condition of women and the duties of both sisters and brothers of vatan who must change things.<sup>86</sup> Reiterating that the progress of a nation depended on the education and moral development of its women, Ta'irah held her "dear brothers" responsible for depriving women of opportunities for acquiring scientific knowledge and progressive education. She addressed them in these terms: "Are we not of

your kind, are we not your peers? If at the time of Creation, womankind [*tayifah-i nisvan*] had not been created, whence would your survival and being come? Were you not created within us and did you not grow up in our bosoms? Was it not we, suffering every manner of toil, hardship, oppression, and aggression, who saw you through your adolescence? Are we not the source of your life, being, and comfort? How have you forgotten this original vatan of yours?"<sup>87</sup> The fact that patriotic duties were articulated as the sons' obligations to mother allowed women to use maternal authority as an argument to support their expectations of men.

### THE CHALLENGE OF VATAN'S VISUALITY

The literary expression of sentiment for vatan drew from romantic literature. Visual representation of vatan as a female beloved posed a greater challenge. How could one represent the unrepresentable, as Negar Mottahedeheh (1998b) has insightfully asked? And, in fact, there was to be no successful visualization of the female vatan.<sup>88</sup> The constitutionalist press increasingly used graphics to convey its political message (Balaghi 1998). Rather than humanize Iran, patriotic iconography most often turned to the lion-and-sun emblem.

When Iran was given a human female form, the mother rather than the beloved was represented (figure 32). As with the voice, it was the trope of mother that afforded representability.<sup>89</sup> Mother Iran did not have to conform to a realistic representation of a mother (see figure 32), though at times she was depicted as a veiled woman (figure 33). Here mothervatan is depicted as a fully clothed and ill figure, lying on the floor, surrounded by her daughters, who are fully awake and attentive, unlike the sleeping sons and brothers on the right. The only men who are awake are male journalists. One of the sisters addresses the men in slumber: "O kind brothers! O brave and zealous sons of the mother! How long will you be asleep? Wake up and think of a remedy for your mother's horrid, diseased condition. Before it is too late, seek a skilled physician. Don't let this kind mother, protector of your honor, waste away."

In the middle, a younger figure addresses men of the press, begging them "to think of something. No matter what we tell our older brothers, no matter what we advise them, they pay no attention, even though they consider themselves guardians of mother." The word used here for guardian, *qayyim*, is associated with the Islamic notion of men being responsible for and in charge of women. Male abdication of this duty authorizes women to move onto the national scene and take charge. On the left a group of



FIGURE 32. Iran as a female homeland, *Tanbih*, 30 December 1910.

women address mothervatan: “Ah, ah, O kind mother! Why have you fallen on this bed of weakness? Have your daughters died that you remain alone and abandoned? O our dear mother, as long as your daughters live, they will not let you remain in such a state of abject misery, we will seek a cure for you.”

In the critical years after the closure of the second Majlis in 1911 and the coming to power in 1921 of Riza Khan (later Riza Shah Pahlavi), the nation, headed by a young and ineffectual monarch, remained fatherless. It was not until Riza Shah centralized and consolidated power that a new crowned father (*pidar-i tajdar*) headed the nation, completing the masculinization of the state.

The modern state as a male collective in charge of protecting the female homeland became progressively more masculinized symbolically as well. Masculinity of the state and femininity of the homeland are symbolically constructed in numerous visual representations from this period. I have already discussed in chapter 3 the Riza Khan curtain-painting that brought together these two gendered national notions. Riza Khan as a hypermasculine savior of a female vatan is depicted in many other paintings, curtain-drawings, and postcards of this period. The strength of gendered and sexual



FIGURE 33. Iran as a sick mother, *Shukufah*, 6 May 1915.



FIGURE 34. A feeble, aged mother Iran begging Riza Kahn to embrace her tight for one night to make her young again.





FIGURE 35. Triumphant, standing tall, mother Iran in the morning of Riza Khan's accession to the throne.

politics of these representations cannot be overstated. Ahmad Shah, the last Qajar king, was not only underage (a vice-regent was appointed for him) but also perceived as weak and, more critically, effeminate. Mothervatan was unprotected, feeble, and in need of miraculous transformation. Only a highly masculine military man like Riza Khan could deliver this miracle. In a postcard from this period, an old humpbacked woman (Iran) is depicted as begging the *sardar sipah* (chief of the armed forces, as Riza Khan was at the time) to hug her tightly for the night, so that she would wake up young at dawn (figure 34).<sup>90</sup> The miraculous work of male sexual power that could restore youth to the old woman recalls the prophetic power of Yusuf in restoring Zulaykha's beauty and youth, bringing together the beloved and mother under the protective power of a man, at once a military and a prophetic figure. Once Riza Shah established a new regime, mother vatan was appropriately made young, standing, proud, and grateful (figure 35).

If Burke had demanded that the country be lovely in order to be loved, Iranian patriots reversed that logic. They considered the love of country as something innate, arising from the love of soil-womb-mother. Given this innate love, they concluded that the patriot's obligation was to make the country lovely.<sup>91</sup>

## 5 Women's Veil and Unveil

Fatima Mernissi's *Beyond the Veil* (1975) offered a bold proposition about the structural work of the veil in Islamic societies. Mernissi argued that Christianity and other Western philosophical traditions, including Freudian psychoanalysis, presumed a passive female sexuality. Islamic doctrine, on the other hand, was based on the assumption of an active female sexuality. If it is not contained and controlled, this powerful force would cause social chaos (*fitna*) and threaten men's civic and religious lives. The veil and the closely related institutions of gender segregation are the mechanisms through which Muslim societies contain and control female sexuality.

This proposition is predicated on the heterosexual presumption that active female sexuality is eternally searching for a phallus. If it were not, institutions of gender segregation would hardly contain and control it. Quite the contrary! Moreover, if we do not assume the naturalness of heterosociality, any more than the naturalness of heterosexuality, if we consider heterosocialization as a social achievement, a learned performance, then we need to radically rethink the veil and gender segregation as institutions for regulation of heterosociality and prevention of uncensored heterosexuality.

If the veil may not be simply a sign of Muslim societies' timeless obsession with controlling heterosexuality, then what does it signify? Surprising as it may seem, we simply do not have a serious historiography of the veil. In the past couple of decades, historical studies of modernity have begun to give us a history of the veil's signifying work for the more recent centuries, but much work remains to be done for earlier periods.

Over the past two centuries, the veil (and unveil) of Iranian (and other Islamicate) women has embroiled modernity and its historiography. The almost exclusive focus of this historiography on the cultural work of the

veil as a marker of cultural difference between Iran (Islam) and Europe has screened away other important effects of this powerful sign and disconnected it from other locations of cultural contest. Most surprisingly and paradoxically, it has worked to consolidate the disaffiliation of issues of gender from sexuality.

The work of the veil as a sign of cultural difference has been closely linked with its becoming a signatory of the modern: dressing up for modernity has been fashioned through undressing women. Yet men's public appearance, including the size and shape of their beards, hair, hats, and other kinds of attire, was just as much at stake—all deeply associated with the (un)desirability of looking like the other (*tashabbuh bih ghayr*).

There is yet another location in which this contest is positioned: the veil as a marker of the homosocial, homoerotic affectionate world of men and women. Its association with backwardness, as we will see, stood for the backwardness of homosociality and homoerotic affectivity. How would we rethink the veil (and unveil) of woman if we relocated it within these other cultural contestations?

#### VEIL (AND UNVEIL) OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCE

As Tavakoli-Targhi has documented, in the nineteenth century European and Iranian/Islamic women (perceived as radically different) emerged as "terrain[s] of political and cultural contestations" (1990b, 74). These contestations, he has further suggested, "resulted in the valorization of the veil (*hijab*) as a visible marker of the self and the other. For Iranian modernists, viewing European women as educated and cultured, the veil became a symbol of backwardness. Its removal, in their view, was essential to the advancement of Iran and its dissociation from Arab-Islamic culture. For the counter-modernists who wanted to uphold the Islamic social and gender roles, the European woman became a scapegoat and a symbol of corruption, immorality, Westernization, and feminization of power" (Tavakoli-Targhi 2001, 54).

Although the veil had become a visible marker of difference between Europe and Iran/Islam, the contention over woman's veil was not simply between modernists and countermodernists. Tavakoli-Targhi's argument that modernists considered the removal of the veil as "essential to the advancement of Iran and its dissociation from Arab-Islamic culture" collapses all modernists into one particular trend that became dominant by the third and fourth decades of the twentieth century (and remained so until recently). It assumes *all* modernists advocated removal of the veil,

thus conflating modernists with those who sought disaffiliation from the Islamic past, rather than a reconfiguration of that past. It participates in writing out of modernity Iranians who were working for an Islamo-Iranian modern. The latter, who included important groups of women, did not advocate and at times opposed women's unveiling, although they fully supported women's education and social participation.

The uncoveredness of European women and the coveredness of Iranian women were repeatedly signaled in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Persian travelogues as something that connoted a difference in the sense of being-in-the-world. Iranians not only reported uncovered women in Europe as a sign of difference but also expressed anxiety when they saw women with uncovered faces in cities of the Caucasus, in Istanbul or Cairo: these cities with overwhelmingly Muslim populations were no longer or would soon cease to be Muslim and would become Europeanized.<sup>1</sup> The production of the veil as a key marker was also achieved by Europeans' frequent interrogation of Iranian men about "their women's veil."<sup>2</sup> Later travelers would signal their border-crossing between Iran (or the Ottoman domain) and Europe by the sight of (un)covered women: "Indeed, at this point [entering the Ottoman domain on the way back from Europe], the situation drastically changed. I saw several women in black veil in a carriage. They were not wearing face veils, but kept their faces half covered" (Muzaffar al-Din Shah 1901, 216).

By the mid-nineteenth century, in the writings of a number of modernists, most prominently Akhundzadah and later Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani, this sense of difference had been translated into the veil as a sign of societal backwardness. This translation was in part informed by the Babi (and later Baha'i) movements and in particular by the spectacular and fablized public unveiling act of Qurrat al-'Ayn.<sup>3</sup> Although highly critical of the Bab, Akhundzadah approved of his edicts on equality and liberty for women and of women going unveiled until they married. Once a woman was married, protection of the husband's honor, he agreed, required that the wife remain indoors and be covered from and not socialize with strange men (Akhundzadah 1985, 177–78). Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani had expressed similar views in *Hasht bihisht*, most likely coauthored with Shaykh Ahmad Ruhi around 1892. As Azali Babis, the authors of *Hasht bihisht* were in favor of removing the veil. At the same time, they prohibited women from talking to strange men to prevent sin, evil, and fornication.<sup>4</sup>

By the century's end, in the discourse of the later modernists, the grand sociocultural critique of Akhundzadah and Kirmani became politically focused on two issues: *ilm* (science) and *qanun* (law). These were seen as

the two cornerstones of European experience. The thrust toward a lawful social order was centered on the quest for a constitutional government. The pursuit of science, the elixir of civilization (*tamaddun*) and progress (*taraqqi*), was focused on education, initially by sending students to Europe, but increasingly by creating new educational establishments in Iran. This focus on law and science influenced the terms of gender for the modernist project, which became centered on women's education. When I'tisam al-Mulk (1900) translated Amin's (1992 [1899]) controversial book, *Tahrir al-mir'a* (Liberation of Women), he left out the second chapter, "Women and the Veil," and translated the book's title as *Tarbiat-i nisvan* (Education of Women). Moreover, he rewrote the final paragraph of the introductory chapter. Amin had written:

Were women's socialization effected in accordance with religious and moral principles, and were the use of the veil terminated at limits familiar in most Islamic schools of belief, then these criticisms would be dropped and our country would benefit from the active participation of all its citizens, men and women, alike. (1992, 10)

I'tisam al-Mulk translated it:

Provided education of women is carried out according to fundamentals of our solid religion and rules of morals and manners, and with due regard to conditions of hijab, we will reach our goal, bitter conditions will be behind us and sweet days will emerge. (1900, 14)

Whether he modified Amin's proposition to avoid the kind of reception Amin's book had met in Egypt or to reflect his own stance on the question of veil and gender segregation at this time, the selectivity and adaptation, as well as the change in the book's title, point to the fact that for him and many Iranian reformers at this time, the central target of reform of women's status was women's education, not the veil. On this there was a strong consensus. But no fixed connection existed between the issue of veiling and women's education. While some, such as Akhundzadah and Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani, considered the veil and gender segregation as a sign of backwardness and an impediment to women's progress, other reformers, like I'tisam al-Mulk, Talibuf, and the popular poet Nasim-i Shumal, considered it an Islamic requirement to be respected and preserved.<sup>5</sup> The reformist émigré paper *Akhtar* deplored the situation of some women in Istanbul whose public behavior was "indeed unbecoming of the covered characteristic of women [*mukhaddarat*] of Islam."<sup>6</sup> A Hajj Muhammad Kabuli, on his way back from Mecca through Istanbul, observed in distress that on the streets of Istanbul some Muslim women walked with their faces

and heads uncovered.<sup>7</sup> Hajj Zayn al-‘Abidin Maraghah’s fictional Ibrahim Bayg expressed similar outrage at the scandal of Tehrani women appearing without the veil outside their home (Maraghah’s 1985, 96). In the eyes of some Iranian Islamo-nationalist reformers, one of the terrible consequences of losing the Caucasus to Russia had been Muslim women’s unveiling (Va’iz Isfahani 1984, 31). The Muslim entrepreneur and benefactor Hajji Zayn al-‘Abidin Taqi’uf was praised for putting an end to the Russian nonsense that *hijab* was harmful and oppressive to Muslim women, as he had established schools for girls that required their participation with veil.<sup>8</sup> In the Constitutional/anti-Constitutional debates of the first decade of the twentieth century, it became even more important to deny that the Constitutional government would move to implement un-Islamic edicts such as encouraging or allowing women to go in public with their faces uncovered.<sup>9</sup> For these reformers, the problem with Iranian domestic space was not that it imprisoned women but that it was a site of un-knowledge, a site of *khurafat* (superstition) and *jahl va nadani* (ignorance), embodied in the women of the household. This was also causing men to run away and spend time in “sinful activities,” as we will see shortly.

Although many Islamists were opposed to unveiling, not all were anti-modernist. Fakhr al-Islam’s 1911 book in defense of hijab was in fact centered on defense of the Constitutional government: “They want to spread this despicable [*qabih*] custom among Muslims and to order women to remove their face veil [*niqab*] so that passion and the Satan [*shahvat va shaytan*] will be happy with them. They could then say that this is one of the consequences of Constitutionalism and national government. With this [falsehood] they hope to make the population hate this holy order and prevent them from progressing. They want to stop the new civilization (*tamaddun-i jadid*) from entering the land of Islam, even though there is perfect harmony between Islam and the new civilization.”<sup>10</sup> Further, he suggested that people who advocated the removal of the face veil by Muslim women “either belong to the new group [*ta’ifah-i jadidah*, meaning the Baha’is] or to the reactionaries and anti-Constitutionalists. These people are enemies of this land.”<sup>11</sup> The subsequent modernist narrative (post-1930s) and most histories of Iranian modernity have flattened the earlier history into a simple story of veil and unveil, or as one of cultural contamination or women’s liberation.

Similarly, pro-Constitutionalist women, who were organizing and demanding education and social and political rights, were not unanimous on the issue of unveiling. Criticizing the press for not acting as the nation’s voice of conscience, in spite of freedom of the press, a woman added parenthetically

that when she said freedom, she meant legitimate freedoms; she advocated nothing against the Qur'an, and among the list of things she did not mean by freedom, she noted, "we don't say that women should not cover their faces [*ru nagirand*]." <sup>12</sup> Other women began to make cautious remarks in favor of unveiling, such as, "It is a great pity that women of Iran, because they are covered [*mahjub*], in the last few centuries have been totally deprived of [sports in the fresh air]. No wonder that most Iranian women are weak and disabled." <sup>13</sup> Other women disagreed. Writing in the pages of *Danish* (the first women's journal, published in 1910–11), one woman suggested that "wearing *niquab* and *rubandah* [two different kinds of face veil] when going out-of-doors is very good for protecting the face and lips, even though I know these days this is against some women's wishes, . . . who consider covering the face a thing of the past." <sup>14</sup>

Muzayyan al-Saltanah, a tireless educationalist, publisher and editor of *Shukufah* (published 1912–16), vehemently opposed unveiling and frequently wrote against women's abandonment of hijab. <sup>15</sup> At the same time, she published essays and poetry by women known for their alternative views, such as Shahnaz Azad and Shams Kasma'i. <sup>16</sup> Taj al-Saltanah, Nasir al-Din Shah's daughter, articulated some of the most eloquent arguments put forward by women for unveiling as a first necessary step toward women's participation in education, paid work, and progress of the nation. <sup>17</sup> Women continued to articulate these differing views on veiling into the 1920s and early 1930s. <sup>18</sup>

#### TO LOOK OR NOT TO LOOK LIKE A FARANGI

The veil was not the only visual marker of difference between Europe and Iran. Men's public appearance was equally important. For many modernists, the veil as a sign of Iran's temporal lag with Europe, its premodernity, was associated with the veil's non-Iranianness; the veil was cast as a heritage of Arab conquest and Islamic hegemony. Other sartorial signs, such as men's beards (and later women's mustaches), hair, hat, and so forth, began to acquire similar significance in nineteenth-century debates and social controversies. <sup>19</sup>

To become modern required one's modernity be legible for the already modern; Iran's modernity had to be recognizable by the Europeans. One had to look European. For many modernists, such as Akhundzadah, Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani, and later and most famously Sayyid Hasan Taqizadah, this was precisely what had to be done. For other reformists, including Talibuf, the writers of the reformist émigré paper *Akhtar*, and Islamist reformists,



looking like a European posed a problem, namely, that of looking like a non-Muslim other (*tashabbuh bih ghayr*). The Islamic prohibition against looking like a non-Muslim was associated with a fear that looking like religious others would cause one to acquire their characteristics.

This dilemma at every step was compounded by a sexual anxiety and fear: the European man, especially with his beardless face, looked to Iranian men's eyes, perilously like an *amradnuma*—an adult man making himself look like an *amrad*. Even the European-style clothes at times provoked that fear. Reporting disapprovingly on the Austrian-style outfit of Nayib al-Saltanah and other high officials of the army, I'timad al-Saltanah wrote in his diary that they "were dressed in white jackets so short that their buttocks [*maq'ad*] showed. One has to cry over Iran's condition that imitation has reached such a level that our army chiefs wear this kind of clothes" (1966, 161). In another entry he called the style "this abominable [*qabih*] Austrian style which . . . 'doesn't cover anything' and shows one's front and posterior" (994). The revulsion at the display of male posteriors signaled the deep discomfort over an appearance that in the cultural world of I'timad al-Saltanah stood for something threatening. This ever-present anxiety informed much of the cultural criticism centered on the figure of *farangi'ma'ab*, the Europeanized male dandy, affecting European ways, clothes, and mannerisms.<sup>20</sup>

From the late nineteenth century, a great deal of cultural criticism has been expended on the *farangi'ma'ab*. In fact, through mid-twentieth century, the prime figure of modernity's excess was not female; the so-called Westoxicated woman did not become the main demon of *gharbzadigi* (Westoxication) until the 1960s and 1970s.<sup>21</sup> On the contrary, in the earliest writings of Iranian modernists and as late as the 1920s, woman signified backwardness. One of the best known and most popular satires of *farangi'ma'abi*, *Ja'far Khan az Farang amadah* (Ja'far Khan Has Returned from Europe), was a 1922 play by Hasan Muqaddam (1895?–1925). While Ja'far Khan performs a superficial over-Europeanization, his female cousin, Zinat, enacts undermodernization.<sup>22</sup> At this point, and perhaps until the late 1930s, tradition and backwardness were feminized, while excess of modernity was a particular male.<sup>23</sup>

The word *farangi'ma'ab* literally means someone who gravitates toward Europe, who thinks things ought to be done in the ways of the Farang, and who attempts to live his life like a Farangi. It was constructed by adding the same suffix as familiar words like *jalatatma'ab* (often used for statesmen), *shari'atma'ab* (often used for men of religion), *darvishma'ab* (used to emphasize someone's humble preferences), and other

praiseworthy adjectives.<sup>24</sup> In fact, the early usages of *farangi'ma'ab* were positive and neutral. Eventually, however, it became ambiguous, ambivalent, and completely negative. In 1889 Ihtisham al-Saltanah described Hajj Mirza Abu al-Makarim, a *mujtahid* (a high-ranking religious leader) in Zanjan, as "farangi'ma'ab and with beautiful hand-writing," and Mirza Aqa Khan, the head of the post office of Zanjan, as "a well-educated, pleasant, and very farangi'ma'ab young man" (Ihtisham al-Saltanah 1987, 88, 98). In *Siahatnamah-i Ibrahim Bayg*, the author objects to the common practice of calling dissenters farangi'ma'ab in order to outcast them (Maraghah'i 1985, 128). Later in the narrative, a farangi'ma'ab figure, born in Mazandaran and residing in Marseilles, is described in admirable terms, as someone who criticizes pompous titles and convoluted, heavy language, lawlessness, despotism, and idle pursuits by the rich and the powerful in Iran (289–92). In "Risalah-i insafiyyah," farangi'ma'abi is given a praiseworthy genealogy in the persons of Malkum Khan and Talibuf (Zargar-i'nizhad 1995, 587). A cartoon in *Adab* depicted a farangi'ma'ab as someone who opposed the use of physical punishment in schools and objected to the use of *farangi'ma'abi* as a dismissive epithet (figure 36). Similar objections to pejorative uses of the term were echoed repeatedly later in the Constitutionalist press.<sup>25</sup>

The initial designations for the figure of excess mimicry were *mufarrang* (constructed in affiliation with such adjectives as *mutalla*, something that looks made of gold but at most has a gilded outer layer, a superficial cheat)<sup>26</sup> and *mustafrang* (constructed as if *mustaf'al*, meaning arisen from Farang or crafted according to the Farangi).<sup>27</sup> Very quickly, however, *farangi'ma'ab* came to mean someone who transgressed the acceptable. For reforming modernizers, he became a figure of superficiality and excess and gave a bad name to a worthy project. Most often he was described as a young man who had absorbed only European mannerisms, fashion, and some half-baked knowledge of language and landscape. From his time in Europe he had brought worthless objects rather than scientific training.<sup>28</sup> His Persian was now mixed with French words, and he looked like the Farangis. Critical satire and cartoons depicted his superficial excess through a series of commodities, such as matches, boots, his European-style clothes, his vest-pocket watch, his affected reading glasses, his walking stick or umbrella, his gloves, his bow tie, his pipe, his use of perfume.<sup>29</sup> In short, the farangi'ma'ab's understanding of Farang was to dress up like a Farangi.<sup>30</sup> Though this designation denotes the superficiality of the "mimic man," the emptiness of cultural transvesting, there was (always) already a weight to that emptiness. A native original haunted the mimic figure that made it unbearable.

FIGURE 36. *Adab*, 26 April 1905.

What traces did this figure carry? How should we understand the vehemence of the anti-farangi'ma'ab critique? Why should the critique of superficiality and empty mimicry be so harsh and occupy so much space not only in conservative criticism of the modernists but even in modernist discourse itself? What did this excessive cultural energy expended against this meek and pitiable figure aim to purge?

Though projected as a superficial, empty character, the Europeanized dandy was anything but empty; he was full of a different character, not from Europe, but from the native soil of Iran. This figure of emptiness was embodied with all the physical marks of the *amrad*(numa) and the by-now-feminized *mukhannas*. The *farangi'ma'ab* is now someone who melts away at the sound and sight of a young adolescent male, someone who puffs rings of cigarette smoke into the air with much flirtatious movement of his neck, mouth, and eyebrows.<sup>31</sup> He is called *zan'sifat* (woman-charactered), with his beauty mark (mole), locks of curly hair (*zulf-i muja'ad*), and languid eyes; he wears a handkerchief in the shape of a cross around his neck and sports such tight trousers that his "ass and balls" are displayed (*kun'numa* and *khayyah'numa*) (Mujahid 1994, 9, 23–24, 26–27, 32–33, 79). Satirical literature described him with the same adjectives that the previous century used to paint beautiful *amrads* (*zulf* [hair] like a bunch of hyacinths, eyes like narcissus, lips sweet as sugar), with one additional marker—his bow tie (*fukul*).<sup>32</sup>

He is the adult man seeking *amrads* (and at times young street women as well), and he displays himself on the streets. The characters that are

described in terms of a nineteenth-century amrad are in the same pieces satirized as womanly exhibitionists (*taqlid-i nisvan*) and as characters in search of sadahs (beardless youth).<sup>33</sup> One of the problems that Ja'far-Khan-just-returned-from-Europe complains about is that he cannot find an 'Ayaz for his mad-with-love heart.<sup>34</sup> In another satire, an "older type" male character, Mashdi Asghar, finds himself in unfavorable competition for the young beauties of the town with the recently appeared-on-the-scene *fukulis* (wearers of the bow tie).<sup>35</sup> The *fukuli farangi'ma'ab's* despised masculinity was threatening to displace the honorable masculinity associated with urban brotherhoods.

That the Europeanized dandy was *alternately* and *simultaneously* satirized as a youthful beauty (amrad), as the abject figure of mukhannas/amradnuma, and as a young adult male himself seeking amrads reconfigured all three as undesired by Iranian modernity. Whereas previously only one of these figures, that of mukhannas/amradnuma, had been an abject figure, all three were now recast into a single despised masculinity through the Europeanized dandy. To the extent that we continue to read *farangi'-ma'abi* simply as performative of cultural inauthenticity, we continue to be implicated in a masquerade that has screened away something more; we insist on missing and thus becoming implicated in historical erasure of the something more that *farangi'ma'ab* signified.

For conservatives, of course, the *farangi'ma'ab* stood for everything that was going wrong.<sup>36</sup> As a mimic figure, he enacted simulation of the other (*tashabbuh bih ghayr*). Most evidently, this *ghayr* in the nineteenth century referred to the Europeans (rather than, for instance, the majus, the Zoroastrians). But how, and through what iconic threats, was this fear of the foreign articulated and fought off?

Zayn al-'Abidin Khan Kirmani (1959, 97–106), a leading figure of the Shaykhis, in his 1912 essay, under problem number 9 ("Presently there are people who apparently have the name of Muslim, but in all respects resemble foreign communities. Are they truly counted as part of the Muslim community? Is it permitted to mix with such people?"), offered a long answer that revolved around the problem of *tashabbuh*: looking like one's enemy is forbidden.<sup>37</sup> To make his case, he recalled narratives that reasoned that men who made themselves look like women became effeminized (*ta'-nis dar anha hasil mishavad*). Tavakoli-Targhi (2001, chap. 4) has argued that Europeanization was feared as effeminization. But another anxiety informed the fear of simulation. Zayn al-'Abidin Khan Kirmani (1959, 110–116), under problem number 11, concerning "cross-dressing" ("It is becoming fashionable for women to wear certain items of clothes that are

for men and for men to wear unmanly clothing”), first argued that the prohibition in both cases is centered on simulation. He went on, however, to emphasize that “the main purpose [of this prohibition]” is to stop men transdressing as women and becoming penetrates and women dressing as men and engaging in *musahiqah* (same-sex acts between women). Changing clothes as such, he argued, was not the main problem; it was the first step toward abominable acts.

Thus the fear was not simply about gender violations. It was a sexual fear. The vast body of nineteenth-century debates on shaving the beard attests to the profundity of this fear. Though not a new debate, it acquired a new significance with the conflation of *amradnuma* with *farangi'ma'ab* in the nineteenth century. As I argued in chapter 1, the growth of a full beard marked adult manhood; a beard made a man look different not only from a woman but also, and perhaps even more important, from a young beardless man. Zayn al-‘Abidin Khan Kirmani (1959, 219–20) argued that shaving the beard was like the acts committed by the people of Lot. To abandon the tradition of growing a full rounded beard, as many young people of this period were doing, was absolutely prohibited.<sup>38</sup>

The nineteenth-century fears were, however, compounded. In the eyes of Iranian men, beardless adult men of Europe constituted a disturbing spectacle of *amradnuma'i*, simulation of amrads. Thus a *farangi'ma'ab's* shaving of the beard was at once sexual and cultural trouble: *it made him look like a European through his looking like an amradnuma*. Muhammad Karim Khan Kirmani (1967–69, 2:146) offered the reason for prohibition of shaving not only that it made a man look like a woman and a young boy but that it was especially forbidden now because the Farangis and their followers shaved their faces.<sup>39</sup>

A related prohibition concerned men's hair locks. Kirmani (1967–69, 2:140–43) was vehemently against the growing of hair locks and argued for shaving a man's head completely. Farangis shave some of their head hair and leave some of it; Jews grow two locks of hair; Muslims are forbidden to look like either of these other groups. Like the beard, the question of hair locks has screened away signification beyond looking like the religious or national other. As we saw in part 1, hair locks were a mark of an amrad's beauty, commonly associated with dancing boys, as frequently reported by European travelers as well as Iranian writers of the nineteenth century. The fictional character in *Siahatnamah-i Ibrahim Bayg* observes that the men of 'Urumiyah were all beautiful-looking and well dressed, and, unlike men of other Iranian cities, they all wore locks. Since this was a common practice, it was not considered shameful. He also reported on dancing boys with

locks near the Aras River (Maraghah'i 1985, 129, 153). Shaving one's beard and not shaving one's head, both seen as the opposite of what was recommended by Islamic etiquette, became signs of the new farangi'ma'ab masculinity, forever haunted by the figures of amrads, dancing boys, and mukhannases. Paradoxically, for the Europeans the zulf of Iranian men marked them in very similar terms. Fraser wrote, "We had now crossed the frontier of Turkey and Persia, and we experienced a corresponding change in the costume of the people. . . . they all wore the long side-locks behind the ears, common to would-be beaux in that country, and affected the swagger of the Persian dandy" (1838, 1:328).

For Iranian men, Europe (Farang) was as marked by its bareheaded women as by its beardless men (and in some instances by men's locks of hair). Travelers reported both as part of their "anthropology of Europe."<sup>40</sup> That these markers of Europe were taking hold in Muslim lands was a matter of deep concern. Aqa Ahmad Bihbihani, traveling to India in 1804, was disturbed to see that "there is a fashion of shaving beards among the high and low, ruling elites and the nobles, nay even among the students of religious institutions. . . . The shias and their ulemas very rarely have the beard prescribed by the shariat. . . . Surprisingly enough, I found a large number of learned and wise-men and still more the religious scholars ignorant of its being a forbidden act" (1992, 161). He was so disturbed by this sight that he wrote a treatise on the subject in which he explained, "Having observed this I have dealt with this matter exhaustively in the work 'Dar Jawab-e-Masail-e-Faizabad.' Praise be to God, a number of believers followed my advice and have kept beards. It is hoped that God by His grace guides others to do so" (Bihbahani 1996, 72).

By the middle of the nineteenth century, Muhammad Shafi' Qazvini, a hat merchant from Qazvin, concerned about order in government and the welfare of people, agreed with the Farangis' views that there were two things, one inherent and one acquired, upon which "the glory of people of Iran rests. . . . What is inherent is the Iranian beard and what is acquired is the Iranian hat. Magnanimity of every man rests on these two which they [the foreigners] did not have and could not conquer" (1991, 52-53). He considered Tehran a city of vice because fornication was prevalent among women, and men had liaisons with young amrads. In fact, he wrote, many government people openly kept several of these young men, and their wives took revenge, or exercised their lust, by fornicating with the same young lads (121-22). He suggested that had young men with such facial beauty existed in the Prophet's time, he would have required them to veil.<sup>41</sup> To deal with this problem, he suggested, "the edict against shaving beards

should be enforced and if then these lads would make themselves into *sadahs* (beardless) through other means than shaving, such as using tweezers, they must be imprisoned for a few days so that the shade of their hair becomes apparent and from then on they would not be able to render themselves beardless" (123).

The agitation over the meaning of men's beards and hair locks was not a theoretical amusement. Throughout the nineteenth century, clerical leaders issued rulings prohibiting shaving beards. Muhammad Karim Khan Kirmani (1967–69, 2:146) specifically declared that not only the man who wanted his beard shaved but also the bath masseurs who shaved them committed a sin. A government report from Isfahan in 1889 noted, "A number of mullas have decided to prohibit bath masseurs from shaving beards. They have extracted assurances to that effect and Hajji Sayyid Ja'far Bidabadi had a bath masseur who had shaved beards bastinadoed."<sup>42</sup> According to I'timad al-Saltanah (1966, 950), in the summer of 1892 Tehran clerics prohibited men from shaving beards and women from wearing shoes with stiff heel backs (? *pashnah nakhvab*).<sup>43</sup> Shaving of beards and mustaches continued to be used to dishonor, humiliate, and punish men.<sup>44</sup>

Regulations about men's (and women's) public appearance went beyond the prohibition against shaving beards. In November 1905 (Ramazan 1323), Aqa Najafi Isfahani forbade anyone who "wore a kerchief [necktie] around his neck" to enter his mosque. This inspired gangs to attack men to tear off their kerchiefs (Sipihr 1989, "Yaddasht'ha": 46). Two months earlier, Shaykh al-Ra'is had ordered the locks of a "beautiful amrad who was said to be *malut* [catamite]" shaved off, at the same time composing these verses for him (Sipihr 1989, "Yaddasht'ha": 258–59):

Today a man of religion [*'alim*] shaved off your hair  
hurting the hearts of a whole world [*'alam*].  
As on every strand of your hair a heart was lodged  
the population of a hundred kingdoms [*silsilah*] were dislodged.<sup>45</sup>

Ramazan 1323 seems to have been a month of public piety. The governor of Tehran, 'Ala' al-Dawlah decreed it unlawful for young men to sing on the streets, and he had several well-known *maluts* bastinadoed and their hair locks shaved (Sipihr 1989, "Yaddasht'ha": 245, 268). Two years earlier he had already ordered that musicians and dancers could no longer dress in women's clothes (*Nawruz* 1, 27 [27 September 1903]: 4). Now he was also concerned about regulating women's public visibility and socializing. He forbade Muslim women from wearing niqab instead of the more covering rubandah, and from going to Jewish homes. He ordered carriages not to transport women with niqab and prostitutes.<sup>46</sup>

The contests over the beard was satirized in popular songs and the press. In 1885 Zhukovskii (1902, 64) recorded a popular *tasnif* (street rap) about the latest fads.

Bearded men have gone out of fashion  
It is the year of men with no beards  
[*mard-i rishdar var uftadah / bi'rish'numast imsal*].

O bearded ones, think of something  
It is the era of beardlessness this year  
[*Ay rishdara fikri kunid / 'ahd-i bi'rishast imsal*].

By the 1920s, the battle for the beard was lost—for the moment, anyway. By then men without beards were seen to look like women rather than *amrads*. *Gul-i zard* (1, 5 [5 August 1918]: 3) satirized the civilized lot (*ashkhas-i sivilizah*) crowding the Tajrish Bridge, a popular evening hanging-out neighborhood, as beardless men (looking) like virgin girls (*tarashidah sar-u-surat chaw dukhtarha-yi dushizah*). ‘Abbas ‘Ali Kayvan Qazvini (1862–1938) recalled melancholically that in his younger days he had “forbidden the sinful” by attacking and slapping the face of a bath masseur who was shaving a client’s beard, while the client ran away with his half-shaven face and hid in the pool of hot water. “Yet today, everyone, in imitation, shaves his beard and mustache, leaving a bit of mustache in the middle over the lip so as not to look a woman; and no one dares to object. If today someone were to prohibit such sinful acts, people would ridicule him and the government would put him in jail, or at least would declare him insane” (Kayvan Qazvini 1930, 214). Whereas a few decades earlier bath masseurs were forbidden to shave a client’s beard, now a new institution, the barbershop (*salmani*), emerged as a popular business.<sup>47</sup>

While the battle for the beard was lost, the figure of *farangi'ma'ab* went through a political transfiguration. *Tanbih* (21 [April 1911]: 2–3), in its political debates with the radical Constitutionalist paper *Iran-i naw*, proudly accepted the designation of old-fashioned (*kuhnah'parast*), a characterization that would locate it under the rule of God and religion, where no man wore a necktie, a bow tie, or a short jacket that showed his buttocks, and where one’s fortune did not depend on flattering *Iran-i naw*. In the political disillusionment of the post-1911 period, *farangi'ma'ab* came to be associated with political opportunism, as unprincipled people who change color every day. To get ahead in the newly emerging modern state bureaucracy, all one had to do was to shave one’s face and dress up as a *farangi'-ma'ab*. Cartoons in *Tanbih* portrayed an ignorant charlatan who had previously lived by dressing as a *mulla*, now transforming himself into a



farangi'ma'ab (figure 37). The cover of another issue of *Tanbih* (5, 21 [19 April 1911]) showed two "old-fashioned" street men, one advising the other to change his outfit and pick up a few French words if he wants to get a job in the new administration. A long, satirical versified piece in *Gul-i zard* (3, 12 [13 October 1920]: 1) described the terrible economic and social conditions of the ordinary working people of Iran, in contrast with the scene around Baharistan, the site of the Iranian parliament. It was a scene of permanent feasting, with well-dressed folks in bow ties milling about and with Mashdi Asghar (the paper's stock character of the old-fashioned street lad) seeking to become a member of the parliament by transforming himself into the new type. More explicitly, *Tanbih's* satire chastised modernists as Christian boys who have stolen people's hearts with their crossed-shaped hair (*Ay tiftl-i tajaddud'talab, ay bachchah-'i tarsa / vay burdah dil-i khalq bidan zulf-i chalipa*); who had come out of the new schools knowing little but how to wear a necktie and pin a flower on their collar; who are constitutionalists and desire modernity (*mashrutah'talab hasti-u-mayil bi'tajuddud*); who want to institute European laws; and who think they can solve the country's dire problems by adopting European fashions (8, 16 [June 1914]: 4–5). The emerging split between the parliament, the modern state bureaucracy, and the hardworking urban population was staged as a culture war between the effeminized ambiguity of the fukulis and the old-style masculinity of Mashdi Asghars.<sup>48</sup>

Not only politically guilty, in his condensed role as amrad, amradnuma, and womanizer all at once, the farangi'ma'ab was now increasingly taken to task for threatening the moral order of the country by chasing young boys and women on the streets, while the country was being threatened with total annihilation, and mother Iran was drowning in a sea of troubles.<sup>49</sup> *Gul-i zard* (1, 5 [5 August 1918]: 2) wittily suggested that the modern young men of Tehran have shaved their beards instead of reforming the affairs of the country. The joke turned on the double meaning of the word *islah*, meaning both reform and shaving or forming hair. Tehran's Lalah'zar Street became the place where clean-shaven, smartly dressed fukulis were said to now display themselves as shahids, chasing young men and women at the same time.

#### GENDER HETEROSOCIALIZATION: ITS EFFECTS AND PROMISES

Once homoeroticism and same-sex practices became marked as a sign of Iran's backwardness, heteronormalization of eros and sex became a condition



FIGURE 37. *Tanbih*, 15 March 1911.

of “achieving modernity,” a project that called for heterosocialization of public space and a reconfiguration of family life. This process was by no means identical for men and women. Whereas male homoerotic affective bonds were reimagined as asexual sentiment among citizen-brothers, and men’s friendships were transformed into patriotic national camaraderie (critically de-eroticizing its homoaffectivity and reorienting its eroticism toward a female beloved vatan), female homosociality came to be seen as deeply implicated in the production of “the vice.” Men’s same-sex liaisons and sexual practices were blamed on ignorant wives. To urge support for women’s education, one author argued, “In Iran, unlike [America], many men, instead of socializing with ignorant women, prefer to escape their wives and spend their time outside the home, engaged in *amradbazi* and other sinful activities” (*Hadid* 1, 13 [25 September 1905]: 4–6; quotation on 5).

The home, identified with women’s quarters, was a domain of backwardness, a bastion of ignorance and superstition, lacking that central elixir of civilization: knowledge and modern scientific sensibility.<sup>50</sup> It had to be

transformed by educating women, bringing them into public life, and remaking them into companionate wives. Within this perspective, the project of unveiling women became pivotal, not simply in the sense that later modernists insisted, that is, as necessary for women's emancipation, but for the modernist heterosocialization of culture and heteronormalization of eros and sex. As we saw earlier, already in the 1860s in the writings of Akhundzadah (1985, 126–27), the veil had come to be identified as the institution that had condemned women to an imprisoned and deprived existence. In a long section on an early Isma'ili leader, Hasan ibn Muhammad Buzurg Umid, Akhundzadah (1985, 117–37) suggested that the Isma'ili leader had advocated monogamy, unveiling women, and educating girls like boys, for which Akhundzadah admired him as the initiator of Iranian Protestantism. He regretted that since then no other leader had appeared among the people of Islam to lead them into civilization. Although he was highly critical of the Bab, Akhundzadah (1985, 178–79) agreed with his support for unveiling women and considered men's exclusive socialization with their own sex and deprivation from socializing with women one of the ill consequences of women's veil and responsible for same-sex practices among men.

Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani echoed Akhundzadah's sentiments. In his *Sih maktub*, largely inspired by and modeled after Akhundzadah's *Maktubat*, he focused his social critique on the veil and gender segregation. Much of marital misery, he lamented, was the consequence of gender segregation: men married women without being able to see them and socialize with them. Because men did not socialize with women, they misbehaved and turned to having sex with young boys (*bachchahbazi*) and male servants (*ghulambarigi*). Women were unhappy and depressed.<sup>51</sup>

Perhaps nowhere is this framing of hijab as cause of *amradbazi* more explicit than in the famous long poem "'Arif'namah" by Iraj Mirza (1989, 75–96). Although one segment of this poem has often been discussed as a humorous anti-hijab tale, the placing of this segment within the larger narrative of the poet against *amradbazi* is almost never noted.<sup>52</sup> I know of only one author, Paul Sprachman, who has commented on and analyzed this framing: "The 515-line 'Arifnamah is ostensibly aimed at the accomplished poet, singer, lyricist, and pederast of the Constitutional Movement, 'Arif of Qazvin, who is often mentioned with Iraj as a proto-feminist. . . . The poem attacks 'Arif for his pederasty and speculates about why the practice was so common and flagrant on all levels of society (from the lowly 'amm to the high-born 'arif: a pun on his victim's name that Iraj uses several times. . . . Iraj . . . blamed the strict segregation

of the sexes . . . for the prevalence of pederasty" (1998, 348–49). Sprachman, however, seems to accept Iraj Mirza's differentiation here between 'Arif as a pederast and himself as an opponent of such practices. We know from biographies of both men, though, that 'Arif was as much known for his womanizing ventures as Iraj Mirza was for his own young male beloveds. That Iraj Mirza chose *bachchahbazi* (pederasty) as the critical bat with which to beat 'Arif indicates that by the time of this composition in 1921, the public denunciation of such practices already had become available for such attacks, even (or especially?) by men who themselves were publicly well known for such predilections. In the public modernist discourse, older man–younger man sexual liaisons had become a source of national shame associated with the figure of nouveau farangi'ma'abs, as we have seen in the satire of *Gul-i zard* and Nasim-i Shumal. The weight of this public shame was already producing self-erasure of Iraj Mirza's own sexual practices.

Unlike Nasim-i Shumal, who opposed unveiling of women, but like his predecessors, such as Akhundzadah and Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani, as well as his contemporary Taqizadah, Iraj Mirza blamed gender segregation and the hijab for "the vice":

O Lord, what thing is this pedomania [*bachchahbazi*]  
 That plagues Aref and greater Tehrania? [*'arif va 'ammi*]  
 Why is it only in this commonwealth  
 Does sodomy take place with little stealth?  
 The European with his lofty bearing  
 Knows not the ins and outs of garçon-tearing [*bachchahbazi*]  
 .....  
 Until our tribe is tied up in the veil,  
 This very queerness is bound to prevail.  
 The draping of the girl with her throat divine  
 Will make the little boy our concubine. (Sprachman 1995, 83)<sup>53</sup>

His famous tale of the lustful, unchaste veiled woman (verses 99–185) is offered to demonstrate this point ("Come listen to this tale so you will see / The chador's effect on society") and is followed with a discussion of the Iranian woman's ignorance and veil.

Iraj, moreover, charges 'Arif with lack of patriotism. Man is born out of a woman's vagina (*kus*, cunt); 'Arif, he charges, betrays the motherland because of his presumed preference for anus (*kun*):

The cunt's your homeland [*vatan*], what is the anus?  
 Why is there no love of homeland in your heart?  
 Are you devoid of any sense of patriotism;

That you think the cunt ranks the same as the anus? (Iraj Mirza  
1989, 79)

In Iraj Mirza's narrative, Europe, a land with no hint of *bachchahbazi*, is the land where men's love is directed toward women. Marriage is contracted through meeting and choosing one's wife, and husband and wife are companions:

Were there no women, love could not persist;  
And without love the world would not exist.

.....  
In other parts the women help the men;  
In this unhappy place they hamper them,  
There, men and women share one profession;  
Here, men must toil in lonely obsession. (Sprachman 1995, 89–90)

He prays for the day that people would tire of uniting men and women who have never met before (Iraj Mirza 1989, 85).

#### UNVEILING: A MODERNIST VEIL?

A woman's veil was thus not only a visible marker of cultural difference between Iran and Europe but also the most visible marker of gender separation, a key signifier of homosociality. It was explicitly linked to "unnatural love" among men (itself a sign of backwardness); "unnatural sex" among men, in turn, was held responsible for "unnatural sex" among women. Unveiling equated with progress-as-Europeanization has screened its own heteronormalizing work. If we name the social regime of Qajar Iran as one of compulsory homosociality combined with procreative heterosexuality that left the structure of sexual desire indeterminate, we can say that Iranian modernity insisted on a regime of compulsory heterosociality that was to underwrite normative heterosexuality.<sup>54</sup>

Once homosexual practices were attributed to gender segregation and more particularly the veiling of women, male-male sexual practices, like the veil and linked with it, became a sign of backwardness of Iran in modernist discourse. The modernist thrust to desegregate men and women, to which unveiling was central, in fact worked at once as a masqueraded campaign to eradicate same-sex practices and unnatural sexualities. The one and the same move was to produce a double miracle: overcome women's backwardness (transform them into companionate wives, educated mothers, useful citizens) and make same-sex practices, especially among men, socially redundant. From this perspective, unveiling and, more generally, a

modern dress code become somewhat more complicated than simply creating modern women (removing the most visible sign of Iranian backwardness—veiled women) or producing uniformed citizens.

The continued focus of much current analysis on the issue of the veil and women's emancipation as the centrally contested project of Iranian modernity misses the productive work of these modernist moves for heteronormalization of Iranian society. It has become a "screen memory" of Iranian history that hides the other achievement of Iranian modernity: the complete erasure of the ghilman from the national imagination.<sup>55</sup> The modernist normative gender moves were at once public performances of normative sexuality; they had to navigate anxieties of modern sexualities. If women had to be unveiled and men had to shave their beards to become modern citizens, they could not look like each other and, more urgently, could not resemble that other figure which was to be forgotten, the amrad. Men had to abandon their *'abas* (long, enveloping outer garment) and wear suits with ties and hats. Although they had to shave their beards, they should keep impressive manly mustaches. The modern Iranian man's effort to look like a European man from the start made him look like the amrad, as many popular satires of fukulis kept reminding him. This was another reason for trying to banish the ghilman and the amrad from Iranian cultural imagination, and it also explains the current drive among many Islamists to grow a full beard. Despite denial, disavowal, and transcendentalization, not to mention suppression and punishment, the figure of the ghilman continually threatens to break through modern normative masculinity.

The effects and promises of, and disillusionment with, modernity as compulsory heterosociality for women cannot be appreciated without rethinking the interlocking issues of gender and sexuality. Iranian modernist narrative has focused on the emancipatory effects of gender heterosocialization in general and unveiling more particularly. In the modernist imagination, premodernity is that time when women were unseen and unheard. Modernity was to transform the invisible and mute woman into an unveiled and vocal public presence. This emancipatory narrative is dependent on the silenced/voiceless, segregated, and oppressed woman for delineating its own temporality. Moreover, it ignores the disciplinary effects of the very same process—upon which its own emancipatory work was dependent. The nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century gender heterosocialization rescripted women's language, reconfigured women's bodily presence in public, and recoded women's wisdom and knowledge. In other words, rather than an emancipatory creativity out of the void of

repression and oppression, women's modern presence was a contingent embodiment of science, sexuality, and discourse.

Women's language and body had been crafted in a homosocial female world. For the heterosocial world that modernity desired, both made an inappropriate presence. As I have discussed at length elsewhere (Najmabadi 1993), this was a body and a language that assumed themselves to be seen or heard largely by other women. Women recited poetry and performed plays at all-female gatherings. Even the readership of written texts by women was assumed to be other women. Modern transformations affected these issues in significant ways. Although the diffusion of print was initially a male preserve in the nineteenth century, words written by women could now leap the boundaries of female circles. Printed and circulated, a woman's written word could now enter the public realm and acquire a heterosocial audience. In the process of acquiring a public, male and female audience, the language itself was significantly transformed in a number of ways.

The earlier language had presumed, and sometimes explicitly stated, a female audience. In later texts, women authors addressed both women and men. Sometimes within the same text the language for men was different from that used to address women.

Second, woman's language affiliated with the informal orality of the female world could be explicitly sexual. Women's modern discourse gradually attenuated and "sanitized" its sexual markers. In other words, to have a heterosocial public audience, the female voice had to veil and discipline itself. The female language, and more generally the language of modernity, produced its own veiling by replacing sexually marked vocabulary. In homosocial spaces, language and body could be sexually overt; the heterosociality of the world of modernity called for disciplinary reconstruction of female (and male) language and body.

The production of a new verbal language accompanied a new language of the body. As woman moved from a homosocial female world into a heterosocial public space, before the physical veil could be discarded it was replaced by an invisible metaphoric veil, or *hijab-i 'iffat* (veil of chastity). Not an object external to the female body, the veil of chastity was to be acquired through modern education, as an internal quality of the self. The body of modern woman was to contain its own unruly sexuality and shy away from its own public presence.

This newly conceived woman, with a veiled language, a disciplined body, and scientific sensibilities, could claim a place in the public space; she could be imagined as a citizen. Learning a new verbal language, a new language of the body, and new rules of social intercourse suited to a heterosocial

space was, of course, not limited to women. Men also had to be reeducated. The manhood that permitted looking like an *amrad* or like the *farangi'-ma'ab* had to leave the stage, be masqueraded, or become the target of cultural derision, social approbation, and sanction.

These enormous cultural transformations were closely linked with the centrality of science to the notion of modern. From the nineteenth century a dominant concept in Iran and elsewhere in the Middle East was that the key to overcoming backwardness was science. The centrality of science provided modernizing women, and men, with a particularly appealing rhetoric for redefining womanhood and claiming a place for women in the public, political domain. If the backward nation could hope for parity with Europe through modern sciences, the backward woman could similarly hope for parity with the man. If the backwardness of the nation was a cause for national shame, the condition of women was a particularly egregious public display of that backwardness.

For women, however, the new schools were not just for acquiring knowledge of the natural sciences. As we will see in chapter 7, women also were to study the sciences of cooking, sewing, child care, husband management, and moral behavior. The school curriculum included lessons on hygiene and the introduction of sports and gymnastics, whose importance was linked to a critique of veiling. Part of modern woman's education consisted of acquiring a healthy body, proper ethics, and correct manners. Later, in the 1920s, a new genre, *adab-i mu'ashirat* (etiquette of socializing) emerged in texts designed to teach women how to interact properly with unfamiliar men (Najmabadi 1993).

The struggle over proper heterosocial behavior in public space and the debate over to whom that space belonged were not waged simply in texts of etiquette. Women of urban upper classes began to claim the streets, formerly traversed by women of the popular classes in the daily conduct of their domestic and employment obligations, or by "depraved women." This "inappropriate presence" was immediately contested and policed by men's flirtations and consequent social approbation.<sup>56</sup> Satirical poems and cartoons were published that criticized the sharing of the streets by young men (now beautiful youths, now womanizers) and women with *niqab* (rather than *rubandah*), which women were accused of lifting on and off in order to flirt.<sup>57</sup>

The sight of these women on the street was a spectacle. In his memoirs Mu'ayyir al-Mamalik repeatedly noted when he had gone for a stroll with a female relative (a sister, for instance) or when he ran into a group of women.<sup>58</sup> Further, he confessed that he tried to gaze closely at such women,



sometimes even with binoculars (Mu'ayyir al-Mamalik 1982b, 31, 167–68). Some women flirted back (50, 70). Other memoirs reveal that men policed women's public presence by pulling off their veils, shouting catcalls, and making street jokes (Mumtahir al-Dawlah 1983, 351–52). Mu'ayyir al-Mamalik also reported frequently on the other inappropriate presence that had become central to the regulation of modern gender and sexual relations, that of *fukuli* (bow-tied) and *qirti* (coquettish) young men.<sup>59</sup>

Even women deeply committed to the emancipatory promises of modernity were alarmed by the “inappropriateness” of unrelated men and women socializing on the streets. In the women's press, articles exhorted young men to treat women respectfully in public.<sup>60</sup> Other articles encouraged women to act as their own police and to be more observant of their hijab and public modesty.<sup>61</sup>

From the beginning, then, women's entry on the streets was subject to the regulatory harassment of men. The modernist heterosocializing promise that invited women to leave their homosocial spaces and become educated companionate partners for modernist men was underwritten by policing of women's public presence through men's street actions. Men at once desired heterosociality of the modern and yet would not surrender the privileged masculinity of the streets.<sup>62</sup> Women's public presence was also underwritten by disciplinary approbation of modernizing women themselves, whose emancipatory drive would be jeopardized by unruly public conduct.

In her journey through the twentieth-century modernist imagination, the new de-eroticized woman became many characters: the well-educated mother, the companionate wife, the capable professional woman often at the service of the state institutions, the sacrificing nationalist heroine, the selfless comrade. Yet this construct could not do away with her complementary/conflicting Other: the sexual woman, seething with appetites and desires, previously held in check by the veil. This figure also appears in many garbs: the fallen woman who gets pregnant and commits suicide (or dies at childbirth), the demonized woman who seduces men out of wedlock. By the 1960s and 1970s she becomes the very embodiment of Westoxication, often referred to in the anti-Shah oppositional political discourses, both secular and Islamist, as the “painted doll of the Pahlavi regime.” In this reinscription she embodies a double Other: the enemy within, *fitna*, and the enemy without, the West, thereby making it possible for the previously distinct voices of secular radical modernism and the newly rearticulated Islamism to condemn in unison the “superwesternized” woman.

For women, the modernist promise of public heterosociality proved somewhat illusory. It was betrayed by women's experience over the following decades, especially after the compulsory unveiling in 1936. Some learned that to be part of the public space, they had to become "manly women," that is, confirming the maleness of the public space by particular codes of "manly" looks and behavior. Still, the daily experience of bodily harassment on the streets confirmed that men did not intend to give up the masculinity of public space. In fact, one way of "reading" the experience of street harassment would be that not only did public space not become heterosocial but a "woman's space" became invaded by male intrusion, to the limit of her very bodily presence. When a man pinches a woman's bottom or grabs her breast on the street, modernity's heterosocial promise has become a nightmare. Women's voluntary reveiling in the 1970s in many urban centers of Islamic countries acquires a somewhat different meaning in this trajectory. But that is another story for another time.

## 6 The Tragedy of Romantic Marriage

The modernist project of heteronormalization of sexual mores and heterosocialization of public life called for a reenvisioning of marriage from a procreative to a romantic contract. It was no accident that Mirza Fath'ali Akhundzadah, who wrote early political essays against women's veil, also wrote some of the first plays that condemned arranged marriage, temporary marriage, and polygyny and advocated instead monogamy and the triumph of marriage based on love.<sup>1</sup> Yet romantic love turned out to be a hard sell. Akhundzadah's political writings were immediately echoed and expanded in writings of intellectuals such as Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani. But there were no immediate heirs to his literary endeavor; romantic love did not take off, even as a literary genre, for quite some time.<sup>2</sup> And when a later generation turned to issues of love, sexuality, and marriage at the beginning of the twentieth century, two genres were the most popular. First, there were the "clean" romantic tales (with no hint of sex) that would underwrite and be moved by national, political, and reform imperatives. Second, there were the sexual moral tales warning about urban corruption and abusive men who took advantage of naive young (often rural immigrant) women in the new climate of socialization between unrelated men and women. The narrative logic of both genres demanded tragedy, at least until the emergence of a victorious strong man of state in the person of Riza Shah.

Modernity, of course, did not invent tragic romance. There are many tragic love tales in Iranian classical literature: Shirin and Farhad, Layli and Majnun are among the most famous tales of that genre. What distinguished the early modernist tragedies was the emplotment of tragic love as political and cultural critique. The plots in these stories were moved not by the obstacles to happy endings in the older tragedies, such as class/status incompatibility in Shirin and Farhad or tribal/kinship issues in Layli and

Majnun, but by political and cultural issues. The frustration of erotic desire in the text was employed to produce a different kind of desire in the reader: that for political and cultural transformations. This political work of romantic love seems to have been critical for its own emergence. It is as if romantic love needed a patriotic mantle to establish its own viability.

Romantic marriage had become a possibility in modernist writings in part through the heterosexualization of love. In patriotic romances the heterosexualization of love was employed to produce patriotic desire, which in turn further consolidated heterosexualization of love through its intense focus on a female beloved, now the homeland, now the woman compatriot.

There is yet another important difference between modernist and classical tragic romances. In the latter, love, sex, and marriage were not necessarily connected. Aside from the existence of popular homoerotic love stories, such as that of Mahmud and 'Ayaz—something totally absent from modernist love stories—"union" of the lovers in heteroerotic tales did not necessarily translate into a wedding. Marriage was above all a procreative contract. This is reflected in the structure of books of ethics and advice with separate chapters on love and on marriage, and in the arguments put forward for the necessity of marriage.

#### FRIENDSHIP, LOVE, SEXUAL PLEASURE, AND MARRIAGE IN THE CLASSICAL LITERATURE

The classical eleventh-century book of advice *Qabusnamah* has four separate chapters: "On Loving," "On Taking [Sexual] Pleasure," "On Seeking a Wife," and "On Taking Friends" ('Unsur al-Ma'ali 1999). For 'Unsur al-Ma'ali, the most valued human relation was friendship, a relationship self-evidently between men: "It is better for a man to have no brother than no friend" (138). In one fifteenth-century work of ethics, heavily modeled after *Qabusnamah*, the priority of friendship over love is reflected in the structure of the text. The chapter on friendship is the second chapter of the book, whereas love is left to the sixth chapter; in *Qabusnamah* the corresponding chapters are the fourteenth and twenty-eighth, respectively.<sup>3</sup> Both texts, however, elaborate more on love than on friendship. The "object of love" is male and distinct from the person from whom one seeks sexual pleasure. The latter could be male or female; in fact 'Unsur al-Ma'ali recommends both so as to avoid the animosity of one sex (1999, 86). As Richter-Bernburg points out, "To put it succinctly, neither is sex for him contingent on 'eshq . . . , nor 'eshq, albeit never non-corporeal, on sex; while he like many of his coevals celebrates 'eshq as unfulfilled, 'chaste' love for

its self-abnegation and non-corporeal 'purity,' he still finds its logical fulfillment in the sexual union of lover and beloved" (2000, 6).

But Richter-Bernburg's conclusion (9–10) that 'Unsur al-Ma'ali did not discriminate between the two sexes as objects of desire *and love* is unfounded. While in the chapter "On Taking [Sexual] Pleasure," 'Unsur al-Ma'ali recommends turning to both *ghulam va zanan* (male servants/slaves and women) for sexual pleasure, the chapter on love is exclusively related to men. Despite possible linguistic ambiguity,<sup>4</sup> the narrative context leaves little room to imagine the object of love as female. The two exemplary tales focus on beautiful *ghulams*, and the exemplary beloved is, not surprisingly, Joseph, son of Jacob. What also strengthens the maleness of the beloved is how 'Unsur al-Ma'ali marks 'ishq as distinct from friendship by comparing and contrasting the two, both pertaining to other males: "Friendship is one thing and love another; in love there is no happy time. . . . Whereas in friendship it is always a good time, in love there is permanent pain" (1999, 83–84).

The fifteenth-century Shuja' more explicitly excludes women as objects of love. He makes a sharp distinction between 'ishq (roughly: love) and *muhibbat* (roughly: affection); while women could be the object of the latter sentiment, such *muhibbat* cannot be included in 'ishq. This is so, he explains, because it is not possible to love women through gazing only; it may cause lustful feeling, whereas in 'ishq, the lover's pleasure must come solely from gazing.<sup>5</sup>

Not all writers followed such idealized, clear-cut demarcations between friendship, love, and sexual pleasure. Ruhi Anarjani (1954), in his late sixteenth-century "Risalah," narrates his adventures as a young man in search of companionship and love, at first with young men of Tabriz. Disillusioned, he seeks the company of women but finds no one deserving. Eventually, he finds a man worthy of companionship with whom he also falls in love. This tale then frames the rest of the treatise, which is a book of advice and manners for a young man, apparently expounded by the wise and knowledgeable companion for the benefit of the young Ruhi Anarjani. This section includes chapters titled "On Love and Lover," "On the Beloved," and "On Taking Shahids." The chapter on marriage, "Dar mazimmat-i kadhuda'i," is largely devoted to the problems and burdens that a man faces in a marriage.

In *Qabusnamah*, the chapter titled "Taking a Wife" is less negative in tone, but it makes clear that taking a wife is neither for love nor for sexual passion (for which one can buy a female slave (*kanizak*) from the market at far less the cost and pain of getting a wife) ('Unsur al-Ma'ali 1999, 130).

Taking a wife is, in the first instance, for begetting offspring. In some of the classical Islamic texts on marriage, the issue of children is argued as if there was no other way that the reader could be persuaded to marry. Unlike the genre of marriage treatise in the twentieth century, these earlier texts do not presume a heterosexual man.

Ghazali's chapters on marriage in *Ihya' 'ulum al-din* and in its Persian rendition, *Kimia-yi sa'adat*, offer a good example. His texts read as if they were written for a skeptical audience that had to be persuaded and cajoled into marriage. Given his own life trajectory through Sufism,<sup>6</sup> perhaps his audience was very much influenced by Sufism, inclined to celibacy and a variety of homoerotic discourses and practices—an audience whose celibacy was a rejection not so much of sex but of procreative sex. The *Book on the Etiquette of Marriage* opens with a discussion of the disagreement among religious scholars on the virtue of marriage. Does marriage promote or disrupt man's devotion to God?<sup>7</sup> Among the five benefits of marriage, procreation is the first. Ghazali reiterates several times that the purpose of marriage is not to satisfy desire but to procreate.<sup>8</sup>

In fact, in Ghazali's outlook the heterosexualizing imperative of marriage has little to do with women's sexual desirability and the latent threat of fornication (*zina*). When sexual desire is mentioned at all, it is to acknowledge same-sex desire. Marriage, therefore, is more important to protect a man's religion from homoerotic impulses than to protect him from fornication. It makes it unnecessary to go to other objects of desire, young men in particular. This is sharply posed when the text broaches the dilemma of the open faces of young male adolescents. The discerning eye cannot avoid seeing these faces because, unlike women, young lads go unveiled. Without the safety of marriage, a man would go from sinful gazing to sinful acts. If a man cannot keep his eye from a young lad, he must contract marriage.<sup>9</sup>

The emphasis on marriage's purpose not being sexual satisfaction is underwritten by yet another fear—the fear of gender reversal. If a woman can satisfy a man's desire, he may become enamored of her, develop an affection bordering on love, and, consequently, become subordinate to her.<sup>10</sup> *Qabusnamah* as well warns the reader that a man's passion for his wife could bring him under her command, thus inverting the man-wife relationship; it would make the man a woman ('Unsur al-Ma'ali 1999, 130). The seventeenth-century Fani Kashmiri warns that greed in satisfying one's passion for women would cause womanly temperament.<sup>11</sup>

This fear, as Howard and Rackin have observed in a different historical context, complements male homoeroticism: "The residual gender ideology

which identified sexual congress with women as potentially effeminating to men also construed male homoerotic desire as entirely consistent with honorable masculinity" (1997, 194).

The modernists had to refashion an emotion appropriate to marriage against this double challenge: classical love was male homoerotic, and love for a woman threatened masculinity. In a deeply homoerotic culture, falling in love was what a man did with other men, especially with adolescents. Falling in love with women more often than not was unmanly; "A man's desire for a woman, now coded as a mark of masculinity, then constituted a double degradation, the enslavement of a man's higher reason by his base bodily appetites and the subjection of the superior to the inferior one" (Howard and Rackin 1997, 193–94).

Books of ethics carried on the discourse of the important goal of marriage as procreation until an important paradigm change occurred in the nineteenth century.<sup>12</sup> This shift took two forms, driven by two distinct impulses. For those Iranians who interpreted European public heterosociality as unregulated heterosexual chaos, marriage became Islam's superior way of satisfying human sexuality.<sup>13</sup> By the twentieth century, popular editions of classical writings on marriage and family would be editorialized to emphasize that "it is sexual instinct that makes a man naturally desire marriage" (Najmi Zanjani 1940, 12). This shift is most notable in religiously informed and theologically oriented texts and remains so to our time.<sup>14</sup> The impulse to differentiate Muslim-Iranian from European moved this reconceptualization of marriage from a procreative to a sexual contract.

Modernists who were focused on becoming like Europe, in contrast, were moved differently. At once identifying with and disavowing the European perception of Iranian society as homosocial, homosexual, and therefore backward, they reconceptualized marriage as a covenant of affective bonds, even love, between man and woman. As Deniz Kandiyoti has concluded for the Ottoman reformers, "Underlying reformers' and polemicists' writings on the modern family, monogamy, and educated mothers and housewives . . . is a new regulatory discourse on sexuality that attempts to institutionalize monogamous heterosexuality as the normative ideal" (1998, 284). Male homoeroto-affectivity was recast from the best love into the worst vice. This may also explain why the Iranian male reformers' discourse was short on monogamy and reform of divorce laws (two central issues for women reformers) but long on what Kandiyoti calls "male longing for the 'modern' woman expressed . . . insistently through clamorous demands for 'love' " (282). As Iraj Mirza would serenade: "In other lands, wife is a companion of man / In this land of sorrows, she is his burden" (1989, 84).

In *Shams va Tughra*, one of the earliest Persian romances of the twentieth century, the male hero is a serial lover who conveniently marries all three women of his heart.<sup>15</sup> In this novel, love is in transition from homoerotic affectivity to modern heteroeroticism. Love and sexual intimacy among men and among women underwrite desire and love between men and women. When the male hero, Shams, sees Tughra embraced tightly (*tang dar aghush kishidah*) and covered with kisses by her older female companion/mentor, Firdaws, he is jealous of her.<sup>16</sup> Firdaws, in turn, uses friendship between two men as a sentiment that could become translatable into the love that she already detects between Shams and Tughra (Khusravi 1950, 1:54–55). Intimacy is similarly depicted among men. But such sentiment is already a sign of pastness. When Khurram (Shams's male companion/confidant) embraces and kisses a certain pahlavan Muhammad, they are said to speak of love and enjoyments (*'ishq va safa*) that were common in that time (*muti'arif-i an zaman bud*—the story unfolds in the thirteenth century).<sup>17</sup> When a second female love appears in the life of Shams (the Venetian Mari), a triangle of love is set up in which there does not seem to be a privileged side at all. In fact, when in the further development of the novel Tughra encourages Shams to marry Mari, it is not clear if this is intended as a favor to Shams or for the sake of consolidating her own close intimacy with Mari (Khusravi 1950, 2:2, 9–12, 34–35).

In volume 3, an intimate female friendship between Huma and Firdaws (a different Firdaws from the woman in volume 1) is indistinguishable from the heterosexual love between Huma and the man she loves and will marry. In fact, Huma tells her male beloved that had she not already been in love with him she would have fallen in love with Firdaws. Now she hoped to get her married to her brother so that she could permanently live with this paradisiacal hur.<sup>18</sup> Huma and Firdaws are said to embrace and kiss each other like two lovers and to sleep together in the same bed (Khusravi 1950, 3:84–86, 146, 176).

Female homoerotic relations in this novel are resolved through the marriage of two women to the same man. For the male author, polygyny saves the day and rehomes female romances into appropriate heterosexual beds. As significantly, in the later episodes of the third volume, an older man deeply in love with the young man Tughrul (the old man's dying wish is to be buried at a spot over which Tughrul would daily pass) is a castrated man. This ensures that his love for the young man is never tainted with lust. A male homoerotic love that dares speak its name by the beginning of the twentieth century had to be made sexually unrealizable. This impossibility



made a symbolic fleshly division between carnal and transcendental love, a distinction dear to later modernist interpreters of Sufi love literature.

It was desire, rather than procreation, that had to be rehomed into marriage and wedded to the emergence of a new family. The feminism of the early male reformers, from this perspective, marked homosociality/sexuality, in particular among men, as an obstacle to progress. Male homoerotic sociality was reconfigured through a complex process of redirecting its erotic component toward heteroerotic romance and companionate marriage and its homosociality toward bonds of patriotism, itself mediated through the female figure of beloved Iran. Iran as beloved was critical for this process of dissolution and redirection, at once consolidating the beloved as female and serving as a shared erotic mediator for a male patriotic brotherhood. Romantic love, companionate marriage, and women's education were not simply necessary for mothering modern citizens and supporting male patriots. They also were implicated in a larger process of reconfiguring male homoerotic affectivity. I am not making an accusation of bad faith. Nor do I suggest some grand conspiracy, but a different logic to many of these endeavors, so far in our mind largely affiliated with women's emancipation.

The most feminist Iranian reforming men, Akhundzadah, Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani, and later Taqizadah, were the most homophobic; it was they who defined male homoeroticism as unnatural. Once a signifying link between *farangi-i birish* (beardless European) and the abject *amradnuma* had emerged, reforming modernizers were under immense pressure to delink looking like a European from the unbearable cultural burden that adult male beardlessness carried.

In the Iranian case, Akhundzadah led the way to connecting several important themes of gender and sexuality. He formulated some of the earliest and strongest anti-Arab, anti-Islamic, antireligious writings of modernity with a focus on women's conditions as the main sign of Iran's backwardness; Islam, the Qur'an, and Muhammad as the causes of this backwardness; polygyny and hijab as the responsible institutions, with hijab as the cause of male same-sex practices; and male homosexuality as deviation from nature.

Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani elaborated these themes in his writings. Finally, with Taqizadah, the themes were translated into statements of culture and politics. Taqizadah was notorious for his tireless advocacy that Iranians must mimic Europeans in all things without exception.<sup>19</sup> He ridiculed the homosociality of Iranian men: "Some well-believing Muslims every day beat up their wives and then go out to have fun and gaze at their

own kind (!) [exclamation mark in original] and think all this is perfectly natural and normal."<sup>20</sup> He heaped scorn on what he considered useless Iranian politicians, asking what could one expect of a young man "who spends his time lying on a mattress, smoking opium, reciting poetry about filthy and unnatural love, who keeps time according to the old system [revolving around daily prayer times and lunar calendar], thinks men's outfit should be long and women's short [inside the house], shaves his head and lets his beard grow."<sup>21</sup> He considered one of the major problems of Iranian society to be the prevalence of "unnatural love among all classes of the nation."<sup>22</sup> Its eradication was part of his program for Iran (along with women's education and the introduction of sports into the school curriculum).<sup>23</sup> A key component of "achieving modernity" and "becoming civilized" had become "eradication of unnatural love" among men. Taqizadah called upon poets to abandon the old homoerotic verses. Instead, they should write poetry that would exalt women (who were to be educated) and make them the objects of men's love: "As poetry often reflects the gentle emotion of love and admiration of nature's beauty, and as poets hold the key to affection and love, it is their task to turn this gentle, natural, and lofty emotion away from despised polluted ancestral paths, and to place a purer feeling in the hearts of men of our country."<sup>24</sup>

In addition to redirecting love and affection away from despised paths to their naturalized heteronormative home, male-male friendship was invoked as the sentiment that could now be refashioned to underwrite husband-wife companionship.<sup>25</sup> This posed a difficult challenge. For one thing, the radical likeness and parity that underwrote male-male friendship would come up against a culture that had assumed an innate inferiority of women and their subordination to men.<sup>26</sup> A wife was definitely to be subject to her husband, even in modernist discourse. Then, there was a "sex problem." Unlike the religiously grounded discourse of marriage as regulated heterosexuality, the modernist has been somewhat leery of sex. This has often been thought of as the Victorianization of modern bourgeois ethics of a derivative modernity. This cultural critique, concerned with mimicry and inauthenticity, overlooks that male-male friendship (and love) was so burdened with male homoeroticism that to legitimize heterosexual love as the preferred and natural love, it had to be almost desexed.

Perhaps it was also for this reason that politics acted as the midwife of heterosexual romance onto the modernist scene. Love between man and woman would come wearing the loftier mantle of patriotic love, often in a tragic, melodramatic mode. The logic of tragic melodrama was well suited to the political agitational work of this type of romance: it entertained and

incited desire, yet by frustrating a happy ending, it inspired anger and desire for political transformation in the reader. But there was more. The love and desire between man and woman through patriotism turned the reader into a heterosexual patriot. Sumathi Ramaswamy (1997b) has written insightfully on the work of erotic desire for transformation of a citizen into a nationalist through a triangle of desire composed of a nationalist man and a nationalist woman destined to become a reproductive wife and a female nation. At least in the case of Iran, there was yet another level of productivity in this triangle: patriotic love transformed citizen-patriots into heterosexual lovers.<sup>27</sup>

#### PATRIOTIC MOMENT OF ROMANTIC MARRIAGE

The heteronormalizing work of patriotic love can be read through ‘*Arusi-i Mihrangiz*’ (Mihrangiz’s Wedding), a short novella serialized in the radical Constitutionalist paper *Iran-i naw*.<sup>28</sup> Written in 1908, ‘*Arusi-i Mihrangiz*’ is set in Tehran in the year A.H. 1305 (a.d. 1887–88), that is, during the later years of Nasir al-Din Shah’s reign (r. 1848–96).

The female protagonist is Mihrangiz,<sup>29</sup> an educated, seventeen-year-old woman from an affluent urban family. The story opens with Mihrangiz taking a late night walk in the spacious garden of her paternal house with Suwayda, her older companion/servant.<sup>30</sup> The family’s modernist inclinations are made clear: at the age of seventeen Mihrangiz is neither married nor betrothed. She is dressed like the new woman, “in a long dress according to the new fashion, with her black hair loosened habitually before going to bed.”<sup>31</sup> Suwayda is concerned about the cause of her mistress’s sad and distressed state, when Mihrangiz suddenly asks, “Are women in the countryside as abject and imprisoned as women in the cities?” The question introduces a favorite topic of modernist perception: urban women were illiterate, imprisoned, idle, and frivolous, or particularly oppressed by backward Islamic teachings, ignorant families, and unconcerned rulers; peasant and tribal women were upright, hardworking, and almost equal with their spouses.<sup>32</sup>

Suwayda responds with the nostalgic romanticization of country life characteristic of the writings of many modernist reformers: “O my dear lady! . . . There [in the countryside], pure hearts are aplenty. Most people are busy with work. You rarely find anyone unemployed. Lustful city eyes, gazing at women like two pieces of fire, are far fewer there. Women like men are engaged in work and their conditions and upbringing are much better and more orderly.”<sup>33</sup>

This conversation emboldens the servant to inquire about what is going on “in the heart” of her mistress. Mihrangiz begins to sob, saying that she is in love and that her beloved is enamored of her as well.<sup>34</sup> The expression she uses for love is not *‘ishq* but *dust’ dashtan*, a word that overlaps with *friendship*.<sup>35</sup> It is Suwayda who first uses *‘ishq*. She is happy to hear that Mihrangiz’s beloved is none other than Hushang.<sup>36</sup> As she observes, he is young, educated, handsome, and from a notable family—that is, he is her *kufu*.<sup>37</sup> Hushang is a friend and classmate of Mihrangiz’s brother (Faridun) who frequents their house and with whom she interacted when she was younger. Once she reached the age of twelve, she was ordered to veil herself and was forbidden to go to her brother’s room in the presence of a male stranger. Her separation from her beloved is thus not an act of fate but the consequence of a social institution, the veiling and segregation of women. Now Mihrangiz is unhappy because she has recently had no news from Hushang.

At the end of the first chapter Suwayda agrees to take Mihrangiz’s letter to Hushang. The novella is thus set as a love story, with the female protagonist as the site of eros. Immediately, in chapter 2, we are taken to the domain of polis, or, rather, the domains of eros and polis united in Hushang, the young man of modernity. The chapter is appropriately titled “How Two True Loves Can Coexist in One Heart.”<sup>38</sup> The title is an explicit rejection of a famous Sufi interdiction on the possibility of two loves in one heart. In this early twentieth-century melodrama, however, the two female loves, through competing yet compatible homologous desires, transcribe each other’s gender and sexuality. The human beloved’s femaleness transcribes *vatan* as a female beloved, and the devotional passion of the Sufi tale is invoked to arouse patriotic devotion for this female homeland.<sup>39</sup> In turn, *vatan*’s love consolidates the affection of the man for the woman as the same passion that had informed the Sufi domain of male homoerotics, but it is now invoked heteroerotically for modern woman. The two passions also set in motion the dynamics between the two plot lines of the story: the Constitutionalist politics of Hushang and Faridun, and the travail of modern love and marriage between Hushang and Mihrangiz.

We meet Hushang early in the morning in his room, decorated with two glass-enclosed bookshelves, in which books with beautiful gilded covers are neatly ordered in alphabetical order.<sup>40</sup> Mostly French books, by “great figures of the world,” they include *The Social Contract*, *The Spirit of the Laws*, *Les Misérables*, *The Floriand Dictionary*, *Notre Dame de Paris*, *Fundamental Laws*, *International Law*, *History of the Eastern People*, *History of Greece*, *Paul et Virginie*, *Gulliver’s Travels*, *Télémaque*,

*Manon Lescault*, and *King Lear*.<sup>41</sup> Hushang has been busy all night, writing and staring at a big map of Iran hung on one wall, sighing occasionally while looking at the present borders of the land and thinking about the borders of the ancient nation. Faridun (Mihrangiz's brother) enters and scolds Hushang for still being in his room. Not only Hushang but all Iranians, Faridun lectures him, are so preoccupied with their own affairs that they pay no attention to their ruined vatan. While the two friends work on an essay they have written "to awaken the Iranian people," preparing it for underground print and distribution, Hushang's servant (Hurmuz) informs Hushang of Suwayda's arrival.<sup>42</sup>

Suwayda delivers Mihrangiz's letter and, as in classical stories, instructs him on when to come to visit Mihrangiz and what procedure to follow in order to be inconspicuous and safe. The entanglement of Hushang's political work (with his friend and political comrade Faridun) with his romantic preoccupation with Mihrangiz prepares the reader for difficulties to come. But these are not two parallel plot lines, connected simply through the figure of Hushang. On the contrary, the novella is structured through a movement back and forth between the two themes, and each move energizes the next. It is not a political novella and a love story; instead, to paraphrase Doris Sommer, eros and polis are constructed through each other.<sup>43</sup> The novella sets "desire into a spiral or zigzagging motion inside a double structure that keeps projecting the narrative into the future as eroticism and patriotism pull each other along. Eros and Polis are the effects of each other's performance" (Sommer 1991, 47).

In this performance, however, both eros and polis are transformed. Passionate love is invoked to craft a devotional patriotic citizen, and love of homeland transforms homosexual into heterosexual love. Mihrangiz's home is where love is discussed, between her and her nanny and later between her and Hushang; it is where the discussion of marriage and of comparative merits of European-Iranian gender relations takes place. The space of the modern woman is thus the domain of heteroerotic imagination. Hushang's home, the patriotic man, is contiguous with the homeland; on the wall hangs a cherished map of Iran; patriotic discussions are held between citizen brothers/friends, political tracts are written and produced; barbaric Asiatic despotism is criticized; and ideals of egalitarian democratic citizenship are pronounced. The masculinity of modern citizenship is transcribed through this spatial and thematic separation. This gendered location not only emphatically marks the heterosexuality of love by making the female the site of a man's love but also centers the modernity and patriotism of the female citizen on her desire to marry for love a

modern patriotic male citizen. At the end he dies for his patriotic goals, and she for him.<sup>44</sup>

At Hushang's house, the two young men complete writing an agitational tract (*shabnamah*)<sup>45</sup> against the autocratic Qajar government in order to awaken the "dead nation of Iran" and establish a constitutional regime. Chapter 3 provides us with the text of this tract—a long discourse on liberty as natural right of man, on law and popular representation, ending with a call for "liberty, fraternity, and equality" and constitutional government. In the subsequent development of the story, the two friends produce the illegal tract and with the help of Hurmuz distribute it in the city.

In the next chapter we move back—and forward—to the space of eros. The lovers meet in Mihrangiz's house, where Hushang asks for her hand in marriage. While these chapters build up the two heteroerotic desires—romantic and patriotic—in spiral motion, chapter 5 begins the work of frustrating these desires by setting up the obstacles to their fulfillment. On his return home—the political space—Hushang finds out that his servant, Hurmuz, while distributing the tract, has been arrested, imprisoned, tortured, and branded a Babi. This episode, which criticizes the forces of the state and its clerical supporters, takes us from the domain of individual erotic and patriotic love to the domain of the brotherhood of Iranians. Appropriately, the trope of vatan as mother replaces that of vatan as beloved. The allied forces of the corrupt state and those clerical leaders who have sold their religion for worldly gains, we are told, keep the cries of the mothervatan from the ears of her children. They are set to tear apart the body of this mother, who grieves over the death of her courageous sons who ruled Iran: Cyrus, Dariush, Kambiz, Anushirvan, and Nadir Shah Afshar.<sup>46</sup> Hushang and Faridun covertly and unsuccessfully try to free Hurmuz. In this state of anxiety and tension over Hurmuz's fate, we once again move back (and forward) to the domain of love, to Mihrangiz's house.

Mihrangiz and Hushang's wedding night becomes the occasion for the author to criticize Iranian women's "beliefs and practices" and to compare the merits and flaws of gender relations in Europe and Iran. Describing the separate feasts of men and women, he refers to the women's hall as the place "whose doors were tightly closed, curtains drawn, and what was within was totally unknown [*majhul*] to those present."<sup>47</sup> The omniscient author crosses this gender barrier and takes the reader to the women's hall, describing what women are doing there according to "womanly beliefs of our country."<sup>48</sup>

The conversation in the men's quarter centers on criticism of European sexual morality and its hypocrisy. European men are forbidden to have

more than one wife, but they often keep several mistresses, we read. These terrible relations have become so prevalent in these barbaric yet civilized-looking nations that men no longer feel obligated to marry, and the reluctance to marry is now spreading to women as well.<sup>49</sup> At this point the enlightened cleric, who is present to perform the marriage ceremony, pronounces what has come to mark the modern Islamic argument for marriage: to overcome sexual anarchy, Europeans need to learn from the enlightened laws of Islam, which allow up to four wives but only on the condition of equity between them. This condition, he explains, is so difficult to fulfill that one can consider it an impossibility.<sup>50</sup>

With the marriage ceremony over, the story moves to the political domain, inside the prison where Hurmuz is being tortured by methods that combine "European technique and Asiatic barbarism."<sup>51</sup> Unsuccessful at extracting from Hurmuz a confession about a Babi conspiracy, the torturers decide to search for Hushang. Predictably, by now, their search brings us back to Mihrangiz's house, where polis contaminates eros. Concerned about the fate of his servant, Hushang is distracted from the full enjoyment of his moment of union with Mihrangiz.

The erotic and political tensions of the novel now break into tragic relief: As the couple are about to enter their nuptial chamber, the police break into Mihrangiz's house and drag Hushang away. The reader is thus deprived of the ultimate voyeuristic pleasure of a consummated romantic union. The novel at once constructs the reader's erotic voyeuristic desire as heterosexual and puts this desire to the work of persuading him (her?) toward a different desire: that of a political end. For the fulfillment of love, government must be changed. The ideal happy ending of the modern romance, the marriage between Hushang and Mihrangiz, is frustrated by the same forces that frustrate the political passions of the two male protagonists: the despotic Qajar government.

In the final episode, Hushang is executed in a public square. Mihrangiz, embracing his dead body, dies of grief. The union denied in life now unfolds in death. People who had come to witness the execution begin to weep. The couple's death arouses the people within the text, as it is meant to do outside the text. Throughout the novel it was the men and their actions that constituted the political domain; they conceived, produced, and distributed the seditious text that was to awaken the dead nation of Iran. Paradoxically, what arouses the people at the end is the work of eros, the action and speech of a woman stricken by grief and love. It is the deadly embrace of Mihrangiz and her speech, directed in part to the spectators, in part to her dead beloved, that make them weep. The reader, like

the spectators at the execution, feels the power of a despotic state through the tragic death of the loving couple. It is the force of Mihrangiz's final speech about her love for her husband and the pain of separation from her beloved that successfully incites within and outside the text. The identification of eros with the female figure of Mihrangiz (one who arouses love) works to direct a male reader's erotic sensibilities toward a female figure. It is not hard to suspect that Mihrangiz also provided a figure of identification for female readers of the Constitutionalist press, as reconfiguration of marriage was becoming an important element of their concerns.

The tragic ending of *Mihrangiz's Wedding* thus heightens the reader's desire for a democratized state under which the beloved Iran could thrive and Mihrangiz and Hushang's wedding could be consummated. The reader comes to see the autocratic state as the obstacle that "threatens both levels of happiness." The frustration of the reader's desire to "see" the consummation produces the desire to "see" the obstacle removed, to democratize the state—a democratization that not only would make the wedding possible but also would allow the male reader and the female vatan to consummate their love and consolidate the nation.<sup>52</sup>

Where does all this put the female reader? The differential deaths of Hushang and Mihrangiz display the gender of modernity. Hushang, in life and death, was a participant in two love stories; Mihrangiz partook of only one. That Hushang dies for vatan whereas she dies for him inscribes him as a patriotic citizen, her as a devoted wife. When Hushang delivered his oration about the possibility of two loves in one heart, the reader might wonder which one he would choose, were he forced to do so. If he were, like his Sufi brothers, tested on this, would he make the "right" choice, the patriotic choice, of vatan over Mihrangiz? Hushang is spared the decision, but not the tragic ending. Yet the patriotic reader can feel "rewarded" by this tragedy. Hushang does not sacrifice his political cause in order to save his skin and live happily with his beloved wife.

But what of the female reader? She has the fulfillment neither of a patriot nor of a wife. Her counterpart in the text dies unfulfilled. The double deaths of Hushang and Mihrangiz foretell a nationalist story and a feminist one simultaneously. Generations of idealist patriotic men would die for vatan under successive despotic governments—a bitter process that continues to this day. Mihrangiz's death speaks to the unenviable fate of modern Iranian womanhood, neither a full citizen, nor even the wife of a citizen, she dies before her marriage is consummated. Unlike the Latin American populist romances that Sommer analyzes, the young men in these romances do not get a chance to be triumphant patriotic rulers and



successful lovers/husbands. The failure of the populist patriotic man is doubled in the failure of romantic marriage ushered in as a tragedy.

In *Mihrangiz's Wedding* the love for vatan is primary for citizen Hushang. Erotic love takes second place to patriotic passion. He dies for one, not for the other. But what if we turned erotic love into the primary desire moving the plot? What if the main character is a female in love? The inversion, it turns out, transforms a tragedy into pathos.

#### A WOMAN'S ROMANCE: BORN IN DISILLUSIONMENT

Written in 1918, a decade after *Mihrangiz's Wedding*, *Dastan-i riqqat'angiz* (A Pitiful Tale) is set in A.H. 1315 (1897–98), that is, in the early years of Muzaffar al-Din Shah's reign (1896–1907).<sup>53</sup> *A Pitiful Tale* occupies the same politico-cultural space as *Mihrangiz's Wedding*, but, written by a woman, in many ways it is distinctly gendered as if in opposition to it. The protagonists in *Mihrangiz's Wedding* are two male friends and a female beloved. In *A Pitiful Tale* we meet two female friends and a male object of love. The story unfolds in a small shrine in a rural hamlet, not a big city. Both novellas are plotted around a tragic love: *Mihrangiz's Wedding* around an unconsummated marriage, *A Pitiful Tale* around an unfulfilled love and a tragic marriage, also unconsummated. More important, the force of each tragedy is mobilized to produce different effects.

Whereas the two interwoven and interdependent themes in *Mihrangiz's Wedding* were romantic passion and patriotic love, here the two themes are romance and women's education. Like *Mihrangiz's Wedding*, *A Pitiful Tale* moves between its two themes, each drawing force from the other as the story unfolds. The two female desires for companionate marriage and for modern education face common obstacles in their drive for fulfillment. The male character, Hushang, has a remarkably similar profile to his namesake in *Mihrangiz's Wedding*: he is a modern(ist) educated son of a notable urban family. When we first meet him, he is distressed by the prospect of an arranged marriage. Ventriloquizing the modernist female author, Hushang considers divorce and polygyny shameful. He wants to wed someone of his own liking so that he may hope for a lifelong marriage. Deep in thought, he overhears a conversation between two young girls.

Tal'at, a thirteen-year-old urban girl who is visiting the countryside, is revealing her sadness to Nusrat, a sixteen-year-old rural girl. Tal'at has completed the fourth grade at a modern school. She longs to go to a high school so that she "would not remain deaf and blind like [her] mother, aunt, and older sister, and could live according to reason and science" (Sanati and

Najmabadi 1999, 477), but her mother and aunt have agreed to marry her off. Tal'at now gives a long description of the workings of the modern school, and her account makes Nusrat (and the presumed female reader of *Zaban-i zanan*) imagine the school as paradise. She, too, wants to go there to escape being "at the mercy of an ignorant mother and a stupid man" (479). At sixteen, she has already been married for seven miserable years. Now Nusrat tells of her life to strengthen Tal'at's resolve to reject the marriage proposal and continue her education.

After the death of Nusrat's father seven years earlier, Nusrat's mother decided to marry the girl off to a fifty-five-year-old hajji, recently widowed. The mother takes Nusrat to town to get a marriage authorization from a town *mulla* for her underage girl. In town Nusrat meets her aunt's employers, an urban, educated family. One of the sons, Hushang, takes a liking to Nusrat and she to him. Hushang asks Nusrat's mother to leave her with the family so that he can educate her. The mother, having bribed a mulla, takes Nusrat back to the village and marries her off. The early modernists had romanticized the countryside as a site of purer Iranianness (including more equitable gender relations). For a woman writer like Dolatabadi, herself from a notable urban family, the town was where education took place. The town held the promise of citizenship for women. The village and the lower classes, particularly as personified by ignorant females of the older generation (mothers and aunts), were where illiteracy and ignorance held sway. The town, to be sure, also corrupted and abused uneducated women. This, in fact, was the prevalent theme in a later generation of fiction with a fallen rural migrant woman as antihero. But the town was also where women's awakening to a new vision took place. This was modern education's promise.

When Nusrat returns, she refuses to give her consenting "yes" at the marriage ceremony, and another girl says the fateful word in her stead. Nusrat falls ill and refuses to consummate the marriage. Two months after the wedding, she overhears her aunt tell her mother that Hushang had intended to educate her and then marry her. The modern educated man literally needed to craft his own mate through education. He had to be creator of his own modern *kufu*. Hearing this conversation, Nusrat at once falls in love with Hushang. She (and presumably the female reader) longs for education. Perhaps more accurately, then, Nusrat falls in love with Hushang because she loves education. The two desires depend on each other for their fulfillment, face common obstacles, and remain tragically frustrated. As Nusrat observes, "Alas, the best and sweetest days of my dear life that should have been spent in joy and happiness, education and learning, have been wasted

away because of the ignorance of my mother, the irreligiosity of today's mullas, and the lawlessness of the country" (488).

Six years later, Nusrat's husband finally gives up on winning her heart and takes another wife. But he refuses to divorce her when she begs for it "for the love of freedom" (488). Now Nusrat must suffer at the hands of the new wife and that woman's two daughters from a previous marriage.

Hushang (who had been overhearing the two girls' conversation) now recognizes Nusrat and is pleased that her marriage was in fact legally void, since she had never given her consent. He enters the room where the two girls were conversing and finds Nusrat a beautiful but sad girl. He consoles her, saying, "God willing, a day will come when ignorant people disappear and people who support establishment of schools will be in charge; they shall set the laws, establish freedom, and remove these ugly barbaric customs so that dear sweet girls like you and young women of our homeland would not be destined to such miseries. . . . I very much like to help people in need and save unfortunate women and girls like you, but alas it is too soon for our country as yet for us young people to intervene in such affairs" (491). At this point Hushang's servant calls him to join his father. Nusrat recognizes him; upon his departure she faints and subsequently becomes very ill. Some three years later, Hushang, by then a successful civil servant and political reformer, sets off for a day in the countryside. There, he is mistaken for a physician and taken to the bedside of a dying girl. He arrives too late, though Nusrat does get a last look at him before she dies.<sup>54</sup>

Unlike *Mihrangiz's Wedding*, however, only the female protagonist dies. In a final episode Hushang, at Nusrat's funeral, speculates about who was responsible for her death: the mother, the old hajji, and the country's lawlessness. He hears Nusrat's voice, reminding him that the mulla who issued the permit for her marriage was also responsible.

Both novellas employ one desire to build up the other and put the frustration of these desires to political ends. But there are important levels of gender asymmetry. To begin with, the asymmetry in closures (in one both man and woman die, in the other only the woman dies) emphasizes something already stated in a different way by *Mihrangiz's Wedding*. Even though the modern man can fit two loves in his one heart, the primacy of love for vatan is clear. In *Mihrangiz's Wedding*, Hushang dies for the sake of polis, whereas Mihrangiz dies for eros. In *A Pitiful Tale*, Nusrat dies for eros (standing at once for her desire for an educated modern womanhood), whereas Hushang goes back to town to work as a reforming civil servant for the polis.

Second, Hushang of *A Pitiful Tale* fails to be a companionate partner in the woman's quest for modernity. He is the patronizing modern male who always defers women's cause, always arrives too late for women, explaining this time lag as too early, as the not-yet time for women. His first appearance in Nusrat's life is already too late: her ignorant mother is set to marry her off and refuses Hushang's patronizing educational scheme. But for Hushang that encounter was too early; Nusrat was not yet the kind of woman he envisaged as his wife. In the second encounter, he again arrives too late, for Nusrat had been married some seven years. Again for him, the time had not yet arrived; it was still not time for young men like him to intervene in such matters. He arrives one more time, too late to snatch a lovesick Nusrat from death.

Though neither Nusrat nor Hushang mentions Hushang's failure to act, through these time disjunctures, as one of the obstacles that blocked the possibility of fulfillment of Nusrat's desire for education or their marriage, the author of the text does point a damning finger at Hushang. When he rides away in his father's carriage after the second encounter, Hushang is initially upset at not having taken advantage of the renewed opportunity and asked for Nusrat's address. He is impressed by her eloquence in recounting her life story and realizes he deeply loves her. Yet, we are told, "His distress did not last more than a few days. Soon he forgot her. . . . It is in the nature of men that they are not deep and loyal when it comes to women. One often sees men who have had very dear and beautiful wives and have been very upset at their loss, and yet within a few months have totally forgotten them and filled their place with others and no longer recall the first" (Sanati and Najmabadi 1999, 492). In contrast, Dolatabadi continues, Nusrat's illness worsened as her love for Hushang became more intensified after this visit and she moved closer and closer to her death. In other words, Nusrat dies, in part, because men are fickle by nature—at least when it comes to real women rather than allegorical females.

The different closure of the two novellas reflects the nascent feminism of *A Pitiful Tale's* author. Dolatabadi was a hybrid. She was a child of a prominent Constitutionalist family and of the politics of the Constitutional era, sharing all the modernist desires for and assumptions about the rule of law, the benefits of modern education, and romantic marriage. Yet she also represents a particular feminist attitude embedded in a culture that insisted on separate worlds of men and women, that distanced women from men and attempted to protect women against men's unreliability and fickleness. It encouraged women to stay connected with their maternal families and

other women and taught women not to trust men, who were infantile and temperamental, if not outright liars.

This was not yet the feminism of equal rights—though Dolatabadi later became one of the earliest and most outspoken equal rights feminists in Iran. Rather, it was a feminism of female solidarity with an antimale tinge, the language we find in Bibi Khanum Astarabadi's 1894 *Vices of Men* and in the poetry of 'Alamtaj Qa'im'maqami (Zhalah) (1883–1946) and of Huma Mahmudi.<sup>55</sup> But Dolatabadi is wary of the conservative tendencies of a female homosociality that buttresses oppressive patriarchy: it is Nusrat's mother, after all, who is to blame for her daughter's misfortunes, and it is Tal'at's mother and aunt who may yet frustrate the educational ambitions of the young woman. But women, in Dolatabadi's tale of caution, cannot depend on men for a way out of these constraints. She proposes a different type of female solidarity based not on kinship but on the modern desire to defer marriage and pursue education. Tal'at's friendship promises solidarity built between authors and readers of *Zaban-i zanan*, a new feminine/feminist sociality that Dolatabadi would work for all her life.

The novella's resolution speaks of the distrust and skepticism that marked women's reception of romantic marriage in Iran from the outset. At its most pessimistic moment, one can read a different lesson in Nusrat's death: desire for a romantic marriage could be deadly for woman.<sup>56</sup>

#### WOMEN'S MARRIAGE BARGAIN

When marriage was regarded as a sexual contract for procreation, the husband had a right to sex with his wife in exchange for providing her with reasonable upkeep and satisfying her sexually. The contractual agreement was particularly important in temporary marriage because of its low social recognition, whereas the notion of *kufu* would presumably guarantee "proper upkeep" for permanent marriage. If the man did not fulfill these marital obligations—or if he proved infertile—the wife had the right to ask for redress or a divorce.<sup>57</sup>

Anything that hindered a man's right to his wife's sexual favors voided the marriage. Thus wives were required to live with their husbands and to be sexually obedient. Further, a woman's infertility was one of the most socially acceptable grounds for male-initiated divorces or for taking a second wife.

Once marriage became a romantic contract, the exchange was presumably mutually even and there was no imbalance in the arrangement. The "object of exchange" was now love, companionship, and mutual attendance to each other's desires and needs. This created several potential problems

from a woman's point of view: the male prerogative of polygyny and divorce clearly broke the evenhandedness of the contract; obedience became not only irrelevant but humiliating to a companionate wife; the notion of proper upkeep and attending to women's sexual needs became vulgar materialism, beneath the dignity of a modern woman; *kufu* became irrelevant or, worse, an impediment to class-crossing romance—a favorite trope for national consolidation.

Moreover, marriage as a sexual contract for procreation neither demanded that homosocial bonds among women be abandoned nor asked for an affective investment in the marriage. In fact, after marriage women continued to spend much time with other women, in particular within the world of their mothers. At times they spent days and weeks in the maternal home. Indeed, marriage to a husband who lived "far away" from the wife's mother was considered undesirable. When a husband moved to a location that cut off the wife from her maternal family, it was socially acceptable for the wife to refuse to go along with him, despite the residency rule.<sup>58</sup>

Marriage as a romantic contract, on the other hand, demanded that women place love and loyalty to husband above their homosocial bonds, with mother, sister, female kin and neighbors, and even female servants. It required transferring one's affective bonds from the world of mother to the beloved husband. To put all one's affective eggs in one man's basket was extremely risky, for men advocated the romanticization of marriage without relinquishing the prerogatives of a procreative sexual contract. They wished to keep (and in most Islamic countries continue to do so) their prerogative to be polygynous and to divorce at will. They would continue to prioritize their male-male friendships, which now found an additional layer of affective meaning through the reinscription of homoerotic love as patriotic love. Sons of homeland could now claim new affective bonds as patriotic brother-citizens. This was a prerogative denied to women, whose citizenship would come later through connections with male citizens. Sisterly solidarity of a national type was not yet on many modernist agendas.

Women resisted this "plot" (in its double sense). They were reluctant to buy into marriage as a romantic contract and remained skeptical about its promises. The project of women's emancipation involved a "heterosocial promise" by modernist men. Modernist men hailed woman to extricate herself from the world of women, from female bonds, and to join the modern man in his effort to give birth to a new nation. Men themselves were to be civilized—modernized—by socializing with women. Heterosocializing practices would regulate and discipline the refashioning of modernist masculinities.<sup>59</sup>

Women haggled over the terms of men's heterosocial promise, demanding that men desexualize *their* homosociality: if you want a loving companionate wife, stop fooling around with young men and boys. Bibi Khanum Astarabadi's *Vices of Men* (1894) considered older man–younger man sexual liaisons (*amradbazi*) both a major male vice and more significantly, a vice that disrupted the companionate marital relationship (Bibi Khanum Astarabadi 1992, 49, 61–63, 80–81). Women expected reciprocity: men who love them and who not only stay away from amrads but also spend time at home rather than always being out with their male friends; men who do not divorce their wives for no reason, and so forth. In this text, we see one of the earliest articulations of what a decade later became the common demand of many women writers and associations concerning the reform of marriage and divorce laws. It is also at this moment that we see the intimate linking of women's reform demands with a deep disavowal of male same-sex practices. In Bibi Khanum's text, in fact, this sentiment against husbands who practice *amradbazi* is expressed through homophobic humor, a tale of an *amradbaz* husband with a beautiful wife who suffers accidental castration while pursuing an *amrad*.<sup>60</sup> The companionate marriage could not tolerate the rivalry of men's homosocial street and sex life and the lack of emotional reciprocity that were acceptable within a procreative marriage.<sup>61</sup>

This was not a symmetrical process. All female homosociality was deemed unmodern, unscientific, ignorant, and superstitious. Female homosexuality was absent from this discourse. Women's critique of male homosociality was centered exclusively on homosexuality. Taj al-Saltanah wrote bitterly about her husband's attraction to young boys (as well as his womanizing). After describing one particularly intense relationship, she concluded,

It lay within my power [as the daughter of the king] to expel the boy from my house, but it was not in my power to purge him from my husband's heart. Over the sixteen-month period of my stay in Tabriz, vast sums of money were spent on this youth every month. My husband loved him ardently, intensely. Had I cherished any real love in my heart for my husband, I would most assuredly have suffered terribly; but I only harbored conjugal respect and affection for him, so I was not particularly concerned with what he did, and left him alone.<sup>62</sup>

Popular songs, through the voice of women stuck in marriages with *amradbaz* husbands, circulated in the press.<sup>63</sup>

From a modernist woman's perspective, if women were to commit themselves to the new deal, if companionate romantic marriage was to replace marriage as a sexual procreative contract, men had to give up a variety of

culturally sanctioned sexual practices—such as sex with other (younger) men, temporary marriage, illicit sex with prostitutes and house servants. Male nonsexual sociality, on the other hand, was perceived as coterminous with public life and patriotic virtue, a model of citizen bonding, not to be disavowed but opened up to the female presence by accepting women as capable of similar asexual bonding with men as citizens. When women began to develop their own modernist discourse about marriage, they bargained with demands on men: make the heterosexual bond worth investing in; make it more secure; stop having sexual liaisons with other men; limit polygyny; limit man's right to divorce. These arguments became women's reform-of-marriage consensus in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Early women's writings on marriage centered on opposition to polygyny and easy divorce by men. So long as a man could have more than one wife, marriage remained a sexual contract in which woman had an unequal legal claim, "one out of every four nights." The centrality of antipolygyny to modern women points to the demand for a shift in marriage from a sexual to a romantic contract, in which woman demanded of man equal emotional and erotic investment. For the same reason, the agitation around divorce in this period was not about a woman's right to divorce but about curtailing the man's right to divorce: women asked for divorce to be difficult for men, not for their own right to divorce.<sup>64</sup>

These demands were sometimes combined with discrediting ignorant mothers and servants, criticizing the world of women as the domain of superstition. These criticisms worked to disaffiliate women from complete allegiance to the world of women and encouraged young girls to consolidate their affective ties with husbands.

Thus it is no accident that the tragic death in Dolatabadi's *A Pitiful Tale* is a consequence not only of "social causes"—ignorant mothers, men of religion without conscience, and lawlessness of the country—but also of an old man's selfishness and a young man's fickle nature. The story is a moral critique of masculinity as well as a political treatise for women's education and legal reform. Nusrat's tragedy is at once the tragedy of the old marriage and the unreliability of new romantic aspirations. Nusrat's death not only puts men of state and religion but also men *as men* on trial: it is manhood that is greedy, selfish, and fickle.

Yet Dolatabadi *is* a modernist. She is not arguing against romantic marriage. She is, in fact, for it, as her life practices and her writings demonstrate.<sup>65</sup> For her, like many other modernist women of this period, romantic marriage could be a worthwhile proposition only if men were willing to give up their prerogatives of polygyny and easy divorce.



The tragic endings of *Mihrangiz's Wedding* and *A Pitiful Tale* foretell of future happy endings. In *Mihrangiz's Wedding*, the removal of autocracy could make it possible to rewrite the story with a doubly happy ending. In a democratic state Hushang could serve his beloved vatan and live happily ever after with his beloved Mihrangiz. The couple would be the ideal reproducing citizens, giving birth to a new generation of Iranian citizens and populating the land with learned daughters (more educated future wives and mothers) and learned sons (model citizens). Similarly, though somewhat more cautiously for the reasons I pointed out earlier, the tragic ending of *A Pitiful Tale* could be rewritten as modernist bliss, once the social and individual obstacles were removed; that is, when women are educated, the country has acquired a just legal system, and men are willing to reform themselves.

The trajectory of Hushang from the devotional patriot and ideal modern husband in the first novella to the reformist but calculatingly petty civil servant in the second is in a sense completed by the emergence of a genre of early twentieth-century moral novels. In these works, heartless men exploit the longings of naive young women for romance to illicit sexual ends. In fact, one of the earliest of this genre was written by Yahyá Mirza Iskandari, author of *Mihrangiz's Wedding*, in 1909. *Ishq-i duruqi* (Deceitful Love), a tragedy in four acts, as the author called it, was serialized posthumously in 1923 in *Majjalat-i jam'iyat-i nisvan-i vatankhva-h-i Iran* (Journal of the Association of Patriotic Women). In his preface Iskandari wrote that his sole purpose in writing this play was "to show the oppression exercised by lustful men upon the women of this country who are teachers of the children of vatan and the very foundation of civilization."<sup>66</sup> In the same journal Sasan Kia Arash's short story, "The Lamentation of a Misfortunate Girl," told of a young, beautiful girl, married to a lustful young man who leaves her after six months of marriage. She questions whether life is worth living now that she had lost her virginity, her only gift of nature. The story ends with her suicide.<sup>67</sup>

Perhaps the most famous example of this early genre was a versified play by Mirzadah 'Ishqi that worked on two levels, as both political allegory and romance. The play was composed in 1924 and published in the journal *Shafaq-i surkh* in response to an invitation by Dabir A'zam Faraj'allah Bahrami, then acting prime minister. Dabir A'zam asked thinkers and intellectuals to write essays about their ideal future for Iran. 'Ishqi believed that the invitation was meant to inspire articles in favor of a centrally strong government with the minister of war, Riza Khan Sardar Sipah (soon to become Riza Shah Pahlavi), at its helm ('Ishqi 1971, 172). He

offered his play in three acts as an oppositional statement. In *'Idi'al* (Ideal), young Maryam, an innocent rural woman, was born on the day that the Constitutional decree was issued. She falls in love with a young man who promises to marry her. He abandons her when she becomes pregnant, and she commits suicide. For *'Ishqi*, her death, like the death of the Constitutional Revolution, is caused by a mischievous young, urban *fukuli* man, representing opportunistic political youngsters who exploited the new ideals of a constitutional government and betrayed "her."<sup>68</sup> Now, not only was the love woven with patriotic desire or with desire for a modern education cast in a tragic mode but love in heterosexual union was also cast as tragic because of heartless men interested only in sexual exploitation of young women.<sup>69</sup> Romantic love both had to struggle against the wisdom of arranged marriage and, even more perilously, faced the enormous obstacle of this genre of moral tales centered around a "despoiling" plot. For young women, the desire for romantic marriage and resistance against arranged marriage were controlled by fear of a misfortunate future. The disciplinary effects of these tales on a generation of women about to participate in the emerging heterosocializing culture of modern urbanity cannot be overestimated. In the pages of women's journals, these tragic tales took their place alongside explicit advice against immoral public behavior.

In search of a happy ending, the allegorical love stories of the later decades took a different direction. Instead of romantic marriage enabled by replacing autocracy with modern citizenship, in these stories romantic love performed political labor for national regeneration, the birth of a modern Iran, or the birth of strong rules inspired by visions of pre-Islamic Iran. In *'Ishq va saltanat* (Love and Kingship), a series of heterosexual romances end happily in everlasting marriages, while the story as a whole produces Cyrus as the great king who unified different populations on the land of Iran.<sup>70</sup> In *Juft-i pak* (The Pure Couple), the reader is immediately told that the story is set to give birth to the national father figure, the poet Firdawsi, as the fruit of a virtuous couple's love and marriage.<sup>71</sup> As a novel of the late 1920s, it already assumes a nationalist patriotic reader who shares the author's vision that Firdawsi revived the Iranian nation out of the two-hundred-year slumber under Arab/Muslim domination through his epic *Shahnamah*. Firdawsi as a figure of paternity of modern Iranian nationhood seeks his own parenthood in this novel. The presumed patriotic desire of the reader for a heroic poet is taken to effect a desire for the union of the two lovers in the text. In other words, unlike in the two novellas discussed earlier, there is an inversion of the work of desire. It is not the desire for overcoming obstacles on the path of eros that produces the patriotic desire

in the reader but the reverse: the patriotic nationalist desire in the reader to see Firdawsi, the national epic poet, procreated in the text produces the desire in him or her to see eros fulfilled. The reader wants the couple to be able to overcome all obstacles and copulate lawfully, as a pure couple, so that Firdawsi is conceived purely, Persian poetry and language is revived duly, pre-Islamic Iranian history is narrated, and Iranianism reconstituted. The happy ending of this novel is thus not so much a happy ending for eros as it is one for polis, for a new Iran now under Riza Shah Pahlavi.

Production of the new man in women's writings would be deferred, eventually breaking into mass-circulation novels of the 1980s and 1990s, most successful as tales of deep disillusionment with romantic love. Ironically, the full force of romantic marriage as tragedy breaks out when love is no longer taken to the task of performing allegorical patriotic and social reformist labors. It turns out that romantic marriage is most tragic as marriage. In these later novels, romantic marriage as such has become an almost unrecuperable tragedy, as told in the most popular novel of this generation, *Bamdad-i khumar* (Hajj Sayyidjavadi 1995). The story of this twentieth-century transformation remains to be told.<sup>72</sup>

## 7 Crafting an Educated Wife and Mother

Hushang's preoccupation with tailoring his own companionate mate for a lifelong monogamous marriage in *A Pitiful Tale* was in a sense the culmination of a century-long challenge first posed in the early nineteenth century when Iranian men learned about the European notion of marriage. Iranian men in Europe, keen observers of European marital relations, were also being observed by Europeans, women among them, who would bombard them with questions about "their women back home": Why didn't they bring them to Europe with them? Why did they cover them and keep them at home? Why did they take more than one wife?<sup>1</sup> Moreover, as we saw in chapter 2, Europeans linked Iranian homoerotic affectivity and same-sex practices to norms of gender segregation and to men's ill treatment of their wives.

Many Iranian travelers visited European (and later Japanese) schools and often reported, with admiration and astonishment, on educational institutions, including, or rather especially, schools for girls.<sup>2</sup> Some believed that an uneducated European girl was unlikely to make a good marriage ('Alavi Shirazi 1984, 156–57). In Iran, however, Iranians feared too much education made an Iranian woman manly and unmarriageable. Take the famous case of Bibi Khanum, daughter of Mirza Muhsin Khan Mushir al-Dawlah (d. 1899). It was said that "during her father's ambassadorship in Istanbul, she . . . learned French and Istanbul Turkish like a top expert; she was also totally versed in the Persian language and knew the arts and crafts of Istanbul ladies. . . . She had pulled herself out of the world of women and reached the level of learned men. She was a learned person and did not bother looking after her husband and trying to please him. She paid little attention to her husband and was not attached to him. Because of these tendencies, the relationship between her and her husband went cold. They didn't get along."<sup>3</sup>

By the turn of the century, however, that attitude toward educated women was stood on its head. Indeed, the fear that ignorance limited a woman's marriage possibilities was mobilized to support women's education: "In civilized countries," an editorial entitled "Ta'lim" (Education) in *Nawruz* (edited by Nazim al-Islam Kirmani) argued, "everyone is required by law to educate his children, teach them reading and writing, and make them literate. If a child remains illiterate his father and mother are responsible. An illiterate person is deprived of most privileges of civilization. No one will give him their daughter as wife. If she is a girl, no one will take her as wife, no one will contract marriage with her."<sup>4</sup>

Many Iranian travelers in Europe, having visited the manufacturing establishments as well as schools, soon came to refer to schools as human manufactories (*karkhanah-i adam'sazi*)—a term commonly associated with the reformer Mirza Malkum Khan.<sup>5</sup> For Pirzadah, traveling in Europe from 1886 to 1889, new sciences as the essence of European civilization were literally staged as a battle between *'ilm* (learning/science) and *jahl* (ignorance) in a Viennese opera. He described the opera at great length; *'ilm* was personified as a "very beautiful young girl, dressed in . . . pale pink silk, with colorful jewels all over her head, bosom, and arms, with studded necklaces on her chest, and her neck and bosom down to her breasts uncovered, with a clear shiny face, made up with perfection and beauty." *Jahl*, not surprisingly, was personified as "a very ugly, bad-natured, and black-colored man" (Pirzadah 1981, 2:57). "Striving for science," *tahsil-i 'ilm*, was for Pirzadah a quest for a "very beautiful girl," a heterosexual venture. To make science even more desirable, *'ilm* brought to the stage sixty "very beautiful girls" and some sixty "beautiful young males," who performed various delightful dances (59–61). To make sure that his Persian readers would not misunderstand the significance of all this dancing and music, Pirzadah stressed, "Their [the Europeans'] purpose in staging these plays is not all games, pleasure, and debauchery [*bazi va lahv va la'ab*]; the purpose is to make people understand that science is superior to ignorance and that people must strive to become learned in these sciences; that wherever there is less science there is more ruin and people are poorer and more miserable. European countries have become prosperous and their people are all wealthy now; all this is because of propagation of science. Therefore one must strive for science and not listen to ignorance" (61).

The initial defensive Iranian response to European queries—that our women are not educated companions—soon acquired a life of its own. As a key marker of difference between Iran and Europe, women's lack of modern education became a major obstacle to progress of the nation.

Akhundzadah repeatedly pointed to “women’s total deprivation from literacy” as a central problem of Islamic nations and argued that his proposed reform of the alphabet would immediately remove this problem, “would make it possible for most women to become literate and then become teachers to their own kind. In most European schools for girls teachers are all women.”<sup>6</sup> An *Akhtar* commentary on a statistical report issued by the Ministry of Commerce and Agriculture in France noted, “The difference between women of the West and women of the East is noteworthy. In European countries women are engaged in any work and profession, even in sciences and literature; they are little different from men. To the contrary, in the East, women are not involved in any of this world’s affairs; their work is limited to bringing up children and even in that work their [low] level of knowledge is well known.”<sup>7</sup>

By the last decades of the nineteenth century, education of Iranian women had emerged as an important element of the modernist project. By the early twentieth century, it was a modernist truism to argue that women’s education was a national priority if the nation were to catch up with European civilization.

Later generations of feminists are often disappointed that women’s education was from the beginning harnessed to their status as wives and mothers. Yet if the argument that educated women made better mothers and wives seems to our contemporary sensibilities like a reinforcement of women’s old professions, we may be ignoring that the meaning of *mother* and *wife* underwent significant changes. In Persian texts, these shifts from premodern to modern normative concepts reconfigured woman from “house” (*manzil*) to “manager of the house” (*mudabbir-i manzil*). The modern educational regimes, deeply gendered from the start, were central to producing the woman of modernity through particular regulatory and emancipatory impulses. These two seemingly conflicting impulses in fact enabled each other’s work. For women, the emancipatory possibilities of modernity and its disciplinary technologies were mutually productive.

#### FROM “HOUSE” TO “MANAGER OF THE HOUSE”

Premodern normative concepts of wife and mother are expressed in Persian books of ethics, aimed at producing a perfect Muslim man, a man of God, of the household, and of the polis.<sup>8</sup> Although these books vary, they had a number of points in common: that the father, not his wife, was the manager of the household, in charge of the discipline and education of the children (sons, more specifically), and that the biological mother was not

necessarily and at times not preferably the nurturer and caretaker of the child.<sup>9</sup> These texts were written by and for men. The male author addressed the male reader as the head of the household, as the managing proprietor of wealth, wives, children, servants, and slaves. The most important function (regulation of property) not only had textual priority over the others; the latter were at the service of the first. Similarly, the father, not the mother, was in charge of a child's upbringing.<sup>10</sup> He was the one who named the child, chose a wet nurse/nanny,<sup>11</sup> and was responsible for the child's physical and mental development. Motherhood in these treatises resided primarily in the womb.

Indeed, some of the critical reformist literature of the nineteenth century continued to treat mothering in similar terms. Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani (1853/54–1896) wrote in *Sad khatabah* (One Hundred Discourses) of five schools in which “every individual man gains his ethics and perfects his temperament and character. The first of these schools is the womb of the mother where the fetus gains the fundamentals of his ethics and acquires those character traits and attitudes that during the term of pregnancy were in the mother, innately or as acquired character.”<sup>12</sup> Kirmani argued at great length that the first school, the womb of the mother, was the most important and most influential. The temperament and manners that entered into the blood of the fetus were very difficult to change. It was for this reason that one had to be considerate toward women and have regard for their rights.

Despite some similarities between Kirmani's nineteenth-century *Sad khatabah* and a work such as Tusi's thirteenth-century *Akhlaq-i Nasiri*, they are vastly different texts. Tusi wrote as a Muslim philosopher for other Muslims and was concerned with the production of the perfect Muslim man. The author of *Sad khatabah* spoke of himself as an Iranian (*man-i Irani*, *Sad khatabah*, 95b), concerned with the sorry state of the Iranian nation (*millat-i Iran*). He considered his ideal reader not a Muslim man in search of this-worldly and otherworldly perfection but an Iranian man concerned with the fate of Iran.<sup>13</sup> The perfect man had changed from a Muslim believer to an Iranian citizen.

For Kirmani, the womb was not simply a vessel but a school (*maktab*). This reenvisioning brought the disciplinary and regulatory functions of school to bear on the womb. Not only did the bearer of the womb regulate the character of the fetus, but now the regulatory process turned back upon the womb/woman. Nation formation began with the womb. To fashion a different kind of Iranian, the mother first had to be regulated and reconstructed. But the new notion of schooling also promised rights: “One needs

to pay special attention to and care for women and their rights so that children will not become ill-tempered and bad-natured" (*Sad khatabah*, 128b; in *Nimeye Digar*, 104). In Iran, however, Kirmani argued, "women are deprived of all rights of humanity and are forbidden from the pleasures of life. . . . Iranian women are treated as lower than animals, nay, they are less valued than the dogs of Europe and the cats of cemeteries" (*Sad khatabah*, 128b, 129a; in *Nimeye Digar*, 104).

Thus, in Kirmani's rearticulation, the womb became at once the ground for regulatory practices toward women and for awarding women particular rights. This double move, combining disciplinary techniques and emancipatory promises, became a general feature of the modernist rethinking of gender. Far from one move simply contradicting and frustrating the other, the disciplinary and emancipatory moments enabled each other's work; a newly envisaged womb produced both the regulatory and the emancipatory drives in order to produce children worthy of modernity.

Woman was also reconfigured as wife: she was to be man's companion in life. As we have seen in previous chapters, Kirmani argued at length against gender segregation and against the veil, which, he opined, not only did not guarantee a woman's chastity but was a huge obstacle to her humanity, her attainment of education and knowledge. The veil, he argued, had reduced half of the Iranian people to a paralyzed, enchained state of ignorance with no ability to render any service to society. Further, it was responsible for same-sex practices in Iran. Segregation deprived men of the beneficial effects of socializing with women. Men and women married without having known or even seen each other. Their life together began, more often than not, with hatred and dislike from the first night of marriage (*Sad khatabah*, 135a–138a; in *Nimeye Digar*, 109–12).

In *Hasht bihisht*, Kirmani and Ruhi expressed more radical views. The authors of *Hasht bihisht* argued strongly for children, both male and female, to choose their own mates and to get to know each other for several years during their engagement. Women and men had equal rights to the pleasures and benefits of marriage, and women should be taught all sciences, skills, crafts, and ethical matters. They argued for the removal of the veil and recommended that men should consider women as their left hand in all activities so that both hands could work equally. They linked the social lot of women, through motherhood, to the fate of humanity: "Women's *hijab* and *tura* [lace face cover], their segregation from men, and their loss of all rights of humanity . . . cause great corruption in the world of humanity, because this delicate kind constitutes children's early education. They are the teachers [*murabbi*] in the household and the



fountainhead of all progress of humanity" (Mirza Aga Khan Kirmani and Ruhi n.d., 121).

In other words, whereas the heterosocialization of public life was naturalized as the complementarity of the two hands, motherhood became a mediating term between two central concepts of modernity, human progress and women's rights. This argument distinguishes a modernist work like *Hasht bihisht* from earlier books of advice and ethics. Instead of being collapsed into and referred to as the household (*manzil*), instead of being subject to the man's management, woman had become the manager of household affairs and the educator of children.<sup>14</sup> Indeed, Kirmani and Ruhi pressed their case to encompass the full equality of men and women:

Because of the bad ways men have treated women, placing them outside the domain of humanity, half of the potential for civilization and urbanity has remained unused and without effect. But the world of humanity cannot achieve perfection unless women become equals and partners with men in all affairs and rights; in fact, human traits are much more perfect in women than in men. . . . In all rights including learning and education, government, inheritance, industries, and commerce women must be equal to men. . . . This edict is for the reform and education of women, to bring them out of darkness and ignorance into the open field of the city of humanity and civility. Undoubtedly because of this edict the world of humanity and civility will double in size.<sup>15</sup>

Few nineteenth-century reformers called for such radical gender parity as Kirmani and Ruhi, though by the first decade of the twentieth century, the argument that women should be educated because they were educators of children, companions of men, and half of the nation was largely accepted.

Kirmani and Ruhi drew on a manufacturing analogy to demonstrate their meaning. Schools were like a factory that took in as raw material bits of wool and produced delicate fabric (Mirza Aga Khan Kirmani and Ruhi n.d., 145). That many writers found this metaphor apt reflects the vastly different concept of education that they were advocating. The education of men and women in premodern institutional and informal settings of mosques, Qur'anic neighborhood schools, or the home could hardly be compared to an orderly, regulated manufacturing process.<sup>16</sup>

Not only the educational system and institutions but the very conception of knowledge was consciously formulated in opposition to older definitions.<sup>17</sup> In premodern texts, knowledge pertained to man's perception of God and his rules.<sup>18</sup> Modern knowledge pertained to issues of civilization and progress. The nineteenth-century writers took pains to distinguish their concept from the older "order of things."<sup>19</sup> Kirmani contrasted the

science/knowledge (*'ilm*) of religious scholars (*'ulama'*) to that of chemistry, politics, law, political economy, and natural sciences (*Sad khatabah*, 94–98). Zuka' al-Mulk, editor of *Tarbiat* (Education),<sup>20</sup> explained, "If in this newspaper we speak of the weakness of science and the lack of learned men, this has nothing to do with the science of religion. . . . Undoubtedly religion and faith supersedes all else . . . and our learned men . . . are suns in the heaven of truth and stars of the sky of guidance."<sup>21</sup> "The point," however, he continued, "is that the order of the day of Resurrection [*nizam-i kar-i mu'ad*] depends on the order of making a living [*intizam-i amr-i mu'ash*] . . . and of course the country, in order to put in order the affairs of this world, needs arithmetic and geometry, algebra and calculus, analysis and medicine, agriculture and commerce, and many other things. For instance, if we want to build a dam or construct a bridge or cure an ill person, would it be correct to go to a learned man of religion?"<sup>22</sup>

The changing concept of education became centered on literacy. The emphasis on reading and writing marked the transition from a largely oral culture to a print culture (Ong 1982). Reading became distinct from reciting, though in Persian, Arabic, and many other languages, the same word continues to be used for both.

Many articles in *Tarbiat* lamented the sorry state of the old schools, their curricula and textbooks.<sup>23</sup> Reporting on the establishment of a new elementary school built by Firuzkuhi, Zuka' al-Mulk emphasized how a new simple and easy method of teaching enabled children to read and write quickly.<sup>24</sup>

The literacy-centered concept of education led to new techniques of teaching and learning: memorization as a highly valued skill was now considered parrotlike repetition; recitation was dismissed; argumentation and dialogue were now used as a didactic, political rhetorical tool suitable for the press and pamphlets but not for the schools. As literacy became the privileged core of education, the press continued to debate changing the alphabet to facilitate mass education.

The debates about the new educational regime attended to discipline and regulation as well as the techniques of teaching and frequently emphasized the analogy with the factory. One of the earliest and most articulate proponents of modern education was Mirza Taqi Khan Kashani, a general and tutor to the prince Mas'ud Mirza (Zill al-Sultan).<sup>25</sup>

In 1881 Mirza Taqi Khan published a small book, *Tarbiat: Namah'ist dar qava'id-i ta'lim va tarbiat-i atfal*.<sup>26</sup> He began his treatise on education autobiographically. Born in Kashan, as a young boy he was first sent to a local *maktab*, run by one Mulla Mahdi, who is described as a frightening

disciplinary figure who used corporal punishment (*chub va falak*) as an educational method. After a few days of suffering at this man's hands, Kashani quit the maktab, but envious of his cousins who could read/recite the Qur'an, he begged his father to allow him to learn reading from his uncle. Once he exhausted this first teacher, he turned to outside teachers to learn arithmetic, astronomy, and other sciences of the time (Kashani 1881, 1–4). When he was seventeen, he heard much about “the strange sciences and innovative arts and crafts” of Europe and left his birthplace to go to Tehran's Military School, where he learned the new sciences from French teachers. Mastering all these subjects, he proceeded to write many books and translate others from French over the following fifteen years.<sup>27</sup>

Mirza Taqi Khan Kashani wrote in a dispirited voice. After so much effort and twenty years of work, not much progress had been made in the education of his compatriots (*hamvatanan*). His hopes and desires remained unfulfilled (14). He contrasted nations/peoples (*millatha*) without education (*bi'tarbiat*) with people of Europe—ahl-i Urupa. Education in Europe was orderly and creative. In a short period, Europeans had transformed their young people into fountains of new sciences and creative inventors (15–17). European education was based on awe and respect, the Iranian on severe physical punishment. He warned about the long-term negative effects of Iranian educational methods on children (18).

He recommended four reforms. First, and perhaps foremost, was to standardize and reform the script. Second, what was taught and how it was taught had to be reformed. Instead of being required to memorize the Qur'an and *ahadith*, children should be reading books written in everyday language (like *Kalilah and Dimnah*) that taught moral tales (24–28). Third, the maktabas had to be transformed from the present unhygienic, damp, and dark conditions that made them breeding grounds for all kinds of diseases.<sup>28</sup> He even had ideas about day care for children between two and five years of age where, supervised by a female director, they would be safe and sing and play simple games (32–34). Finally, the fourth set of reforms concerned encouraging students with rewards instead of punishing them (45–46).

The nineteenth-century educational treatises did not address men as private individuals. Education for the sake of national progress was a public duty rather than a religious obligation or the path to individual perfection. It was thus expected of *the government* to undertake the task and of *men* to take educational initiatives, not as heads of household, or even as fathers, but as men of the nation, *as citizens*. The texts were addressed to men as compatriots (*hamvatan*): “It is incumbent on any patriot of means

and on all powerful lovers of the nation to spread as much as possible these good methods (of education) and guard the means of universal education [*tarbiat-i 'ammah*]," Kashani wrote.<sup>29</sup> After prophets sent by God to educate people, the task of education fell upon "people in charge and the wise men and kings" (Kashani 1881, 47). Private persons of means should share the government's obligation to provide education. Zuka' al-Mulk argued that we should not expect the government to do everything; dissemination of knowledge and improvement of industries are among the duties of the nation (*vazifah-i millat ast*).<sup>30</sup>

Education, in turn, would produce competent men of state, would lead to the development of industries and mining, and would improve trade and infrastructure. Japan's rapid advance over the last decades of the nineteenth century was attributed to that country's reform of its educational institutions.<sup>31</sup> This shift in the purpose of education proved to be critical for opening the possibility of education to women. One of the central ways through which women claimed citizenship was to take charge of female education and to found educational and occupational establishments for girls.

#### THE DIFFERENCE GENDER MAKES

It was within the context of general debates that girls began to creep in as subjects worthy of education. In a significant departure from premodern texts, Mirza Taqi Khan Kashani's essay, for example, ended with a section addressed to fathers and mothers, calling for the education of girls as well as boys: "Teach your children, sons and daughters, science and obedience" (Kashani 1881, 61). Mahmud Afshar devoted an entire section of his pamphlet to women's education, arguing that "the more we work for education and learning of women, the more we would serve the uplifting, progress and perfection of our nation. We must ensure that women's breast spurts forth water of life not murderous poison. Education must be so generalized that it would cover all men and women of the nation."<sup>32</sup> Educated mothers not only would ensure the nation's prosperity through their role as educators of children but also would create families in which loving interaction, pleasant exchanges, helpful kindness, good housekeeping, and religiosity would reign. "A nation composed of such families would be rich, strong, prosperous and fortunate."<sup>33</sup>

Girls began to appear as characters in books designed for the education of the young. A book of parables from 1876 had as many female as male characters in its stories (Miftah al-Mulk 1876). Designed to highlight good and bad character traits, the stories were thoroughly gendered. Mas'ud's

New Year's present to his parents, for instance, was to demonstrate that he could read any text they chose (Miftah al-Mulk 1876, 6–10). Kawkab, a frivolous girl, was disliked by everyone because she was undisciplined and shameless, laughed a great deal for no reason, opened her mouth in front of people and made awful noises, ran around and paid no attention to others, did not greet people properly, talked nonsense, and eavesdropped on others' conversations. The four-year-old exemplary girl, Khawrshid Khanum, was impeccable, obedient, and well mannered. Everyone liked her. She got up in the morning with her parents without a fuss, dressed and cleaned herself, performed her ablutions, and prayed. She spent her whole day doing only good things, played by herself, did not bother adults, and was already in a Qur'anic school where she could read the Qur'an and other texts, and she did not do anything without her mother's permission. The tale ended happily: Kawkab, despite her many defects, was very smart. Under Khawrshid Khanum's guidance, Kawkab reformed and ultimately was well liked (11–17). This pattern of moral example continued throughout the book.

Other educational texts of the period similarly marked gender distinctions and hierarchies through inclusion of girls. Miftah al-Mulk's *Ta'lim al-atfal* (Teaching Children, 1897), a manual on teaching the alphabet more efficiently, had drawings of both boys' schools and girls' schools, all pupils properly seated behind desks; however, the boys were all sitting on chairs, and the girls were squatting on the floor behind low desks.<sup>34</sup> After the alphabet, numerals, and months and years of the zodiac system, Mirza Muhammad teaches prayers. A female character, Fatimah Khanum, teaches fundamentals of religion and the names of the twelve Shi'i Imams (1:68–80, 95–101). Subsequently, Mirza Muhammad becomes a prayer leader for his classmates. Fatimah Khanum invites her classmates on a Friday to play with dolls and to sew, and "thus they learn the science of house-keeping and the necessary arts" (81–94, 102–6; quotation on 105). In a second volume, the students were taught poetry, geography, and arithmetic. There were no girls in the second volume.

By the turn of the century, proposals to include girls in the new educational regime became less ambivalent. Earlier, reformist papers had raised the necessity of women's education largely implicitly and through comparisons with Europe, the Ottoman Empire, Japan, and India. *Akhtar* recited a narrative attributed to the prophet Muhammad, which explains that seeking knowledge is obligatory for Muslim men and women, and encouraged Iranians residing in Istanbul to establish schools for their children, by implication for both girls and boys.<sup>35</sup> *Ma'arif* reported that

Mu'ayyid al-Islam, editor of *Habl al-Matin* (published in Calcutta), was raising funds so that the Ma'arif Association could open a school for women in Tehran.<sup>36</sup> There is no subsequent report on whether the association did establish any schools for girls, though the paper continued to report favorably on women's schooling. An editorial commentary on the reports from the Ottoman press on women's schools noted that in Istanbul there were sixteen scientific and two technical schools for women and expressed hope that in the future the association would remove all obstacles faced by such a necessary endeavor. After all, "To anyone of sound mind and reason, it is evident that knowledge and education of mothers and children's nannies [*dayigan*] are vital and necessary for children's proper care and good health. . . . If our daughters, like those of other civilized nations, would become knowledgeable in the sciences necessary for livelihood and housekeeping, that is, those of moral uplifting and household management, that would be an immense contribution to the comfort of their spouses and children" (*Ma'arif* 2, 34 [3 March 1900]: 3).

In a cautious statement, Zuka' al-Mulk noted that while national efforts regarding education had to start with fathers and sons, "God willing, the turn for education of mothers and daughters will also come, since experienced scientists and skilled educators have said that the bulk of the education of children is in the hands of mothers."<sup>37</sup> Following this brief remark on education for girls and women, the paper received and published a piece by no less than Hajji Sadr al-Saltanah, the minister of general welfare (*favayid-i 'ammah*) (*Tarbiat*, 40 [16 September 1897]: 2-4). Sadr al-Saltanah quoted Napoleon to the effect that one must try harder for girls' education than for boys,' since girls (as future mothers) laid the ground for children's education. He remarked, "In Europe, girls' schools are separate from and not mixed with those for boys.' In India, in one of the schools for girls that is built from the charitable deeds of Suhrabji Shahpurji, I saw Zoroastrian girls who shone like stars from the light of science. I went to another school built by Manikji Khawrshidji. Girls were learning crafts and were skilled in sewing." He regretted the terrible conditions of Iranian women; they had no literacy skills (*savad*) and were ignorant of any crafts and arts, whereas even ugly women of Europe were moons in the sky of perfection because of the holy spirit (*ruh al-qudus*) of science.

Comparisons with Europe also provided an important subtext of Talibuf's *Kitab-i Ahmad*, one of the most influential books on education in late nineteenth-century Iran. In the preface, Talibuf spoke as a concerned citizen of Iran. In the rest of the book he took the voice of a father, tutoring his son, Ahmad. The triple position of citizen/father/tutor allowed Talibuf

to write the book not only as a treatise on education but also as a modernist text on Iran's sociopolitical problems and how to overcome them. The book was explicitly modeled after Rousseau's *Émile*, yet the differences between the two works were significant. In the eighth chapter of the first volume, the author noted that while in most of the introductory chapters Ahmad had been echoing Émile's conversations, one needed to adapt the conditions of the western Émile (*Imil-i maghribi*) to those of the eastern Ahmad (*Ahmad-i mashriqi*) (Talibuf 1893, 81).

The central problem informing the book was not how through a model education to resolve the conflicts between the natural and the social man; rather, it was how to overcome the disparity between the innate giftedness of Iranians and their current state of ignorance and idleness—in other words, how through a scientific education to produce a competent and patriotic citizen. Unlike the solitary Émile, Ahmad had two brothers and two sisters. Through the older brother, Mahmud, who attended the old school system, Talibuf constructed the difference with his own proposed educational methods: Ahmad was first tutored at home by his father—the narrator of the book—and later, in the second volume, he attended one of the new schools. In the third volume, he had already earned an engineering degree and had authored many books. He had become a model scientific citizen. The two sisters, Zaynab and Mahrugh, constructed the gender difference. They were childish and playful; at times they were told off by Ahmad for their unbecoming behavior or their ignorance; they were in awe of their smart brother's scope of knowledge. Yet as spectators to Ahmad's various scientific experiments at home, they occasionally got to ask a question or offer him a helping hand, confirming his superior knowledge and status while making a point that girls were also eager to learn something. Although at several points Talibuf noted that in "civilized countries" both women and men were educated (1893, 72; 1894, 4), there was nothing in these three volumes about the daughters' education. In fact, by the third volume, in which Ahmad spoke as an adult model citizen, Mahrugh and Zaynab had totally disappeared. This tension in Talibuf's text is worthy of further consideration. Talibuf presented rather negative judgments about European women and gender relations, writing with disdain and disapproval of European women wearing low-cut dresses, putting on makeup, and going to dances (1906, 36). The paradox of noting women's education in "civilized countries," yet not advocating it for Iran, perhaps resided in this moral anxiety. As late as 1907, Talibuf wrote that it was unnecessary to rush into opening up schools for women, as there were not yet sufficient schools for boys (1978, 129).

## EDUCATING THE EDUCATORS OF THE NATION

The issue of women's education received its first full attention with the publication in 1900 of a partial translation/adaptation of Qasim Amin's book *The Liberation of Women* only a year after its Arabic publication in Cairo.<sup>38</sup> A number of chapters were translated by Yusuf Ashtiani (I'tisam al-Mulk) and published under a significantly different title, *Tarbiat-i nisvan* (Education of Women).<sup>39</sup> In his preface, I'tisam al-Mulk noted that famous Egyptian writers as well as European thinkers had written extensively on women's rights, including the right to education.<sup>40</sup> But, he explained, there were still no books in Persian that debated the advantages and harms of women's education. It was for this reason that he had translated a number of the chapters from *The Liberation of Women*.

I'tisam al-Mulk and other Iranian reformers shared Amin's conviction that the "evidence of history confirms and demonstrates that the status of women is inseparably tied to the status of a nation."<sup>41</sup> They attributed the progress of a nation to the progress of women (I'tisam al-Mulk 1900, 69; Amin 1992, 75). And if Iran's relative backwardness could be overcome by acquiring the sciences and a new kind of education, then the conditions of women could similarly be improved (I'tisam al-Mulk 1900, 63; Amin 1992, 63–64). These reformers perceived women's education as the fundamental step in the nation's quest for civilization. In fact, in the first decades of the twentieth century, we find the argument that women's education was more important than men's because an entire educated nation would follow from educated women. One author went so far as to give women's education higher national priority than even the development of a new body of law, the issue central to the modernist discourse a few decades earlier: "The progress, uplifting, and civilization of every nation, every country, is dependent on three things: first the education of girls, second science, third law. . . . The education of girls . . . is far more important than the other two, because sons and daughters come from women and are educated by them until they reach school age."<sup>42</sup>

Women themselves adopted these arguments. A female teacher of one of the new girls' schools wrote, "What is the difference between Iranian and European women except for science? Why is it that European women are on a par with men or even superior to them?"<sup>43</sup> Connecting the modernist theme of the centrality of science to the progress of nations, a female school principal argued:

The key to the treasure of prosperity in both worlds . . . is science alone. . . . It was through science that [the Europeans] took away Turkistan and the



Caucasus from us,<sup>44</sup> it was through the force of science that India . . . was separated from us. The same with Egypt, Greece, Crete, Sicily, Spain, etc. . . . Through science they have swallowed more than half of Iran, the true birthplace of ourselves and our forefathers and they intend to take away the rest. . . . Perhaps some may think that the Europeans are not of our kind, and therefore to think of becoming their equal is impossible. This is utterly false. . . . Even if it were true, what do you say about the Japanese? At least we should follow our Asian sisters, the Japanese, . . . in pursuit of sciences and industries. It must be emphasized that educating women is more important than educating men, since the education of men is dependent on education of women. . . . Therefore, you respected women must seriously and with great effort seek sciences and spread knowledge . . . so that liberty, equality and fraternity could be established in our homeland and we too could acquire that civilization and life that the Europeans have. (*Iran-i naw* 1, 114 [18 January 1910]: 4)

From the very beginning, the goals of men's and women's education were different. Once the domain of the man of the polis had expanded into the national community, this man of the nation could no longer be expected to be simultaneously in charge of national politics and management of the household. Woman was now to become man's helpmeet, the manager instead of a subject of the household. Like the transformation of the womb from a vessel to a school, the transformation of woman from house to manager of the house was at once a regulating and an empowering moment. The regulatory and disciplinary regime of modern sciences was to bear on woman's daily activities. Whereas the man was to be educated in the new sciences in order to fulfill the demand of national politics, economics, and modern industry, the woman was above all to be educated in the science of home management:

[A] woman cannot run her household well unless she attains a certain amount of intellectual and cultural knowledge. She should learn at least what a man is required to learn up through the primary stage of education. . . . It is important for a woman to be able to read and write, to be able to examine the basis of scientific information, to be familiar with the history of various countries, and to be able to acquire knowledge of the natural sciences and of politics. . . . [A] woman who lacks this upbringing will be unable adequately to carry out her role in society or in the family. (I'tisam al-Mulk 1900, 17–18; Amin 1992, 12)

Women echoed similar sentiments in pursuit of education:

Because of the duties of a woman to mother and educate humanity, the harms of ignorance are a hundredfold worse for them and the advantages of learning a thousand times greater. A learned woman will keep her

house clean and orderly, thus making her spouse happy. A learned woman will educate her child according to rules of health and hygiene and wisdom. . . . A learned woman will protect her family relationship and will prevent discord and difference which is the greatest cause of destruction of family and nation. . . . A learned woman can advise her spouse in some worldly affairs. . . . A learned woman can increase her spouse's happiness when he is happy and console him when he is sad.<sup>45</sup>

Daughters of Shams al-Ma'ali explained that they had established two schools for girls in Tehran so that "in the future, every household is headed by a learned lady who knows household management, child rearing, sewing, cooking and cleaning and from whose breast the milk of love of the homeland will be fed to infants so that they shall be deserving of [national] service and sacrifice" (*Iran-i naw* 1, 19 [15 September 1909]: 3).

For the wife to manage the household, female homosociality within that space had to break up. Previously female homosociality had been seen as a threat to male bonding, to the relationship between men and between man and God. Now it threatened the orderly management of the household, which required the wife to regulate her female servant instead of chatting and socializing with and befriending her. This was explicated at length in the literature that advised women on how to deal with their servants.<sup>46</sup>

Family itself was now reenvisaged. Socially, it was relocated in relation to the national community rather than in relation to other kin and families: "The family is the foundation of a country," and within the family, woman as mother was the foundation. As such, "her intellectual development or underdevelopment becomes the primary factor in determining the development or underdevelopment of the country" (I'tisam al-Mulk 1900, 69; Amin 1992, 72). This reconfiguration gave new meanings to motherhood. Woman's role as nurturer and educator began to take precedence over her function as a vessel for the fetus. She was mother both to her children and to the country, and she replaced the father as the manager of the children's upbringing: "We have overlooked the fact that children are products of their parents, and that mothers have the greater share in this relationship" (I'tisam al-Mulk 1900, 41; Amin 1992, 23). A mother's ignorance could thus be the source of all manner of troubles:

An ignorant mother allows her child to do whatever his little mind and his big desires conjure up for him. . . . It is a well-known fact that a child lives most of his childhood, up to the age of discretion, among women. . . . Is it not a mother's ignorance of hygiene that allows her to neglect her child's cleanliness? . . . Is it not her ignorance that allows him to be lazy? . . . Is it not the impact of a mother's ignorance that paralyzes all our nerves? . . . Is it not a mother's ignorance that compels her to bring

up her child through fear of jinn and evil spirits? Is it not her ignorance that impels her to hang charms on her child? . . . Is it not her ignorance that forces her to follow other superstitions? (I'tisam al-Mulk 1900, 47–49; Amin 1992, 26–27)

Women's education was therefore oriented toward rearing an educated (male) citizenry: "In order to fulfill this function [of proper mental upbringing of children] adequately, a woman requires a broad education, immense experience, and a wide range of knowledge" (I'tisam al-Mulk 1900, 69; Amin 1992, 72). This was not a call "for equality of education for men and women," but for "the possibility for boys and girls to have a comparable educational experience throughout the primary stage" (I'tisam al-Mulk 1900, 52; Amin 1992, 28).

Once the family was envisaged as the building block of the nation, relationships within it had to be reformulated. Ignorant women made unsuitable mothers and unfit spouses: "An educated man likes order and a systematically arranged home. . . . When a man finds his wife in this ignorant condition, he quickly despises her" (I'tisam al-Mulk 1900, 29; Amin 1992, 17). In an evident heterosexualization of male homosociality, sentiment comparable to friendship between men was to constitute the right bond between husband and wife: "Friendship provides us with a good example of the power of true love between individuals." This was yet one more reason for women's education: "A man and woman whose upbringing and education differ cannot experience this type of love" (I'tisam al-Mulk 1900, 34; Amin 1992, 20).

Unlike the 1899 publication of the Arabic text, the translation and publication of Amin's book into Persian in 1900 did not inspire public debate. The book was well received among reform-minded intellectuals.<sup>47</sup> Occasional articles obliquely talked of women's education.<sup>48</sup> More explicitly, a serialized article in the Calcutta-published journal *Habl al-matin* agreed with Amin's arguments. It attributed to women's lack of education a nation's decline and misfortune, expressed regret that "we Muslims have neglected this important matter and have done nothing to educate our women," and asked, "How could any people hope for progress if their women, the first teachers and educators of children, are captives in the realm of ignorance?"<sup>49</sup> A subsequent section gave four reasons that education of women would benefit men: children's education would become perfect because both parents would be contributing to it; children's gifts would become evident at an earlier stage of life; today's men were educated but were stuck with uneducated wives, and children thus received contradictory training and instruction from their fathers and mothers,

which produced problems in their education; and, finally, every nation's civilization was dependent on women's and men's education, since men and women needed to live and socialize together.<sup>50</sup>

Education of women was also linked to the imperial power of Europeans: "But even in household management women of Europe and America have surpassed those of Asia. An Asian king's palace may envy a European household. The good order of household objects and the pleasantness of the rooms . . . competes with the gardens of paradise. . . . Husband and wife, like body and soul, provide each other with comfort of life and happiness of soul. They assist and love each other. . . . Nations with mothers like European women can conquer other lands and rule over other nations."<sup>51</sup>

In the East, however, women were kept ignorant yet were expected to fulfill three enormous tasks: to keep their husbands happy, educate their children, and manage the house. How could a woman who was ignorant of her tasks and her husband's rights manage to satisfy him, especially if the husband was a man of science and a master of an art? That was like putting a parrot and a crow in the same cage.<sup>52</sup> Women's role in the house paralleled men's role in social affairs and national politics. In fact, for man to be able to be the good citizen, woman needed to be a good household manager: "Woman's role in the management and order of the house and in supervising its income and expenditure is like that of a minister of the land. . . . The well-being of the family and supervision of rights of the people of the household and the general direction of the household belongs to the mistress of the house. Men who are in charge of the big affairs of the world cannot spend their valuable time in these small matters."<sup>53</sup>

These discussions did not produce immediate results. Three and a half years later, another series of articles in the same journal, on "Rights and Liberties of Women," referred to Qasim Amin as a pioneer of women's education and reviewed the attacks against him and the debates of that time in the Egyptian press. It noted the translation and publication of Amin's book by Mirza Yusuf Khan I'tisam al-Mulk into Persian. It expressed regret that, unlike other Islamic countries, in Iran nothing but talk had come of it.<sup>54</sup>

The conceptual shifts in the meaning of wife and mother had a more immediate influence on texts about child rearing, such as *Tarbiat-i atfal* (Rearing of Children).<sup>55</sup> In premodern texts, it was not assumed that the biological mother and the breast-feeder of the child should be one and the same person; the child was to be entrusted to a wet nurse upon birth. The author of *Tarbiat-i atfal* argued differently: "A mother who entrusts her child to someone else upon birth has deprived herself of one half of the label mother and should thus not be called a mother. What is better and

lovelier and more suitable than a mother looking after her own children? But some mothers prefer to leave this job to others and engage in useless leisure activities. This is the result of bad education that these mothers have received from their forebears."<sup>56</sup>

Although the text addressed the mother rather than the father, the child remained a male child. Muhammad Tahir (1891, 12–13), quoting Montaigne, recommended that children should be discouraged from becoming female-tempered and beautiful youths. The two dangers that haunted the challenge of modern manhood were contamination with femininity and fear of being perceived as a "beautiful youth." Not only were women as mothers to ensure their sons' growth into proper manhood; as wives they carried the burden of being "good enough" loving and pleasurable companions so that their husbands would not go after sinful pastimes such as *amradbazi*.<sup>57</sup> Reconfiguration of the family as a regime of heteronormativity empowered women by putting them in charge of producing themselves and their daughters as new women and their sons and husbands as the new men of the nation. As we saw in previous chapter, this disciplinary position corresponded well to women's own demand on men in their renegotiation of marriage into a romantic contract.

The texts for this work, however, were authored by men for the next two decades, before women's journals took charge of this discursive production. *Tarbiat-i atfal* was one such text. Composed of three parts on physical upbringing, mental development, and (wet) nurses, the book discussed all possible minutiae of prenatal care, beginning with the mother's comportment, including her dressing and eating habits and her sexual relations. Chapters explored and advised on every conceivable situation in an infant's life, including nutrition, digestion, clothing, and sleeping. Four chapters, by far the longest section in book I, expounded on the virtues of breast-feeding and its multiple benefits for mother, child, family, and nation.

In book II the author advised on how to attend to the child's mental development (*tarbiat-i 'aqlani*), keeping his authorial eye firmly fixed on the mother (Muhammad Tahir 1891, 234–35). Book III was devoted to the question of whether a child is best served when brought up alone or in groups. Muhammad Tahir ended the book with reminiscences about his own mother (264).

A special curriculum was developed to put the management of household affairs on a "scientific basis," including courses on home management, education of children, hygiene, fine arts and crafts, and cooking. The publication of this genre of textbooks was an important moment: the printed words of male authors (a European author mediated through the

Iranian translator) and modernist reformers invaded a domain that had been largely oral and female. Previously, advice on child rearing was passed orally among women, mothers and daughters, wet nurses and nannies, sisters, female friends, and neighbors. Male-authored texts now began to regularize mothering practices in the interest of rearing new men, men of the nation.

The process of crafting a new kind of mother and a new kind of wife, and the accompanying proposition that the progress of the nation depended on the education of women were discussed repeatedly in the Constitutionalist press of the first decade of the twentieth century.<sup>58</sup> In this same period the establishment of new schools for girls gained momentum. American Presbyterian missionaries had established a girls' school in Urumiyah in 1838. Sisters of Saint Vincent de Paul had opened schools for girls in Urumiyah, Salmas, Tabriz, and Isfahan in 1865, and in Tehran in 1875. In 1895 the American School for Girls was established in Tehran. Various religious denominations of Iran established schools for girls in the last decades of the nineteenth century. Armenian schools for girls were established in Tehran in 1870, in Qazvin in 1889, in Sultanabad in 1900, and in Isfahan in 1903. The first Jewish school for girls in Tehran, Ittihad (Alians) was established in 1898, followed by schools in Isfahan and other cities with large Jewish communities. In Kirman, Zoroastrians established Unas-i Jamshidi in 1902.<sup>59</sup> Tarbiat-i bunat was established in 1911 by the Baha'is in Tehran. A school for girls is also reported to have been established in Chalias near Kirman in 1897, but we know nothing more about it. This was followed by Parvarish in 1903 in the residence of Hasan Rushdiah, with Tubá Rushdiah (his sister-in-law) as its principal. Mukhaddarat was established in 1905, and Dushizigan (by Bibi Khanum Astarabadi) and Hurmatiyah-i sadat in 1906, and in 1908 Tubá Azmudah opened Namus. The following years witnessed a rapid expansion of such schools in Tehran. Provincial capitals followed suit: Bunat was opened in Qazvin in 1908, and Bunat-i Islami in Rasht in 1911.<sup>60</sup> By 1911, there were forty-seven schools for girls in Tehran with 2,187 students, compared with seventy-eight for boys with 8,344 students.<sup>61</sup>

By the first decade of the century, women had taken charge of girls' education. Tehran women presented a petition to the Shah in 1907 asking for provisions to facilitate women's education.<sup>62</sup> Women wrote tirelessly in the press on female education, encouraged women of means to put their resources into the cause, organized fund-raising events, and provided free schooling for girls who could not afford to pay for their educations. The early girls' schools were all established by women, often in

their own residences. They were under continuous scrutiny for impropriety and un-Islamicness.<sup>63</sup> Many of them faced hostile attacks. The memoirs and letters of some of these women provide us with moving accounts of the difficulties they faced in this pioneering work.<sup>64</sup> The issue of women's education became a point of contention between pro- and anti-Constitutionalist forces. Shaykh Fazl'allah Nuri, a prominent anti-Constitutionalist cleric, associated "the opening of schools for women's education and elementary schools for young girls" with the "spread of houses of prostitution" and as breaches in Islamic law.<sup>65</sup> This statement was construed as the Shaykh's fatwa against women's education and was used to agitate for closing down the new educational establishments.

Women educationalists voiced the most articulate defense of girls' schools in this debate. Addressing Shaykh Fazl'allah Nuri directly, one woman questioned his religious credentials. She insisted that her God, unlike his, was just and had not created men and women in such a way that one deserved the blessings of education and the other deserved to remain like an animal; that the prophet of her God had made it obligatory for all Muslim men and women to seek education, whereas his God had forbidden women to seek education. She challenged him to name a single woman close to the Prophet who was illiterate or ignorant, and questioned if he had the right to speak in the name of Shari'a. She defended the structure and curriculum of modern schools over maktabas, explaining the benefits of education for women, and eventually concluded that nothing in Islam forbade women's education. Unless he could answer all her arguments, he had to admit that he had spoken thoughtlessly.<sup>66</sup>

The Constitutionalist government's first initiative was a report issued in 1911, whose proposals included a stipulation for the government to "subsidize five elementary schools for girls. This will make the supervision of the Ministry of Sciences over their affairs more complete. It will become possible to make special provisions in all schools for girls, so that the Ministry of Sciences will reach its high and sacred goal of educating the womenfolk." A state subsidy for one of the better schools was suggested, to orient it toward training women teachers, for there was a serious shortage of female teachers (Mansur al-Saltanah 1911, 22). In 1917-18, the first ten state schools for girls were established, with a total of 938 students (Hasibi 1991; Bamdad 1968, 62). In the same year Dar al-Mu'allamat provided the first postsecondary education for women, with Yusuf Khan Richard (Mu'addab al-Mulk) as its principal.<sup>67</sup> Two years later the first state secondary school for girls, with three grades only, was established. Forty-five girls graduated from this school in 1924. Many private schools had already

begun to expand beyond the elementary grades. State-supported extension of intermediate schools for girls beyond three grades did not come about until 1939, when high schools were to provide education for three more years with the same curriculum as the boys' high schools for pupils planning to pursue university education. Pupils interested in continuing education but with no plans to attend the university could enroll in a two-year program in "techniques of housekeeping and hygiene" (Iran 1940, 3-4).

The new schools obviously offered growing opportunities for female education. But national education was oriented toward creating a new citizenry and training a body of civil servants for the state. Consequently, more attention and investment were spent on education for boys at all levels. Moreover, and perhaps in response to the opposition of some religious leaders, strict sex segregation was observed in terms of both student body and teachers—in a departure from the old schools (*maktabs*), where boys and girls were often taught in mixed groups and where the educator, even for boys, could be a woman.<sup>68</sup>

From 1912 the new elementary and intermediate schools could inhabit a private residence only if there were no men living in the house (Mushir al-Dawlah 1913, 24). Thus for the next two and a half decades the traditional schools, which were not under state supervision and restrictions, educated larger number of girls than boys (though only in rudimentary skills) and had a higher female-to-male ratio of teachers. In 1925 Tehran *maktabs* were required to observe the same residency restrictions and came under the supervision of the Ministry of Education.<sup>69</sup> From May 1936 the *maktabs* were dissolved and the children moved to state schools.<sup>70</sup> The phasing out of *maktabs* eliminated one of the traditional occupations for women.<sup>71</sup> The state now controlled the curriculum and modes of daily operation of all schools to ensure that they functioned according to modern national sensibilities.

Later narratives about modern education speak as if female illiteracy (*bisavadi*) was transformed into literacy (*savad*). But a different kind of literacy was at stake. Most women involved in the first generation of modern education would not have been illiterate under the old system; they would have been tutored in a *maktab* and at home. The new education differed not in transforming illiteracy into literacy but in terms of the site of literacy (new schools, not *maktabs* or homes). It was also embedded within the national project. Therein lay its immense attraction for women. The new educational sites provided them with public sociability and the national recognition that it promised. Education for women was no longer a means to a private end. It was creative of a new social self: women as educators of



the children of the nation, as companions of male citizens, and, as we will see in the next chapter, as citizens.

The vast literature on scientific housekeeping, child rearing, and maintenance of one's husband has later been called a "discourse of domesticity." From the current feminist perspective, that discourse may seem to have frustrated women's potential and contained their social advance. For women of the early twentieth century, it provided the very grounds from which the male domain of modern education could be opened up to women.<sup>72</sup> To claim the position of the learned (*mudabbir va mudir*) manager and head of the household, far from frustrating the dynamics of women's move into public life, provided the empowering grounds for their national recognition. True, in the 1930s, when the issue of university education for women was debated, its opponents used "women's place in the home" as an argument against admission of female students to universities (Amin 1996). But that is a later episode in the story. To categorize the literature that fashioned a new woman through scientific household management, learned mothering, and educated husband-keeping as a discourse of domesticity deprives us of a way to understand why women embraced these notions in the first place.

In the literature on scientific household management, especially in the women's press, women articulated their vision for, and negotiated the terms of, the new husband-wife-centered family. The first women's journal was in fact named *Danish* (Knowledge). Edited by Dr. Kahhal, a woman ophthalmologist with an active practice,<sup>73</sup> it began publication in September 1910, with a masthead that read: "This is an ethical journal on the science of housekeeping, child rearing, husband-keeping; useful for girls' and women's moral development. It will not say a word on national politics."<sup>74</sup> The articles in the early women's press elaborated women's vision of a new kind of marriage. Already in the pages of the Constitutionalist press, women, such as Ta'irah, had aired more publicly the ideas that Bibi Khanum Astarabadi had expressed in her 1894 *Vices of Men* (Najmabadi 1993). Bibi Khanum had observed that European men treated women tenderly, like bouquets of flowers, honoring them with respect and honesty. In Iran, on the contrary, men were rough, talked ugly, sought discord, and humiliated women (Bibi Khanum Astarabadi 1992, 57). Whereas in Europe men and women socialized pleasurably, marital life in Iran was an endless war of attrition (58–60). In a section subtitled "How Men Look After Their Wives," Bibi Khanum offered a devastating portrait of men marrying deceitfully, cheating women of their rightful privileges and rights, getting bored with them, and ignoring them or divorcing them for

a new spouse (82–88). She revealed her own story of marriage to demonstrate that in Iran even the best of marriages was in jeopardy. Her marriage, she emphasized, had been based on mutual love and affection. She and her husband had waited for four years for family opposition to the match to abate. She wrote admiringly that her own mother had not demanded the *mahr* or any other payments as a condition for the marriage: “It was my mother’s custom to give her daughters free, that is, she would not sell them” (89). In the early years of her marriage, Bibi Khanum was overwhelmed by six children. To get some respite from her husband’s sexual demands, she encouraged him to make a temporary marriage with a female servant. But her plan ran afoul: at the temporary wife’s demand, Bibi found herself expelled from her own household. She fought the divorce. More interested in financial gain than in a union with Bibi Khanum’s husband, the servant left, and the saga ended in a joyful reunion between husband and wife. Despite the happy ending, the lesson had more dire implications: even the best of men and the best of marriages cannot provide a woman with a lifelong, loving partnership.

Within a decade of Bibi Khanum’s writing, women began to figure out how such marriages might be crafted: men had to reform, and women had to acquire education. Ta’irah, writing in *Iran-i naw*, was unambiguous. Men had to accept monogamy; to encourage men to remain faithful to one good woman, women had to be good, that is, educated. Only when men learn to value monogamy and women become worthy companions would men and women become partners for life.<sup>75</sup>

Although later issues of *Danish* ran articles on fashion and physical beauty, education remained the cornerstone of a good marriage.<sup>76</sup> An author, identifying herself as “a girl educated in Europe,” praised the “new situation of women.” In the old days, she argued, women had no education and had no status in their husband’s eyes unless they were young and beautiful; now educated women had many good qualities. Women had been sadly mistaken when they sought their place in their husband’s heart by making up their faces and putting on fancy clothes instead of paying attention to educating their children and housekeeping. It was knowledge and good qualities that a husband never tired of, not good looks and fancy clothes. She urged her dear sisters to be equal to their husbands, at least in education. They should not think that pleasant manners and a kind tongue guarantee his love. A wife should be a friend and companion of her husband.<sup>77</sup>

In a typical article on “husband-keeping,” the author of a *Danish* article advised the wife on how to make her husband happy, how to treat his relatives, how not to keep complaints within the family, and how to avoid

bad-tempered behavior. It was a big mistake, women were cautioned, to love their children more than their husband: "Unless there is a husband, there are no children; therefore, one must unavoidably love one's husband more than one's children."<sup>78</sup>

A parallel essay, titled "Rasm-i zandari" (How to Look After Your Wife), articulated the expectations of a new wifehood upon men. Men were advised to treat their wives kindly, consult with them on issues, and be attentive to their difficulties.<sup>79</sup> They were encouraged to tell their wives about what was happening in the outside world so that the husband and wife could become more attuned. Another essay similarly emphasized that men should treat their wives as friends, with kindness, not be harsh with them, and realize that after their parents, the closest person in their life was their wife. Men, it continued, had no right to insult and demean their wives.<sup>80</sup>

Articles in *Danish* on marriage in other countries emphasized that men and women were free in their choice of mate and socialized with their prospective spouse.<sup>81</sup> An article on marriage in Istanbul began by noting that in the Ottoman domains, "in the past several years among some people it is no longer acceptable [*pasandidah*] to take more than one wife. In this constitutional period, the situation of Ottoman women has become like women of Europe."<sup>82</sup> The emphasis on women choosing their life partners with knowledge and not trusting the words of any relative or neighborhood marriage broker was articulated as well in many articles in Iran's second women's journal, *Shukufah*.<sup>83</sup>

A major theme in the women's press on "husband-keeping" was that women should not be emotionally preoccupied with other women but should concentrate on providing the new man of nation with support. As one woman put it, "Women of the country ought to be educated/trained [*tarbiat shavand*], because if men do not have comfort and peace at home, it would be impossible for them to serve the nation and run the affairs of the country."<sup>84</sup> The nuclear family also excluded female figures like the wet nurse/nanny. Although earlier articles in the women's press were sometimes addressed to both mothers and nannies, the emphasis was decidedly on biological mothers nurturing their children. Using nannies was to be a last resort. An article in the third issue of *Danish* was devoted to all the physical, moral, and political ills that ensue from entrusting one's child to a nanny.<sup>85</sup> Mothers were told to avoid giving their unique (*yigana*) child to a stranger (*bigana*) nanny; the child must receive nourishment from the breast of mother's love.<sup>86</sup> Much was made of the goodness of the mother's milk and the dirty/impure milk of a nanny who lived an unhygienic life. The racialization of Iranianness went explicitly through

mother's milk. The author informed her readers of a child whose eyes developed a twisted condition because the nanny had twisted eyes, of a Persian prince who drank camel milk and rode camels all his life because he had been entrusted to an Arab lady in childhood, of an honorable lady who was incontinent all her life because her nanny had been so and she had inherited it from her,<sup>87</sup> and of the foul language the children pick up from their nannies.<sup>88</sup>

Perhaps even more than *Danish*, the journal *Shukufah* espoused the new type of wife and mother. *Shukufah* was edited by Muzayyan al-Saltanah, herself an active educator who established three elementary schools and one vocational school for girls. Article after article in the pages of *Shukufah* advised women to forget all the nonsense that their mothers and grandmothers had taught them about how to keep their husbands. To become a woman of modernity was a learning process that demanded an unlearning.<sup>89</sup> Women should consider the house their kingdom to run. All the important qualities necessary for running the affairs of a country, such as the basics of humanity, honesty, trustworthiness, hygiene, hard work, time management, seeking knowledge, resistance in the face of hardship, and avoiding bad manners, were learned in childhood.<sup>90</sup> Muzayyan al-Saltanah also believed that the schools had an important role in the ethical and moral development of young girls.<sup>91</sup> Although the journal, like *Danish*, published articles on women's as well as children's health and hygiene, a growing number of articles were concerned with women's moral development, demonstrating a clear anxiety over the direction of changes that were becoming evident in women's heterosocial performance.<sup>92</sup> The articles in *Danish* and *Shukufah* were "how-to" manuals for conceptualizing nuclear monogamy. These publications replaced "maternal advice" ("old wives' tales," advice of Kulthum Nanah), becoming mother/educators for the younger generation of women.

Women's educational projects, whether in the girls' schools or on the pages of the women's press, were to craft the scientific mother and the learned companionate wife. I want to emphasize again the enabling work of two seemingly conflicting moments here: one disciplinary, the other emancipatory. It was the moment of "freedom and sharing life with men" that made the discipline of the self as expounded in the press and taught in the schools not only a workable but a desirable project for women. Conversely, the new disciplinary and regulatory practices and concepts defined the acceptable social space for freedom of the modern woman. The success of this double work made her place in the nation possible. She would be ready to become a citizen. In fact, it was within the girls' schools that women had

already begun to constitute themselves as citizens from the time of the Constitutional Revolution, as we will see in the next chapter. The new mother and wife had begun to make a different claim to womanhood.

These new claims eventually clashed with the limits set by the former discourse. That women's claims had already gone beyond the earlier discourse was clear in the new round of "educational debates" of the 1930s. Why did women need to pursue higher education? Was not the goal of their education to become better mothers and wives? What, then, would they do with their higher diplomas? These arguments were advanced against women's entry to upper grades of high school and to university education. Having been entrapped by the very discourse that had opened up education to them in the first place, women now opted to enlarge their notion of "domestic duties" to mean national service. The new home to whose management they now began to lay a claim was no longer their conjugal household but the national home, Iran. Women's embrace of Riza Shah's agenda in the 1930s can thus be seen not as a "selling out" of women's cause to the increasingly powerful state; rather, Riza Shah's program of constructing the citizen as a servant of the state—*nawkar-i dawlat*—provided the possibility for women to break out of the trap of what can now indeed be named domesticity. They could claim their right to higher education and to many professions in the name of service to the state. Having mothered the nation, they could now serve the state. Again, one can see both disciplinary and emancipatory dynamics in this scenario: appropriation of the notion of servant of the state enabled women to claim their right to higher education and professions while subjecting those rights to regulations, demands, and agendas of the state—a legacy that marked the Iranian women's movement during the Pahlavi era.

## 8 Women or Wives of the Nation?

Articulation of homeland (*vatan*) as a female body had highly contentious repercussions for woman as citizen. Within the familial trope of the modern nation, whether as a *sister*-citizen or as an occupant of the same gender category as *mothervatan* (or a female beloved *vatan*), woman became subject to man's possession and protection. What did it mean to claim parity with men as citizens, as children of the same mother homeland, yet to be under the protective fold of brother-citizens? What did woman-as-metaphor for homeland do for woman-as-citizen?

Moreover, in the early years of the twentieth century, the very word *woman* (*zan*), was a contested notion; meaning both woman and wife, it represented the ambiguity of womanhood itself. The Constitutionalist discourse on women integrated two contradictory discursive elements within itself.<sup>1</sup> This contentious articulation mapped the possibilities, as well as the limitations, of imagining a new womanhood. The first was a discourse of parity (*hamta'i*, not to be conflated with equality, *tasavi*), that is, woman designated as man's partner in the newly imagined nation of Iran. *Zan* was thus woman in apposition to *mard* (man), and between them there was parity. The second was a discourse of woman subject to man's possessive protection (*qaymu-mat*), derived from Islamic-Iranian notions. Here woman was subordinate to man, and *zan* was placed in apposition to *shawhar*, that is, wife to husband. This element was not simply borrowed from a prior discourse on women to consolidate male privilege in the new nation, although that may well have been its effect. It was not merely a leftover of misogynous thinking about women that lingered into modern thought. Rather, it became articulated through the Constitutionalist "language of grievances" at the political level. The ambiguity residing in the conflicting discourses on womanhood was further reinforced by another related modernist development: the movement to

purify the Persian language of Arabic words. This movement confounded the ambiguity of *zan* as woman and wife by eliminating the common usage of alternative words for wife, such as *zawjah* and *'ayal*, and alternative words for women, such as *nisvan* and *'unasiya*.<sup>2</sup>

Constitutionalist women played a crucial role in rupturing the suture between these two meanings of *zan* and opening up the possibilities for reimagining the meaning of woman. Through their activities and persistent writings in the press, they created their own space of citizenship next to their patriotic (*vatani*) brothers. Women's journals in the second half of the 1910s eventually went beyond the discourse of parity toward the language of equality.

### THE CONTESTING AMBIGUITIES OF WOMAN

In texts of the Constitutional period (late nineteenth century through early 1910s), the word *zan* is often ambiguous. A common expression of the time such as *zanha-yi millat* could mean women or wives of the nation. The linguistic ambiguity is compounded by a double political one. First, *millat* itself was a fluid notion at the time, meaning *mardum*, "the people," but moving closer in meaning to "the nation."<sup>3</sup> Second, the newly crafted national community was often conceived of as a brotherhood of male citizens, *baradaran-i vatani*. As women began to claim a political space and project themselves as sisters of the land (*khvahan-i vatani*) the masculinity of *millat* was challenged to include women as citizens. These multiple meanings make it difficult, even within a textual context, to decide which meaning of the word *zan* is intended.

Take, for example, the following passage from a parliamentary discussion in the first Majlis (the Iranian parliament). On 21 November 1906, a deputy, Hajj Sayyid Nasrallah Taqavi, in his remarks on the unsettling state of the country, asked: "What does this nation say? This nation says that we have concluded a covenant with death; we will not accept dominance of foreigners" (Sadr Hashimi 1946a, 31). Discussing the critical situation, which once again had forced the parliament to contemplate looking for new foreign loans, he added: "Fearing the shame of this new loan, *zanha-yi millat* are ready to sell the rug from under their feet and the clothes from their backs to help the government overcome its present need. But those manly men, that is, those dutiful, grateful, and life-sacrificing servants [of the government] do not give a damn. Nay, more! They are yet again sewing bags to grab as much as they can from the new sources of money" (Sadr Hashimi 1946a, 31).

*Zanha-yi millat* is ambiguous here not only for the reasons already suggested but also because of its location in a multiple context. The parliamentary discussion places *zanha-yi millat* in the national political arena. Connecting *zanha* to the question of the shameful foreign loan, *millat* is brought forth as "nation" and *zan* as a female citizen. Simultaneously, the activities ascribed to women—selling the rug from under their feet and the clothes they wear—place women figuratively in the household, thus according *zan* the meaning of wife.

The ambiguity of the word *zan* in the context of a parliamentary speech points to the conflicting notions of womanhood in this critical period. The notion of *zan* itself included two contesting elements: the discourse of partnership/parity that imagined women as participant members of a modern nation, and the discourse of possession/protection that located woman within family subject to man. At different political moments, this ambiguity was resolved with differing outcomes for women's rights. The debate in the first Majlis over the legality of women's associations was a case in which the discourse of parity won out. In the second Majlis, the notion of woman as subordinate to and protected by man was invoked to reject women's right to vote.

In the first debate, on 12 March 1908, the Majlis discussed the legal and moral status of women's associations (*anjuman*). In this period, women's associations organized various public functions—"garden parties," screenings of films, and other performances—to raise funds to establish girls' schools, for formation of capital for the National Bank, for victims of battles in Azarbayjan during the fights against anti-Constitutionalist forces, and to celebrate such national occasions as the opening of the Majlis.<sup>4</sup> Several deputies argued that neither the constitution nor Islamic shari'a sanctioned women's associations and that they should be prohibited by the police (*nazmiyah*). They were challenged by Vakil al-Ru'aya, the outspoken deputy from Hamadan: "First, we must ascertain whether from the beginning of Islam to the present day, gathering of women in one place has been religiously prohibited. This name, association [*anjuman*], is of course a new expression. What harm would it ensue if some women got together and learned good moral behavior from each other? Of course if it became evident that some corruption of religious or worldly matters is caused by them, then it should be stopped; otherwise, in principle, this should not be a bad development" (Sadr Hashimi 1946a, 484).

Another deputy, Hasan Taqizadah,<sup>5</sup> joining the debate, confirmed the religious grounds for approving women's gatherings and immediately turned to the Constitutionalist language, which defined men and women



as members of the same nation: "There is no religious objection to such gatherings, and women of Islam have always and everywhere come together. Also according to the constitution, this is not objectionable. *When it [the constitution] says an Iranian, the word is inclusive of men and women both.* So long as gatherings are not disruptive of religious and worldly affairs, there is no harm and no prohibition" (Sadr Hashimi 1946a, 484; my emphasis).

This discursive shift beyond the realm of Islamic history and law, to declare "Iranian" inclusive of women and on a par with men, turned the debate to the advantage of those supporting women's right to form their own associations. No further objection was raised.

In the second Majlis, convened in 1909 after the victory of Constitutionalist forces over Muhammad 'Ali Shah, the electoral laws were debated at length and drastically modified. It was during the course of this debate that the issue of voting rights for women was first raised. Despite the dominance of secularist forces, symbolized by the execution of Shaykh Fazl'allah Nuri, in this debate the rhetoric of protection outmaneuvered that of parity. On 3 August 1911, during the debate over the proposed electoral law barring women from the right to vote, the same Vakil al-Ru'aya raised a cautious but courageous objection: "With a great deal of courage, I want to say that [with regard to] item one that deprives women [of the vote], they are also creatures of God. On the basis of what rational justification can we thus deprive them? . . . Women are also created by God. . . . For how long can we deprive these creatures of God [of their rights]?" (Sadr Hashimi 1946b, 1530–31).<sup>6</sup>

Another deputy, Zuka' al-Mulk, argued that although many deputies, including himself, wish to see an expansion of women's rights and improvement of their lives, at the present time it was not possible for them to vote; it was so self-evident as to need no justification. Mudarris, a well-known clerical leader and deputy to the second Majlis, joined the debate:

Since the beginning of my life, many events . . . have happened to me. None of them have had my body tremble. Today my body was shaken. First, an objection to the Commission [that had drafted the proposed electoral law]. Women should not have been mentioned among those who do not have the vote. That would be like saying that they are not of the insane, or the idiots.<sup>7</sup> . . . But as to our answer . . . if we reflect we see that God has not endowed them with the ability to be electors. . . . They are among the weak, their minds do not have the capacity. Moreover, in our religion, Islam, they are under supervision, "men are in charge of women."<sup>8</sup> . . . Our official religion is Islam. They are in our charge. They will have absolutely no right to elect. *Others should protect the rights of women.* (Sadr Hashimi 1946b, 1531; my emphasis.)

No deputy responded to Mudarris. This silence was in part a consequence of the proposed legislation itself. Denial of women's right to vote was embedded within the article that stated "persons under age or under religious/legal guardianship [*taht-i qaymumiyat-i shar'i*]" were excluded from the electorate. Mudarris's recitation of the Qur'anic verse (4:34), bringing women into protective "custody of men," sealed women's exclusion from the electorate.<sup>9</sup> The discourse of protection/possession, infantilizing women by putting them in the same category of exclusion as persons under age and under religious/legal guardianship, triumphed over the attempt to call women equal creatures of God. Women were barred from the voter category. *Iran-i naw*, one of the most influential and radical modernist newspapers, regularly carrying reports of parliamentary debates, noted, "Mr. Mudarris usefully explained condition one [of article 4 of chapter 2]."<sup>10</sup>

The resigned voice of *Iran-i naw*, echoing Mudarris's theatrical presentation, was grounded in a shared articulation of women as men's protected possessions. In the Constitutionalist discourse, however, depriving women of equal rights was not justified with recitations of Qur'anic verses. Rather, it was the political language of grievances against the old regime that scripted women as the weak victims of autocracy in need of the protective custody of a just constitution and of manly citizens.

#### GENDER AND SEXUALITY IN THE POLITICAL LANGUAGE OF CONSTITUTIONALISM

The Constitutional "order of things" was intimately linked with sexual and gender order. The modern Iranian nation drew its sense of manly brotherhood from an order of gender and sexuality whose genealogy in past notions of manhood was reconfigured through the political language of patriotism and constitutionalism. This political reconfiguration crafted modernity as a heteronormalized patriarchal order. The new cultural order, however, in part depended on reallocating its own gender discrimination to a notion of the (Arab/Islamic) traditional past, on its celebration of heteronormativity, and on relegation of same-sex desire and practice onto something called the "pre-modern." Yet the Constitutionalist language itself depended on gender hierarchy, and the to-be-forgotten male object of desire continued to haunt Iranian modernity in the garb of the *fukuli* (bow-tied) man.<sup>11</sup>

The patriotic discourse of Iranian Constitutionalism drew on the literature of "the end of time" to invoke the necessity for a great transformation. Gender and sexual disorder were among the signs of the apocalypse. A

typical sermon, given in April 1905, warned that during the reign of a eunuch (implying Aqa Muhammad Shah, r. 1785–97), the people would suffer greatly, and during the reign of a king enamored of young males and women (implying Muzaffar al-Din Shah, r. 1896–1907), rebels would appear in cities and great transformations would occur. The people's misery would draw to an end and would be followed by a time of happiness.<sup>12</sup> Anti-Qajar stories depended for their political work on accusing Qajar women of fantastic sexual improprieties and on marking Qajar masculinity with the desire for penetrates and for young adolescent males.<sup>13</sup> Muzaffar al-Din Shah himself was often satirized as sister Muzaffar (*abji* Muzaffar).<sup>14</sup> While this appears to be a charge of effeminization, there is another, sometimes forgotten, layer to this naming: *abji* was (and is) used to refer to adult men who enjoy anal penetration. In anti-Qajar political literature, both Muzaffar al-Din Shah and his father, Nasir al-Din Shah, were often called *lachchak bisar* (wearer of scarf). Protesters, including women, during the tobacco boycott of 1890 are reported to have shouted at Nasir al-Din Shah in these words: "O mustached Shah Baji, O wearer of scarf, O you irreligious fellow, we don't want you!"<sup>15</sup>

Calling Muzaffar al-Din Shah an *abji* and Nasir al-Din Shah a *baji* and questioning their manhood by calling them "wearer of scarf" revealed sexual and gender anxiety. Women wearing men's clothes was considered a prominent sign of gender disorder. Conversely, men were shamed for behaving like women, *zan'sifat*. Historically, dressing men in women's clothes, in particular head scarves, that quintessential mark of public female visibility, was employed to shame men in public. A military leader, escaping the scene of battle, could be punished by parading him in public in women's clothes.<sup>16</sup> Men's weakness could also result in women taking on men's responsibilities; manliness performed by women was a marker of shame for men.<sup>17</sup>

Constitutionalists used this cultural language to shame men and to provoke them into political action to save their manhood: "O sons of vatan: Exert yourselves so that you are not forced to dress like women [*bikushid ta jamah-i zanan napushid*]." <sup>18</sup> The preceding expression was widely used in patriotic discourse.<sup>19</sup> Alternative expressions chastised men for "covering themselves in layers of veils like women" (*mastur bih pardah chun mukhaddarat*),<sup>20</sup> for sitting like women inside the home and doing nothing (*misli-i zanan dar khanah nishastah va dast ru-yi dast guzardah*),<sup>21</sup> or, most common, as deserving to become *lachchak bisar* (with a head scarf). This latter was not only a verbal insult but an actual symbolic performance that would provoke men into battle.<sup>22</sup> At several critical moments in the

life of the first parliament, women are said to have gone there and shamed the deputies by threatening to cover the men's heads with women's scarves.<sup>23</sup> Such reports that women participated in acts of public shaming indicate that both men and women read the offer of *lachchak bisar* as a sign of men's shame, and that women were unconcerned about the possible negative cultural work of this symbolic act for the constitution of womanhood. It also points to the shared cultural ground between Constitutionalists and their political adversaries. Shaykh Fazl'allah Nuri, the clerical leader of the anti-Constitutionalists, recited among the signs of disorder ensuing from a parliamentary regime the fact that women dressed as men and roamed in the streets.<sup>24</sup> And when reports circulated that some women prostitutes were roaming the streets of Tehran in men's attire, the Constitutionalists claimed that this had happened at the instigation of anti-Constitutionalists in order to claim that such transgressions arose from a Constitutional regime (Nazim al-Islam Kirmani 1983, pt. 2, 432). After the fiasco of Arsenal Square in December 1907, Shaykh al-Ra'is, the Constitutionalist Qajar prince, poured scorn on the defeated forces of Nuri and his supporters by taunting them as womanly:

On the day of battle, what men have to accomplish cannot be done  
by women;  
Even if they tie fast their belts and put on hoods.<sup>25</sup>

Even when women actually dressed as men to fight for the Constitutional cause and were admired for their participation, the sentiment was at once translated into men's shame and men's failure in their manly duties. Tahirzadah Bihzad recounts a story about a wounded fighter in Tabriz who refused to be undressed to have the wounds cared for. It turned out that the fighter was a woman. Realizing this, Sattar Khan, one of the military leaders of Constitutionalists in Tabriz, was moved to tears, telling her, "I'm still alive, why did you go to the battlefield?" (1984, 327).

Although women shared this cultural outlook, their active participation in the movement began a process of reconsideration. Within a few years, women modified *bikushid ta jamah-i zanan napushid* to *bikushid ta jamah-i zanan-i bi'himmat napushid* (act, so that you do not have to wear the attire of irresponsible women).<sup>26</sup> On other occasions, they left out the word *women* (*zanan*) and replaced it with three dots, as if it suddenly occurred to the writer that something was unacceptable in her sentence,<sup>27</sup> or else the word *women* was replaced by named individual men of state who were the particular target of critique. In an open letter, addressed to "leaders of the nation and vanguards in the field of honor and endeavor,"

women of Sangilaj (an old Tehran neighborhood) declared that they, unlike mean-natured un-men (*namard*) who were letting the country go to ruins, were prepared to sacrifice their lives for the country and the nation, and to consolidate the Constitutional government in a manly manner. It implored ministers and members of the parliament to act in a manner that would enable these women, as well as women of the whole city, nay the whole country, to say: "O men! Act, so that you do not have to wear the attire of Sani' Hazrat."<sup>28</sup>

The cultural language that women Constitutionalists inherited was deeply male-centered, as was the sociopolitical public domain. To use this language to claim citizenship was an enormous challenge for women, especially when the very terms of patriotic duties of Iranians were articulated through notions of gender hierarchy. Nowhere was this challenge more evident than within the language of grievances—the dominant political language of the time.

#### WOMAN IN THE LANGUAGE OF GRIEVANCES

It may seem self-evident that when men occupied positions of religious, cultural, and political power, when new ideas of modernity emerged from the interactions and conversations of male writers and leaders, that modernity would be articulated in a male-centered language whose linguistic, social, and political subject would be male. Men would be at the center of the text; women would mark the margins. Contrary to the current argument that because the Persian language is gender neutral, it includes women, in the period under discussion, the gender neutrality of the language meant the total exclusion of women. When one meant "she," one had to say so. For instance, in this Constitutionalist verse "O youth of the land! It is the season for our freedom / It is time for our happiness, rejoicing, fun and celebration" (Sharif Kashani 1983, 1:304), the word *youth*, without any linguistic markers denoting it as male, means to the Iranian who hears or reads the verse, then and even now, "young men." In other texts of the period, parallel constructions made the maleness of the youth more explicit: "O respectable representatives! Why did you ruin, through your bad intentions and disposition, a National Consultative Assembly that was obtained with the blood of the youth, the honor of women and the burning of infants?"<sup>29</sup>

The parallel construction distinguished youths from women and infants, thereby sealing them as male. The parallelism in this text was doubly distinctive in that it specified what each category offered the cause of

the Constitutionalist parliament: blood, honor, and life, respectively the most valuable offering by each category of the nation.

The use of the connective *and* (*waw*) performed a similar distinction/exclusion. Reporting on the departure of elected deputies from Tabriz to take their parliamentary seats, *Adalat* wrote, "There was such a great unimaginable sensation of joy and feeling evident in the population. The general public *and* children *and* women were offering good wishes, and expressing their hopes and expectations."<sup>30</sup> The connective *ands* exclude children and women from the general public, delimiting the public to adult males.

Yet, women *had* made a presence in the text through the connective *ands*; because they participated in the Constitutionalist activities of the time, they had to be added on to the male public. The parallel constructions and the uses of *and* excluded women from the general (masculine) category, yet they created a new hybrid space of political activity for their inclusion. Their supplemental work was surely transformative. The maleness of the text, as well as the maleness of the social context, became an arena of struggles that challenged male exclusivity.

Women began to appear next to men both in the sociopolitical domain and in discourse. A leaflet (*intibah'namah*), dated 7 May 1909, warned Muhammad 'Ali Shah, "O king! . . . do not battle with the nation more than this. . . . O king! What proof for the loyalty of the nation of Iran to the king more than this that so far it has not consented to wasting the Majesty's sacred life. Otherwise, God be our witness, there have been people ready for it among the Constitutionalists everywhere—in the *andarun* and the *birun* and the *khalvat* [inner and outer courts and the private coterie of the king], servants, doormen, soldiers—women and men" (Sharif Kashani 1983, 1:289).

The expression used in this text for "women and men" (*'unathan va dhukuran*) is not, of course, a new one. But something new is in the making. On the one hand, women and men are placed in their respective presumed spaces, the inner and outer courts; yet they have also acquired new descriptive terms: as Constitutionalists and as belonging to "the nation of Iran." Similarly, in the following passage from *Habl al-matin* (18, 4 [18 July 1910]: 10), women and men are both written into "our nation": "Our nation, young and old, women and men, have parted with their lives and anticipate that the Russians carry out their promise [to withdraw from the North] and hope for the just sentiments of other governments."

In a Constitutionalist poem, women and men both engage in the patriotic modernist pastime of reading the newspapers:

From the Constitution, the country prospered.  
 From oppression, the nation was liberated.

.....  
 Since the emergence of the moon of Constitution,  
 our brothers' eyes and ears have opened.

Men and women read the newspapers;  
 in all affairs, they have become knowledgeable. (Namini 1984, 778)

Thus, women were, like men, scripted as actors engaged in a number of Constitutionalist activities. They were prepared to assassinate the anti-Constitutionalist king, to sacrifice their lives, and they were reading the newspapers.

The presence of women in a hitherto male domain was, however, contested. While in the preceding examples the Constitutionalist discourse placed women next to and on a par with men, it crafted women as subjects of male possession and protection through the language of grievances.

In the Constitutionalist discourse, acts of oppression or cruelty against women and children were narrated to condemn autocratic rule. A power that oppressed the most helpless and the weakest was immoral and intolerable and deserved to be overthrown.<sup>31</sup> In the narratives of grievances against the autocracy, and in the rhetoric of mobilization for a constitution, women were oppressed and dishonored by the vices of autocratic government. Men were called upon to act against these vices, to rise up against autocracy and form a constitutional government: to establish the will of the nation and to reestablish moral order. National sovereignty and masculine honor became the simultaneous prizes of a changed political regime.

In most of these narratives, oppression and cruelty were linked to transgressions against women's sexual integrity, defined as men's honor (*namus*). They constituted a condensed sign that political, moral, and social oppression had gone beyond the limits of tolerance. It was time to introduce great changes. The most famous tale of multiple loss was "the story of the daughters of Quchan," in which destitute peasants sold their young daughters to Turkoman tribes to pay taxes to Asif al-Dawlah, the aristocrat governor of Khurasan. It became a narrative of outrage that condemned the old regime and inspired political mobilization against it. Multiple transgressions across many politically explosive boundaries in this remarkable tale included the class tension between peasants and aristocrats and the ethnic, sociological, and sectarian boundaries between Turkish Sunni raiding tribes and Persian Shi'i settled peasants. The selling of young virgin girls/daughters (*dukhtar*) violated the family's sexual honor. The Turkomans were said to have taken the girls across the Russian-Iranian border,

thus betraying national honor, and to have sold them to Armenians of 'Ishqabad (Ashkabad), thereby transgressing religious honor. Narrated in a variety of genres of revolutionary literature, the event signified a multiplicity of national, sexual, and religious losses.<sup>32</sup>

In much of the Constitutionalists' agitational literature, side by side with wealth, women and children were listed as subject to male possession: "We the people must think of reforming our own situation, and find a Kavah, the Blacksmith. There is no oppression, no humiliation greater than this: Have you thought about how many women, how many sick people, how many children, how much money, what wealth has been taken away from the people over the past few nights? Can you imagine what oppression has been committed against the people?"<sup>33</sup>

Recounting the sufferings of the people of Isfahan under Iqbal al-Dawlah, Sharif Kashani documented the response of Isfahanis to the governor's order to reopen the bazaar in these terms: "Governors are there to ensure security. We have no security. Our goods, whether food stuff or clothesware, have been ruined by the soldiers; our women, our honor and chastity have been ruined by the soldiers. Our children dare not go outdoors for the fear of being kidnapped for Iqbal al-Dawlah. We will never reopen the bazaar."<sup>34</sup>

The word *atfal* or *bachchah'ha* used in this and many other similar texts for children, though grammatically gender neutral, meant young male adolescents in Persian prose of this period. Along with women, young males were seen as in jeopardy because the oppressor's transgression included taking them for sexual pleasure. It was not so much the same-sex nature of this transgression that was objected to in this and similar protest literature. As with women (young or adult), young males were subject to possession and protection of the male head of household and thus any transgression against them constituted a challenge to his honor. The governor of Isfahan was thus seen as unfit to be a ruler because his transgressions against the male heads of households' domain of possession and protection dishonored the latter. Men's sense of honor was appealed to. They were to stand up, to protect and take possession of their wealth, their women, and their *atfal*. The language of honor, in this political rewriting, became the language of political mobilization.<sup>35</sup>

In a leaflet signed by Iranian Social Democrats from the Caucasus, the writer told the story of two women he had met trying to cross the border into Russia. They were seeking their husbands, who had taken refuge in Russia from government oppression. He asked them what they would pay him in exchange for taking them across the border. The women said that



they had nothing to offer. If he expected anything, he would have to take them as prostitutes. Moved by their plight, the author addressed the reader of his leaflet in these terms:

O soldiers of Iran! . . . Are these not your honor? Are they not your sisters? Are they not the wives of your brothers-in-religion? Are you not in charge of protecting the honor of Iranians? . . . Without their lords [*bi'sahib*], they set off for Russia; Russian soldiers take these wretched ones, dishonor them and let go of them. If you have any sense of honor, protect your honor so that they . . . are not dishonored by the soldiers at the border or by the riffraff in the interior, for the sake of bread. . . . O you shameless ones! What has become of you?<sup>36</sup>

In a remarkable chain of fluid meanings, sexual honor became national honor: women, whose sexual honor needed protection, became sisters and wives of brothers of Iranian soldiers. These brothers were not just brothers-in-religion; they were Iranians, a national brotherhood, whose honor was synonymous with the nation's honor, or the honor of all Iranians. The message went beyond demonstrating the oppression of rulers. Where women were subject to such treatment and men did not respond, the oppression became a sign of men's unmanliness. Men were thus called upon to set right the political injustice, and to reconstitute their manhood, to salvage national and sexual honor, to save the nation and manhood in one act of justified revolt. The association between national and sexual honor, alternating from one to the other, would regenerate Iran as a manly nation.

The manliness of the nation was also transcribed through the association of womanliness and masculine lack with a weak and incompetent government. As the contest for power between the autocratic monarch and the parliament became more critical in 1908, the Constitutionalist journal *Musavat* accused the courtiers and military leaders of timidity, of "hiding like harem women behind veils of dishonor and shame." They were also belittled by being called "women with beards" (*zanan-i rishdar*),<sup>37</sup> or "bearded children" (*bachchah-i rishdar*), implying the abject figure of *mukhannas* (an adult man making himself look like a young, beardless adolescent) (Sharif Kashani 1983, 2:490; 3:752). A leaflet issued in 1909 by one of the secret societies working to restore the Constitutional government argued that the autocratic government was not as strong as it seemed. It could easily be overthrown by the courageous work of young patriots ready to give up their lives for the cause: "Today, the military might and governmental competence of a handful of soulless, half-alive autocrats of Iranian government are fairly evident to all. This womanly state and these mukhannas of the country look like men but are not men. If only people of

Tehran would realize that the situation today is very different from that of yesterday."<sup>38</sup> The association between incompetent men and the unmanly mukhannas was depicted graphically as well. In figure 38, the man on the right is wondering how the other men in the illustration have given up on their manhood to dress like women; but, he objects, in civilized states even women fight and sacrifice greatly for their rights.

Both men and women Constitutionalists linked patriotism with manliness. In a letter in *Iran-i naw*, a woman exhorted men with the following: "O brothers! Today is the day of honor and magnanimity. Today is the day of manliness and endeavor. . . . Clearly, at such a precarious time the zeal of Islamism and the manliness of our brothers has been stimulated. . . . Along with us distraught women, they are ready to sacrifice life and property in a manly fashion. Following this laudable path, they act according to [the Qur'anic verse] 'men are in charge of women.' Manliness and Iranianness require that they not refuse their lives and property in order to protect the honor of Islamism."<sup>39</sup> But, whereas men often used such expressions as *zan'sifat* (woman-tempered) to insult or to provoke men, and conversely such adjectives as *shirmard* (like a male lion) to compliment women,<sup>40</sup> the conflict embedded within this discourse for women as citizens pushed them to introduce partial breaks from it through a number of strategies, including its ironical rearticulation, as we will see shortly.

From the culturally hegemonic notion that men protected and possessed women, the language of grievances against the old regime wove a new cloth. Suturing sexual honor with national mobilization, it argued for the necessity of changing the political order. This double act of manly salvation contained and procured gender tensions. Implicitly and explicitly, this literature of warning and mobilization—Where are you men of honor?—deplored men that their indifference to honor and manliness had endangered the nation and manhood. A further sign of dishonor, however, was that women had taken to the streets. This was a paradoxical sign. Women's public presence was at once praised and resented. For instance, in a "night letter," evidently addressed to men, the presence of women on the streets was seen as both positive and negative:

You have witnessed the events of Karbala'. Has your Islamic zeal been transformed into Jewish abjectness? Shamelessly and in disgrace, O you who are less than women!, you have become silent and gone to sleep. . . . Women of Azarbayjan put on cartridge belts, breast-fed their infants in sorrow, and fought in the battlefield like male lions. . . . But [it would seem that] our decent people were only those who were murdered or imprisoned; the others have gone into a slumber of shame, like women



FIGURE 38. *Tanbih*, 24 July 1913.

in comfortable beds. . . . O you who have destroyed Islam's honor! O you who have ruined the rights of humanity! You are shameless, less than women, nay! less than dogs! . . . Did you think that all Iranians are like you, women-tempered and worshipers of Antichrist?<sup>41</sup>

There is a paradoxical tension in this text: to exhort men to action, women are praised for fighting like male lions. But because the battlefield is a male preserve, this praiseworthy behavior threatens the gendered order of things. The threat is immediately redressed by accusing men, who are absent from the battlefield, of being like women asleep at home in comfortable beds. Women's fighting presence, though initially admired, becomes immediately a sign of shame for men. Men are thus incited to awaken and prove that not all Iranians are shameless and women-tempered. Following the dominant discourse, women's presence on the streets (women-out-of-place) was often viewed as a sign of things gone wrong; gender-out-of-order signified general sociocultural disorder.

Yet in the new political context, this out-of-placeness of women was linked with positive social events. It was associated not with chaos (*fitna*) but with establishment of a constitution. In many of the texts of the period, this tension is rhetorically articulated by admiring the tenacity and endeavors of women, while interpreting their behavior as a sign of men's failure.

Muhammad Rahim al-Khawnsari's account of Constitutional events, for instance, versified this tension thus:

Zealous, the women of the city rose up.<sup>42</sup>  
 Some came to the shops in their veils.  
 Sad, heartbroken and anxious,  
 As if on fire, they came to the merchants.  
 O people! Put on the veil of women!  
 Look out! The nation is lost! (Khawnsari 1906, 13)

Here "people" is the all-male collectivity whose manhood is lost because of its inaction in the face of a national crisis. The male collectivity might as well mark the abdication of manliness by wearing the single most obvious marker of femaleness, the large head scarf (*mi'jar*). What started as a positive appreciation of women coming to the streets in a display of social honor immediately became a sign of men's failure of men. Yet in the chain of narration, the coming of women onto the streets resulted in men taking charge of the situation, the city arising in rebellion, the bazaar closing down, and everyone joining in the commotion. The monarch, upon hearing of the rebellious mood of the city, promised to form a Council of Justice (Khawnsari 1906, 13–14).

Similarly, women's donations to the Constitutionalist cause were publicized to arouse men. On 19 February 1907, for example, Speaker of the parliament, Sa'd al-Dawlah, read a letter from an anonymous woman from Qazvin,<sup>43</sup> accompanying the donation of her jewelry, "my savings for hard times," and three valuable items from a female neighbor, "a widow with a minor son." The writer requested that the items be sold and equivalent bank shares be issued in her name and the young son of her neighbor. Sa'd al-Dawlah asked the deputies if they had forgotten their own decision to stop the government from obtaining new foreign loans and appealed to them as follows: "These men of wealth [the deputies' constituencies], where did they get their wealth? It would be good for the deputies to donate a share of capital for the Bank from their own constituencies, like this respectable lady who has put up her earrings, bracelet and head ornament. . . . This is zeal. Zeal is what this respectable lady has exhibited" (Sadr Hashimi 1946a, 84).

Reports of women's zeal became a context for demanding manly action from the deputies and their wealthy male constituents.<sup>44</sup> Women's patriotic acts were often encoded as "women's manliness" (*mardanigi-i zanan*), and women were praised as *javanmard* (heroic generous men).<sup>45</sup> Calling patriotic women manly implied a reassuring restoration of gender order: only men performed such great acts.<sup>46</sup> Articles reporting women's activities were frequently titled "Is a Man Less Than a Woman?"<sup>47</sup> Often, reporters observed that "even women" were engaged

in this or that activity, indicating the writers' anxiety to mobilize men to do the same, if not more.<sup>48</sup>

To the anti-Constitutionalist charges that a parliamentary regime would create gender disorder, that men would lose control over their women, and that women would go unveiled on the streets and commit adultery, the Constitutionalist response was reassurance of gender order: manly patriotism would make women's public presence unnecessary; the paradox of women's out-of-placeness would be resolved by exhorting men to act manly and thus render it unnecessary for women to do men's work.

"WE ARE ALSO PART OF THIS NATION":  
WOMEN'S CLAIM TO CITIZENSHIP

Constitutionalist women resisted this gender containment. For them, to be called honorary men provided an opportunity to claim membership in the patriotic brotherhood. As manly women, they could acquire a public place in the nation, become "of the nation" (*az ahad-i millat*). The manly position implied parity with their vatani brothers, instead of being subject to men's protection and possession. Later generations of women's rights activists may not be satisfied with this kind of "gender erasure," but when an "essential difference of gender" was the ground for exclusion from citizenship, to claim "essential sameness" was to make a claim to men's power.<sup>49</sup>

The language of manliness was common to Constitutionalist women and men. However, aware of the disempowering and disenfranchising effects of manly protection, women often used this language with irony. One of the most rhetorically effective moves by women was to speak ironically as an ignorant, weak woman. The following is a letter by a woman to *Tamaddun*, anonymous, like many other women who wrote in the press at this time:

I am only an ignorant woman with deficient mental abilities. But since I am a sister in this land and a friend of the nation, with patriotic and nationalist zeal within me, I will tell you, fathers and brothers of our dear homeland, a little about our miserable lives, the lives of us women. . . . First of all, our fathers . . . would take us to school [*maktab*] when we were five years old—not all of us, only a very few rare ones. Then, when we were only nine, they took us out of *maktab*. What could we have learned at the age when children only think of games? . . . Second, if we could read a book or write a line, our dear fathers in anger would take the pen out of our hand and break it, tear [the paper], and throw them away. How dare a girl know how to write. . . . We women of Iran only knew how to bear children. It was you, our fathers, who brought us up this way.

Otherwise, like all creatures we are intelligent and possess reason. The only difference was that we were women and you were men. Now, for what reason, on what prerogative, should people who claim to be patriots, who consider themselves ready to sacrifice for the nation, why should they go to *Husayniyachs*, the pulpits and public places and accuse women of laziness, idleness, and ignorance? These are the same persons who would not allow people to progress. These are the same people who said that women should not leave their homes, the same people who destroyed women's intelligence and capabilities, the same people who called women the weak and brain deficient. . . . [Yet] these same women . . . have always been ahead of men. In the initial rebellion, after the murder of Sayyid 'Abd al-Majid, it was women who put clay mud on their heads [a sign of mourning and disaster], provoked men's zeal and caused general rebellion. These same women are carrying out the orders of the National Assembly. When the Majlis ordered the formation of the National Bank, these women sold their earrings and bracelets and donated the money. But the rich men who hold the wealth of the country shamelessly put their money in foreign banks. . . . We are your compatriots, we are your coreligionists. You who talk about rights of the nation, who talk about law, who speak of honor and zeal, we are also part of this nation, we also ask for our say in these rights.<sup>50</sup>

The two incidents, the "initial rebellion" and the "formation of the National Bank," through whose recounting the author includes women as men's compatriots and as part of the nation, are highly significant. Both incidents were repeatedly cited in the press (and subsequent historiographies) as moments of great national consequence, one leading to the sit-in (*tahassun*) of the clerical leaders in Qum and the eventual promise of a National Assembly, the other generating the excitement and momentum for raising funds to establish the National Bank.

Men's narrative, grounded in the discourse of "men in charge of women," assumed that women did not belong in the streets; their public presence was usurpation (*ghasb*) of men's prerogative, caused by men's unmanliness. The women's narrative, however, demanded expansion of sociopolitical space. Women's public presence became the grounds for claiming citizenship. The boundaries of social space were challenged and broken up, making room for women next to men as men's compatriots, as citizens of the nation.

The men's recitation of the national events had a tendency to guide women back to their homes. When in Tabriz large numbers of bazaaris took to the streets in support of the constitution, "a group of women wanted to join in, but they were turned back" (Kasravi 1968, 698). Two weeks after the Qazvini women's donation to the first Majlis, several rich hajjis bought

the offerings in an auction, paid cash for them, and returned the items to the women. This generous but patronizing gesture bought the women out of their place and was resented by them. Perhaps with this precedent in mind, another woman, Badr al-Muluk, sent in her diamond bracelet to the second Majlis with an accompanying letter: "It is incumbent on every member of the Iranian nation, man and woman, to assist in the improvement of this land to whatever extent their means allow them, to save our dear homeland. . . . I hope that this worthless offering is accepted by the Respectable Directory, and that you do not deprive me [of this honor]." <sup>51</sup>

A prominent woman journalist and educator, Muzayyan al-Saltanah, protested that the call for collection of funds to help the relatives of national fighters (*mujahidin-i milli*) killed during the battles for restoration of the parliamentary government had not stated what women could do for this cause. <sup>52</sup> Women thus demanded to be included. Women's letters to the Constitutionalist press indicate their deep concern about being accepted on a par with men, as companions, compatriots, and partners in the progress of the homeland.

#### SITES OF CITIZENSHIP: SCHOOLS, THE PRESS, AND THE COURTS

In women's writings of this period, both the general discourse of progress and civilization and the specific concepts of women as educated mothers, wives, and household managers were mustered to the causes of women's education and further equality with men. As "managers of the house," women would transform "the house" into a social space of citizenship. Education was not simply a means to an end. Much like the centrality of the vote for defining American citizenship (and thus for the suffragette and civil rights movements), modern education was constitutive of Iranian citizenship and of women's claims of national rights. Girls' schools proved to be the critical site of citizenship. It was there that women became orators, teachers, and servants of the nation, hanging the map of Iran on the wall, teaching Iran's history, literature, and geography, rather than the Qur'an, the hadith and the *siaq* method of arithmetic. Indeed, the Constitution was included as one of the subjects in many of the newly founded girls' schools. <sup>53</sup>

Obvious as such a curriculum may seem now, it was not then. Instead, it indicated an important shift. Although the female students and teachers of these schools would have been tutored at home or studied in a *maktab*, the new education was not a simple matter of literacy. The quest for new

schools and curriculum was a quest for a different kind of learning, one that constituted these women as national subjects, *vatani* sisters. In many speeches at school graduation ceremonies, the claim to Iran as *vatan* came through loud and clear. The Constitutional regime, women said, was the young offspring of *mothervatan*, whose care and nurture was the maternal and educational task of women.<sup>54</sup> Prefacing their donations for the purchase of national bonds, a group of Tehran women declared, "We, a body of women of Tehran, directly on our own behalf and as representatives [*vikalatan*] of all women of this country, because of our responsibility as members of the nation, declare that we are ready to accept any order by the holy Majlis."<sup>55</sup> In turn, women felt entitled to the rights of citizenship. A women's journal, *Shukufah*, asked, "Are we not members of humanity, have we no rights in this land just as this dear *vatan* has rights to us?"<sup>56</sup>

Women demanded that the government take responsibility for establishing girls' schools. If it did not, education for girls would remain limited to the urban elite. The girls' schools founded by women themselves were private and depended on tuition-paying clientele, though most allocated a number of positions for nonpaying students.<sup>57</sup> By the end of the second decade of the century, women were protesting that the government was only opening schools for boys. If the nation was a family, then girls deserved a share of the national disbursement. At first with irony and then seriously, Sédighé Dolatabadi suggested that the government (in Isfahan) spend at least half as much on women's education as it spent on men's. This was a reference to a daughter's inheritance share, which was half as large as that given to a son.<sup>58</sup> After all, she argued, the budget for the Ministry of Education came from taxes paid by citizens. "If the government followed Islamic rules, a boy's share would be two, the girl's one. . . . If you have opened up six schools for boys, you must open up three for poor girls."<sup>59</sup>

In the meantime, women continued to turn their private quarters into educational centers.<sup>60</sup> Formerly used on religious, ceremonial, or festive occasions, women's private quarters, reconstituted as spaces for national educational or fund-raising events, became sites of public civic sociability. Within these spaces, distinct kinds of sisterhood emerged that connected women across gender lines to men of the nation. Different kinds of sisterhood emerged that transcended religious, ethnic, or local affiliations. Though sometimes women referred to themselves as *khvaharan-i dini* (sisters-in-religion), more often they used two new expressions: *khvaharan-i vatani* (national sisters) and, significantly, *khvaharan-i naw'i* (gender sisters).



Women's writings about education were critical for disaffiliating women from the previous homosocial bonds of sisterhood. The old bonds were now seen as born out of ignorant, irrational, and superstitious activities. The new national and gender sisterhoods were formed through education and civic activism.<sup>61</sup> The most common self-designation of women in the writings of this period was *khadimah-i vatan* (servant of the homeland), an expression that had become possible with imagining of homeland as a familial space. As a civic, familial expression, it allowed women of Iranian provinces as well as Tehrani women, and women of various religious denominations, including Baha'i women (such as Ta'irah), to sign themselves onto the national map.

Women formed their own associations, held meetings, and gave "garden parties" to raise funds for the government and for girls' schools.<sup>62</sup> Forming associations was itself an expression of citizenship. Meetings were often held at girls' schools, which frequently were private residences of prominent women. There, women simultaneously fashioned a new individual self through literacy and a new social self through patriotic (*vatani*) political activities. At these meetings they spoke as citizens, as "we Iranians," addressed the general political problems facing the country, built sisterly solidarity on a national level, and often lamented women's disadvantages, which deprived them of the chance to be of more help to the homeland. In the reports of these meetings, women's names began to appear in print, in public. Initially, a woman was identified as someone's daughter, sister, or wife. In later years, women's own names began to appear.<sup>63</sup>

In addition to their campaigns for women's education, women actively boycotted foreign textiles, encouraged the use of native textile, and raised funds for capital formation and the establishment of a national bank.<sup>64</sup> The Constitutionalist press, especially after the parliamentary government was reestablished in 1909, reported these activities regularly and at some length.<sup>65</sup> The press coverage affirmed women's citizenship. Further, women's letters and essays published in the Constitutionalist press acknowledged them as part of the national writing and reading community. Women were quick to claim their right to be heard. When one woman's essay on freedom of the press was not published, she wrote a sharp letter asking the editor to explain his reasons: "Why are you delaying [its publication]? Do you suppose that women do not count? Do you not regard my word as genuine? Either you have no zeal for our vatan, or else we women in our own vatan do not have the right to speak."<sup>66</sup>

Women found another, novel way to bring their national presence to public attention. Instead of turning to family networks of mediation or

using customary clerical appeal, women began to take their grievances to the new judiciary courts. These cases were regularly reported in the press. Sometimes women wrote to the press about their court cases, often invoking the constitution and the language of law and rights (*qanun* and *huquq*), equality and justice (*musavat* and *'adl*) that were so central to the concept of the new parliamentary order. They adopted this language as their own, making themselves beneficiaries of the new order and claimants to the rights of citizenship.<sup>67</sup> Akram al-Dawlah, daughter of Sahibdivan, wrote to *Iran-i naw* to announce that she was taking her older brother to the great judiciary to claim her and her younger brother's shares of their father's inheritance that the older brother had usurped, "now that, thanks be to God [*bihamdallah*], laws, equality, and justice work in Iran, and the return of people's usurped rights has become common."<sup>68</sup>

Another woman, Fatimah bint 'Ali, wrote to *Iran-i naw* appealing against the judiciary on whose orders she had been evicted from her house. She called this action arbitrary, illegal, unconstitutional, and a case of severe oppression. She appealed to her dear vatani brothers and sisters to pay attention to her case: "O dear brothers, you who gave your lives to remove oppression . . . protect the Constitution, . . . do not let this grave oppression happen [to me], . . . am I not your vatani sister?"<sup>69</sup>

Fatimah Baygum, writing on behalf of her son, Husayn Khan Sardar Afkham, who had been imprisoned for thirty-eight days without a charge, demanded that her letter be published in the name of freedom of the press, "the tongue of all Iranians."<sup>70</sup>

That women now turned to a national rather than a local, familial, or religious institution for legal grievances; that they articulated their legal appeals in the language of constitutional rights, equality before the law, and justice reveals their self-perception as right-deserving, right-bearing members of the nation. The public recognition accorded them in the press coverage reveals the extent to which they were embraced as members of the nation, at least by those of national brotherhood that a journal like *Iran-i naw* represented.

On occasion, women's activism pointed to competing claims, as in the boycott of foreign goods. One women's organization, Anjuman-i himmat-i khavatin-i Irani, was formed for the specific purpose of advocating use of domestic textiles and boycotting foreign goods.<sup>71</sup> The campaign was projected to be women's translation of *hubb al-watan min al-iman* (Love of the homeland is of the faith).<sup>72</sup> When around 1915 there was a rapid rise in the prices of tea and sugar, a woman (most likely Muzayyan al-Saltanah) argued that in the past clerical leaders took the initiative and

called for temporary prohibition (*tahrim-i muvaqqati*) when a critical situation (including hoarding and rising prices) developed. It was now up to caring women (*zanan-i bata'assub*) to take this step and to add tea and sugar to their boycott.<sup>73</sup> This call was not a challenge of the clerical leaders; it was aimed at women, instructing them to act as caring citizens, and secondarily at men, pointing out that they should be ashamed of their failure to act as responsible citizens.

Women claiming the rights of citizenship sometimes challenged men's ability to run the Constitutional regime. In a speech at a women's gathering in 1910, for instance, Agha Baygum Khanum<sup>74</sup> took the male government to task for its many shortcomings:

If I am not wrong, our men do not know much about the virtues of unity either. Why is it that when our country is in trouble, our ministers, upon whose good management the life of this nation is dependent, who today hold all of the executive power of the country and who face no internal obstacle, do not assist each other, remove the foreign obstacles and strengthen our internal power? . . . O my dear sisters! If we were knowledgeable, and if we knew the workings of [state] affairs, we would address honorable members of the parliament and ask, "For how long must we have foreign troops on our land and for what reason are they here?" . . . We would ask, "Why do our great deputies not organize the domestic loan that was ratified in the Majlis?" . . . Why? . . . and why? . . . and why? . . . If we consider ourselves Iranians and consider this land belonging to us, we must strive to provide the means for keeping it.<sup>75</sup>

Another letter, sent to *Nida-yi vatan* and written by a woman who identified herself as a representative of the "Women's Secret Alliance," went even further:

For fourteen months now we have had a Constitutional government. We have spent the days and nights of our noble lives reading the newspapers, trying to figure out what the National Consultative Assembly said or did. . . . Thousands of statements have been read, many discussions have been held. What has been the result? . . . Nothing! . . .

It seems that our deputies have set up the Majlis for their own fun and amusement! A parliamentary assembly is for the sake of implementing laws. But where are your laws? Where is your Senate? Where is your judiciary? It seems that they are happy to read statements and give no answers. . . . I am a woman, and according to you gentlemen I am mentally deficient, not quite human. Thanks to my father, I was not educated. But today it is clear to everyone that [even] any widowed woman has a claim to this National Assembly and today we demand our rights. . . . We are fed up, we can no longer remain patient.

Finally, she challenged men to let women run the state for a trial period:

If our respectable deputies can finish drafting the law by the end of Ramazan,<sup>76</sup> and put some order into all other affairs so that some tranquillity descends on the people, so much the better. Otherwise . . . we give notice through this same letter that they should resign from all posts, and officially inform us through this newspaper, *Nida-yi vatan*. Let us women take into our hands all affairs for forty days, provided they do not feel ashamed. We shall elect the deputies, we shall elect the ministers, . . . we will amend the laws, we will put the city police in order, we will assign the governors, we will send legal guidelines to the provinces, we will uproot oppression and autocracy, we will kill the oppressors, we will break through the wheat and barley storages of the rich, we will form a company to handle the bread, we will open up the treasure boxes of the ministers which have been collected through the blood of people and buried in dungeons and establish a National Bank, we will defeat the Ottomans, we will retrieve the captives of Quchan and return them to their homes, we will clear the city *qanats* [underground water canals] and provide people with healthy water, we will clean the streets, and form a company for the city, and once we finish all these tasks by the end of Ramazan, we will resign our posts and will officially declare that others could then do the rest.<sup>77</sup>

Another woman, Zarrin, made a spirited retort to the representative of the Women's Secret Alliance. How can we expect, she asked, a country like Iran to accomplish in fourteen months what countries like France had not entirely achieved in half a century? She went on to make ironic use of the language of domesticity:

We should be proud that at least we have a Sacred National Consultative Assembly. . . . We should be honored to be allowed in to sweep [the floor of] the Majlis. How can we introduce security to the roads? How can we claim to uproot autocracy? How can we boast that we can retrieve the captives of Quchan? And all this in one month? . . . Have you forgotten that you are but an illiterate and ignorant woman?

Yet she pointed the blame on the same forces that were the target of the first author's criticism:

Our supposedly zealous men consider us mentally deficient. Have you forgotten that we are not free? Have you forgotten the kinds of oppression visited upon us Iranian women? . . . Have you forgotten that . . . our men say "these are women, we should act contrary to what they say," . . . that our religious leaders read our essays in the press, throw away the newspapers and say, "what meddlesome women!"<sup>78</sup>

## CLAIMS TO EQUALITY

By about 1910, the language of parity openly broke out of the bounds and bondage of male protection and moved toward the language of equality. The notion of patriotic sisters (*khvaharan-i vatani*), as well as gender sisters (*khvaharan-i naw'i*), provided a language through which moves toward equality were made. As patriotic activists, women disputed the received wisdom that they were passive, like the dead. They would prove, they contended, that they are no different from men.<sup>79</sup> Women's rights activist, writer, and prominent Baha'i educator Ta'irah went further. God, she proclaimed, had created women equal to men. Indeed, in some domains of life women were stronger than men. She pointed to child rearing as one example. Women were kinder, more loyal, and cleverer than men. Women's endurance in the face of enormous suffering was further evidence of their greater strength.<sup>80</sup>

Women's claims to equality were most frequently formulated within the educational domain. "I take up the pen to complain greatly about the fathers and husbands of Iranian girls. Why do they not yet understand that woman and man are like the two wheels of a carriage; they must be equal, neither should have privileges denied the other. If one wheel of a carriage is deficient, the carriage cannot move," wrote Shahnaz Azad. She immediately modified her claim to equality in these terms: "It should be evident that by equality I mean equality in education and learning of sciences, not in any other matter."<sup>81</sup> Another woman, Shams Kasma'i, was more daring. In a poem sent to *Shukufah* from Ashkabad, she called upon her sisters to educate themselves to cure their shortcomings, to use speech, reason, and rationality to conquer the whole world, to set fire to all superstitions, to tear asunder the veil of oppression, and to prove the equality of their rights with men through their words, deeds, and all their power.<sup>82</sup>

This poem could well be one the earliest pronouncements in Iran of the equality of rights, of a new kind of modern feminism. The discourse of equality, however, remained a minoritarian one for some time to come. Within the discourses of modernity, parity with protection remained dominant. In particular, there were few references to the women's vote and political equality. Women did not openly demand the vote until the 1940s. In 1920, for example, Sédighé Dolatabadi framed an essay addressed to "our vatani brothers," on the impending elections with "if we women had the right to participate in the elections." She then proceeded to explain what kinds of persons women would and would not elect, had they been enfranchised.<sup>83</sup>

Azad's image of the wheels of a carriage was more than a metaphor for equality. It envisaged a coupling of man and woman in a common goal, as partners in the civilizational drive of Iranian modernity. It thus imagined modernity as a heterosocial pursuit, with modern man and woman as necessary complementary parts of a whole. For homosocial Iranian womanhood to imagine modernity as heterosocial was a radical move. While empowering women's claims to equality, it harnessed this project to the heteronormalizing dynamic of Iranian modernity.

# Epilogue

## *Feminism and Its Burden of Birth*

In a recent issue of an Iranian feminist journal, an author recounted a curious episode:

The daughter of a friend of mine, a student in a good Tehran high school, came home bubbling with a report about the school, her class, and the teacher. Her teacher had said that Qajar women made themselves look like men. The daughter added, "and we saw their pictures, the women were really ugly." My friend and I asked in surprise, "What do you mean? Were they dressed as men?" She responded, "No, they were very fat and had mustaches." We asked again, "Were they wearing false mustaches?" Response: "Of course not! It was their own mustaches." Well, to cut a long story short, it transpired that Qajar women were fat and did not remove their facial hair. They did not do cosmetic surgery on their noses and faces or anywhere else, so they looked like men. (Nurbakhsh 2001, 141)

To the contemporary eye, Qajari women's mustaches made them look like men and made them ugly. Yet, in its own time, the mustache was a cherished sign of women's beauty. Carla Serena's account of her 1877 journey to Iran included a description of a feast given by the Princess 'Ismat al-Dawlah to which she had been invited: "The princess expressed interest in making me up. . . . First she covered my eyebrows across the forehead with mascara and turned each of them into a bow-shape, then she dyed my eyelashes, covered my cheeks with white powder and red blush, and finally made my lips red without forgetting to draw a thin shade of a mustache over my lips, which is apparently considered one of the beauty marks for an Iranian woman's face."<sup>1</sup>

In her description of 'Ismat al-Dawlah, Serena observed that "over her upper lips she had soft down of a mustache which gave her a manly look."

Similarly, about Anis al-Dawlah (Nasir al-Din Shah's favorite wife) she wrote that "a thick wheat-colored down shadowed her red upper lip. . . . She was the epitome of womanly beauty in Iranian eyes."<sup>2</sup> Many Persian-language sources, as well as photographs, from the nineteenth century confirm that Qajar women sported a thin mustache, or more accurately a soft down, as a sign of beauty (figure 39).<sup>3</sup>

Over a relatively short period of time, however, this mark of female beauty was transformed to one of ugliness and masculinity. We can trace the turning point quite precisely. As if to mark the end of the Qajar era in the early 1920s, the aesthetics of a woman's mustache began to evoke discomfort and disdain, as clearly expressed in a popular satirical play first staged in March 1922, *Ja'far Khan returns from Europe*. The Europhile lad Ja'far meets his female cousin Zinat, whom his mother wants him to marry, of course. He mutters to himself: "Pas mal! [the French is in the original]. She has turned out well. Except for that mustache" (Jamshidi 1994, 327). The stage directions for the play specify that in the opening scene Zinat is busy making up her face, using mascara to complete her eyebrows, and that she had previously drawn her mustache (313). At the end of this sequence, as Zinat leaves the room, once more Ja'far mutters to himself, "Well, this Zinat has turned out well, except for that mustache" (329). This first encounter between the two cousins is framed by the repetition: that mark of female beauty for Qajar society, a woman's mustache, had become a troubling sign of undesirability. A woman's mustache was in danger of becoming a sign of pastness, of out-of-dateness and was beginning to mark the figure against which Iranian modern woman was defining herself, the so-called traditional old-fashioned woman. In a 1924 issue of a women's journal, *Nisvan-i vatankhvah* (Patriotic Women), one writer's criticism of women's fashion and makeup included mention of "mascara-painted mustaches."<sup>4</sup> These emerging aesthetic sensibilities subsequently gained national hegemony, as the vignette at the beginning of this chapter demonstrates.

In the vignette, as well as in the opinion of nineteenth-century European women, moreover, the mustache is a mark of "looking like men." In the nineteenth century, however, the single most important visual marker of manhood, as we have seen, was not a mustache but a full beard. The mustache, more accurately the soft down, or the imitation thin line of mascara that women applied over their upper lips, signified khatt, the much-celebrated sign of a young man's beauty. The khatt, then a sign of young man's and woman's beauty, is no longer considered beautiful in women because it makes them look like men. But no one seems to remember that it was a sign of amrad.





FIGURE 39. Taj al-Saltanah.

For the young woman in the vignette, the issue of Qajar women's mustache is not an academic matter. Today's female teenagers have to engage in wars of attrition with their teachers and authorities (and perhaps parents) to evade this masculine ugliness. Removing facial hair can get a female high school student into trouble at home and at school. Clearly parents, teachers, and other authority figures have also forgotten the signifying work of the khatt. They do not worry that a young woman's down makes her (look like a) *sadah*—a word that in Persian means “simple” but also “beardless young man.”<sup>5</sup> Rather ironically, many adults want these young girls to remain simple and unadorned, not realizing that remaining simple (*sadah*) also makes them look like an amrad (*sadah*). They have so forgotten the amrad.

The change in aesthetic sensibilities, especially for women, is often attributed to mimicry: Iranian women attempting to look like European women about whom Iranian men fantasized and wrote endlessly, with lighter features, thinner bodies, and hairless faces. See, for example, the contrast between figure 39 with a Europeanized figure of the same woman, Taj al-Saltanah, in figure 40. I do not wish to deny the weight of this cultural pressure on Iranian women, but to read the transformation of a woman's mustache from a sign of beauty to one of masculine ugliness only as cultural mimicry misses another critical transformation in nineteenth-century Iran: the disappearance of the amrad from Iranian cultural imagination, and sometimes the willful forgetting and erasure of his significance for masculine sexuality. This act of historical amnesia has been intimately linked with emphasizing gender and cultural mimicry in critiques of Iranian modernity.

Recent feminist efforts to write women into male-centered histories have certainly succeeded. It is much less credible for historians to be oblivious of women or to ignore the work of gender. But feminist history has inadvertently contributed to this historical amnesia by doing gender analysis without regard for the historical transformations of sexuality. Feminist historiography that screens away sexuality mirrors the disavowal of male homoeroticism that became a contingent birthmark of the Iranian women's movement for parity at the end of the nineteenth century.

This historical legacy requires that feminist analysis of modernity integrate gender and sexuality, recognizing that doing one without the other is intellectually and politically a seriously damaged enterprise. From its inception, Iranian feminism has been deeply enmeshed in disavowal, denial, and eradication of male homoeroticism. What cultural and political work could contemporary feminism perform to reconfigure a genealogical branching that would deal with its own history of erasures and screening?



FIGURE 40. Taj al-Saltanah.

How could we reenvision a feminism that brings out homosocial and homoerotic possibilities that earlier feminists (women and men) felt compelled to cover over, to suppress and deny? And is it possible to do so without denigrating the integrity and gains of early Iranian feminism?

The nineteenth-century distinctions of woman, amrad, amradnuma, and man meant that gender differences were not read through a template of sexuality, and that sexuality was not read through a template of gender. Specifically, gender was not the male-female binary that we now take for granted. Adult manhood was not just, or even in the first place, marked away from womanhood but from young manhood, from "amradhood." Although being a woman and being an amrad were both positions that demarcated manhood, there was a sense of abjection associated with woman that did not pertain to amrad. Being an amrad was, after all, a transient phase of life: an amrad grew to become a man. The amradnuma, on the other hand, was a highly detested, abject figure. Unlike the woman who could not be man, the amradnuma refused to become a man, and by that refusal he threatened manhood and displayed the fragility of masculinity, the ever-present possibility of adult manhood lapsing into the state of un-manhood. Womanhood and amradnuma-hood were distinct abject positions.

The amount of cultural energy invested in discussing beards and beardlessness (and to a lesser extent women's mustaches), on *farangi'ma'abs*, and on *fukulis* points to the particularly troublesome figure of amradnuma for Iranian modernity. The association established between the beardless European (*farangi-i birish*) with the homegrown amradnuma kept modernists like Malkum Khan, Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani, and Taqizadah, who had vehemently argued that Iranians must adopt European mores, under continuous suspicion of being amradnumas. Possibly for this reason, they strongly condemned male homoeroticism and same-sex practices. The harsh criticism of Taqizadah, for example, is usually believed to be a condemnation of his advocacy of mimicking Europe. That is, it is centered on the issue of cultural inauthenticity, missing the sexual anxiety over his beardlessness, his amradnuma appearance. When attention has been paid to these changing mores, such transformations of sensibility have often been cast as effeminizing. We have become so modern that we can only think of binaries, native versus foreigner, man versus woman.<sup>6</sup>

It is this figure of amradnuma that became modernized into the *farangi'-ma'ab* dandy, the *fukuli* (the bow-tied man), as he went into a masqueraded national subjectivity. Modern manhood crafted itself in part by reconfiguring the amradnuma's sexual difference as cultural difference. This compounded masquerade made it possible to avoid trouble with sexuality and to

criticize the farangi'ma'ab for cultural inauthenticity. Our shared national laughter at Ja'far-Khan-just-returned-from-Europe is a laughter of embarrassment at his inappropriate looks, manners, speech, and presence.<sup>7</sup> But that laughter conceals our deep discomfort, if not panic, at the inappropriate sexuality that lurks in that figure.

Modernity, bringing gender into visibility and masquerading sexuality, made gender the template for the legibility of sexuality. It is then that amradnuma, along with fukuli and farangi'ma'ab, became emphatically effeminized. Since the mid-nineteenth century, the visibility of gender of Iranian modernity, focused on the veil and unveil of women, has worked to screen off issues of modern sexuality.

Feminist critiques of Iranian modernity, for instance, have focused on the disciplinary work of the female figure of excess—the Westoxicated woman—for production of modern womanhood. This focus has worked as a “screen memory” for the other figure of excess, the fukuli, the farangi'-ma'ab man, the man who mindlessly mimics European ways. Farangi'-ma'ab, however, was a figure of double displacement and double mimicry. He was a displacement not only of European man but also of the figure of amradnuma—an adult man mimicking amrad, the young male object of desire for adult men of the male homosocial/erotic domain.

In the early decades of the twentieth century, there were in fact two figures of excess. In an article in a women's journal (1915), for instance, these figures were articulated as women and men who flaunted the rules of decent behavior in public; they were excesses of urban transformations.<sup>8</sup> The female figure is reproached for abrogating “the verse on *hijab*,” for rejecting modesty and showing herself off in public, openly wanting to have fun with men; the man “with his bow tie and flower perfume, . . . having consumed some alcohol, with a cane, vain and drunk,” pops up next to her everywhere. A 1913 versified criticism of excess of the Constitutional order is centered on the inversions and unthinkable incongruities that the modernists are accused of introducing under the rubric of Constitutionalism. Among them:

Whoever heard of a God's judge wearing a slanted curl of hair

[*zulf-i yik'vari*]?

Whoever heard of a judge using makeup [*bazak mi'kard*] at a trial?

And wearing a bow tie and making enchanting moves [*ghamzah'ha-yi dilbari*]?

.....

Whoever heard of a son complaining to a commissar that his father disciplines him?

Whoever heard of a wife taking a complaint against her husband to a commission? (Sharif Kashani 1983, 3:790–92)

Along with the fear of inversion of gender and of patriarchal order, another fear informs this passage: of a particularly troublesome masculinity, a male figure with a bow tie, with zulf and makeup, replacing manhood of the past order of things. Farangi'ma'ab, marked by his superficial imitation of European ways, symbolized by his bow tie, was held responsible for many of the political, cultural, and especially moral problems facing the country.<sup>9</sup> The fukuli remained a stock figure of critical satire all the way through the 1940s. By the 1970s, however, the Westoxicated woman had pushed aside the fukuli and had become the sole figure of modernity's excess. What does the disappearance of the fukuli man tell us about gender and sexual politics of public visibility in twentieth-century Iran?

The excessively Europeanized man, the fukuli, was compounded trouble. He transgressed the rule of gender propriety by socializing in public with women who were not kin. He was an abject figure through his affiliation with the amradnuma. His multiply troublesome features allowed his public criticism to avoid "sexuality trouble" and focus on his "inauthenticity," his mimicking the European. Nonetheless, his abject affiliation with amradnuma continued to inform the vehemence of the cultural critique and the drives at denial and erasure. After all, why should Iranian modernity have spent so much cultural energy satirizing this pitiful and ineffectual (impotent?) figure?

Iranian modernity has placed the amrad(numa) in premodern times or transcendental locations. The forever revisited question of "the nature of Sufi love" may turn out to be a modernist obsession, arising from the nineteenth-century heterosexualization of love and the consequent modernist embarrassment over what to do with the homoeroticism of Sufi love.<sup>10</sup> Reinventing it as transcendental is quite an ingenuous plot, though there is always fear and anxiety over the leakage of the transcendental into the material. The transcendentalization of Sufi love has been coupled with marking male same-sex practices as filthy and debased, always marked as pederasty/pedophilia, and a horrid consequence of gender segregation and the "unavailability" of women to men. In other words, the transcendentalization of Sufi love goes along with producing same-sex love as a vice that heterosexualization of love and heterosocialization of public life would put right. One aspect that a study of modernist production of heterosexuality would have to investigate is the partial convergence of modernist production of homosexuality-as-vice with Islamic jurisprudential discourse on *liwat*.

Homoeroticism and same-sex practices as signs of premodernity are often explicitly based on a heteronormative presumption that considers homosexuality a consequence of gender segregation. The argument that homosexuality is frustrated heterosexuality is a commonplace in the modernist disavowal of male (and female) homoeroticism—always located in the past, always already resolved and overcome. The modernist presumption that beauty attributed to young, beardless male faces is a consequence of social practices that excluded women from men's social life follows from the assumption that heterosexuality is normal and homoerotic desire is abnormal.<sup>11</sup> We do not find this assumption in much of classical Islamic thought, literary or jurisprudential. William C. Young's harsh critique of Murray and Roscoe's book, *Islamic Homosexualities*, concludes: "Seclusion, not Islam, seems to be the best variable to choose for testing hypotheses about the frequency and forms of homosexuality in the lands between Morocco and southeast Asia—that is, in those countries where some form of seclusion is practiced. It would be interesting to search for a correlation between the strictness of women's seclusion (mild, for example, in Greece, Malta, and urban Turkey, but very strict in Qatar, Yemen, and Oman) and the frequency of male homosexuality."<sup>12</sup>

The editors of 'Arifi's fifteenth-century book *The Ball and Polo Stick or The Book of Ecstasy* devote more than three pages of their five-page introduction to a similar exercise in disavowal:

The protagonists in 'Arifi's work are all male, but it is important here to dispel any notion that he might have been glorifying homosexuality or homoeroticism. . . . In the world of the *ghazal* [the high genre of love poetry], a world in which the only predictable characters are lover and beloved, . . . [n]either one has any sex to speak of. Conventionally, however, beloveds are portrayed as having attractive black down on the upper lip, and this is certainly not an appealing feminine characteristic. It is a feature of adolescent males, and they were taken as the only proper object of *nazar*, "regard," in the sense that they were objects of contemplation and enjoyment of beauty. . . . In Timurid Herat, in the Persianate world altogether, where could one gaze upon the beauty of a female? One's mother and sister would hardly do; a prostitute or courtesan would scarcely be a proper object for contemplating divine beauty; and no other female would be likely to come into a male's purview unless it be a wife, but wives were partners in a social contract, not seemingly objects for romantic love. In a sense, the strict segregation of the sexes not only relegated females to their own world but also prevented them from serving as the metaphors for inspiration they became in European courtly love.<sup>13</sup>

It seems that the book is, after all, homoerotic, but only because it has no other erotic choices.

Other strategies of Iranian modernists aimed at forgetting homoeroticism include emphasizing the gender ambiguity of the Persian language. As Meisami has succinctly pointed out:

A distinctive component of the Persian *ghazal*, and one that has often proved disconcerting, is its overt homoerotic content. The gender ambiguity characteristic of Persian lyric poetry has traditionally been exploited to permit the [modern] critic to construe the beloved as feminine. While this is possible to some extent in the *qasidah*, . . . it is less justifiable for the *ghazal*, where the male gender of the beloved, often explicitly indicated, becomes a standard convention of the genre. Critics uneasy with this situation have attempted to rationalize it in various ways, either by allegorizing the male beloved as a neo-Platonic human reflection of divine love, or by invoking such sociohistorical factors as the prohibition on the open reference to women in love poems. But while such factors lend a certain verisimilitude to the fictive world of the *ghazal*, reliance on them to explain away the presence of a male beloved ignores the fact that such love—which might or might not include a carnal dimension—was not only not condemned, but widely tolerated and frequently highly esteemed.<sup>14</sup>

The weight of contemporary disavowal of male homoeroticism is so heavy that in an otherwise excellent chapter on the nature of love in the *ghazal*, Julie Meisami unexpectedly—given her own argument up to that point—uses the feminine pronoun in English to refer to the beloved with a parenthetical remark, “her (or him: I use the feminine pronoun only for convenience)” (1987, 254). For convenience, of course, one could just as well use the masculine pronoun.

In addition to allegorization of homoerotic love into neo-Platonic or Sufi divine, another tactic is to separate poetical discourse on male homoerotic love from “what actually happened between men.” I do not wish to make a case for poetry as a mirror of reality. But it is intriguing that no one separates poetry from life in discussions of heteroerotic love poetry. Without any assumption of a transparent relation between poetry and actual sexual practices, one may still ask what connection exists between the poetic imagination and actual sexual practices instead of deciding a priori that poetry floats without any connection to reality. If that were the case, we would then have to explain why such poetry appeals to anyone’s imagination or gives pleasure to the reader.

The figure of Westoxicated woman as the focus of a cultural critique of prerevolutionary Iran was itself a figure of double displacement. It was a



displacement of the figure of European woman onto an Iranian figure,<sup>15</sup> but it was also a displacement of the “sex troubles” of Iranian modernity; woman had come to act as a masquerade for amrad(numa). A number of twentieth-century transformations, central among them the compulsory unveiling campaign of 1936–41, made the over-Europeanized woman the privileged excess. Yet the figure of the fukuli was never far away. Recall that Amir ‘Abbas Huvayda, Iran’s prime minister in the last decades of Muhammad Riza Shah’s reign, was rumored to be a Baha’i and a homosexual. Whether or not he was, the two designations were figures of Iranian modernity’s alterity and excess.<sup>16</sup> He was thought to be not only politically impotent and passive but also a passive homosexual. His marriage was considered a ruse, and jokes about his sexual life were but a barely concealed topic of satire and social gossip. He was always meticulously shaved and immaculately tidy.<sup>17</sup> He wore an orchid on his coat pocket. All these details linked him with the figure of fukuli, a mimic man, always already under suspicion of being an amradnuma.

Our post-1979 concentration on a critique of cultural construction of gender for the formation of Iranian modernity and the price that many women have paid for this project have continued the screening work of “remembering woman to forget the amrad.” For example, from the initial months of the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran in 1979, a great deal of popular energy was directed against what were perceived as cultural markers of the old regime. As part of this “cultural purification,” as it was called, women’s veils and men’s beards became the recommended (for the beard) and the compulsory (for the veil) visible markers of state-sponsored masculinity and femininity. Men were also highly pressured into not wearing a tie. Often considered simply a symbol of Europeanization, the necktie has its own chain of association, through the bow tie, with the figure of the fukuli.<sup>18</sup> Though much has been written about women’s veil, little has been said on men’s beard and tie.

The issue of women’s veil and unveil, compulsory or consensual, in Islamicate societies and communities has taken center stage in discussions of “the status of women” in these societies on an international scale. The veil, in its hypervisibility, has come to serve as a sign for more than gender; it has come to be read for “the state of modernity.” This hypervisibility has compounded the erasure of that other excess figure of Iranian modernity by continuing the prior work of making woman stand as a privileged mark of modernity.

It is now vital for these connections to be made if Iranian feminism is to retain its critical edge, especially as current Iranian culture wars have

become explicitly articulated around a concept of cultural imperialism and the West that is focused on “moral corruption, sexual excess, and homosexuality.”<sup>19</sup> If at an earlier moment feminism had been disavowed as Western and foreign to Iranian womanhood, the markings of excess and alterity have now shifted onto particular kinds of feminism (lesbian feminism) and more generally same-sex desire and practices. It would be tragic if the opening of a publicly acceptable cultural and political space for feminism in Iran is officiated by a national consensus against queer subjectivities.

An important task facing feminist historiography of Iranian modernity is, then, to re-member, to bring back into national belonging, *amrad* and *amradnuma*. What if instead of disavowing male homosexuality and same-sex affectivity, feminism would begin to inquire into the kinds of affinity, “avowable knowable proximity” in place of the disavowed masquerading substitution, that could be crafted between feminism and sexual others who have been placed in times and places before and beyond the modern national?<sup>20</sup>

Such a proposition often conjures up the suspicion of “the golden age syndrome.” Am I suggesting that there was some premodern golden age of multiple sexualities, and am I proposing a return to that time? The question presumes that acknowledging something from the past is a threat to the appreciation of the present. It indicates a fear that nostalgia for the past golden age would undermine subsequent historical achievements.<sup>21</sup> The suspicion is based on the dispensability of a totality: if one piece of the present is critically challenged, it receives that challenge as a call for overthrowing all and reverting to a past. It is critical to reject this totalistic view of progress. But my proposition is riskier than mere fragmentation of the totality of the modern. I am saying that some of that progress, in its moment of shaping and emergence, was predicated upon loss of something about the past that is worth recuperating in new ways. This predicament was a contingent, not some existentially essential, one. Instead of feminism’s historical disavowal, it is thus possible to reenvision affinities with male homosexuality and same-sex affectivity.

My proposition is hazardous on a different level, however. One of my arguments in this book centers on how particular sexual desires and practices were rendered illegible and unreadable by the national culture. Under conditions in which the safest existence may be a masqueraded one, perhaps the screening of sexuality with gender is not such a bad thing after all. Would not open expression of such desires and practices, including the writing of this very manuscript, bring under national and state scrutiny practices and persons who can ill afford that kind of visibility, precisely

because their existence depends on being invisible and unrecognized by the national public and state authority?

Yet if we are to accept that a “youth crisis”—a euphemism for adult panic over sexual and gender experimentation of young Iranians—is currently gripping Iranian society, it may be that these issues are no longer willing to remain screened anyway.<sup>22</sup> While we have spent a great deal of cultural energy in denying and disavowing homosexuality and same-sex affectivity, we have not eliminated or silenced them. The denial and disavowal have regulated what is publicly recognizable (“sex acts among opposite sexes”) and what is publicly abhorred and disavowed (“sex acts among same sexes”). Under the Islamic Republic’s policies, the public space continues its heterosexual markings and longings. The state obsessively and at times violently regulates how men and women even look at each other. Yet the enforcement of public homosociality is haunted by the specter of homosexuality.

Even the historical work of gender masquerade of homoeroticism is now getting an ironical restaging. While our historical amnesia has left that other figure of excess of Iranian modernity, the *amrad*, off contemporary disciplinary maps, other transformations of post-1979 Iran have brought out its continued haunting of our present: We are forced to face what we have constituted as the gender and sexual excess of our modernity. Current anxieties continue to bring out the imbrication of issues of gender and sexuality in constitution of our present moment. The haunting figure of *amrad* now threatens to come back in the form of transdressed young women in urban Iran, reminding us yet again that studies of gender and sexuality cannot be divided and demarcated into separate proper domains and objects.<sup>23</sup> Scores of female teenagers have discovered that transdressing helps them cope with the difficulties of everyday life as young women in Iran.<sup>24</sup> The alarm with which this phenomenon is reported does not arise simply out of concern for hazards these young women may face on urban streets. The transdressed young females bring back from our nineteenth-century memory—despite all our cultural labor to forget it—the figure of the *amrad*, or in this case *amradnuma* with a gender difference.

# Notes

## INTRODUCTION

1. This is the central proposition of many of Mohamad Tavakoli-Targhi's writings (in particular 1988 and 2001), which I take as a point of departure for the present study.

2. One of the consequences of rethinking the central arguments of this book was that I had to abandon a title, "Male Lions and Female Suns: The Gendered Tropes of Iranian Modernity," that I had become very fond of over the long years of working on this manuscript. It seemed inappropriate to keep a title that participated in modernist forcible confinement of genders into man and woman, and that continued to uphold the possibility of writing on gender without sexuality.

3. In this introduction I do not present the chapters' themes in an orderly fashion, for I am not satisfied with the way we write history. Much like a psychoanalyst, the historian works genealogically and archaeologically, moving backward against "the arrow of time," so to speak, for much of the research stage. When we come to writing history, however, most often we reverse this direction and write along the arrow of time. This reversal, like its psychoanalytic analogue, gives our narratives a causal sense that the genealogical approach would challenge. Although I was tempted several times to try to write this book backward in time, I eventually conceded the enormous difficulties of doing so and chose both here and in the body of the book to move in both directions many times over.

4. Although I concentrate on male homoeroticism in this book, female same-sex desire underwent similar transformations. For instance, the openly celebrated nineteenth-century "vows of sisterhood" seem to have given way to spatial masquerades, such as rooming in the same house, or heteronormative screens, such as two women marrying the same man. I concentrate on male homoeroticism for two reasons. Historically the modernist project, which is the topic of this book, was developed by the political and cultural elite of Iran, an all-male brotherhood, at least until the closing decade of the nineteenth century,

when a women's modernist project begins to emerge. The second reason is that as far as female homoeroticism is concerned, most of my sources relate to masquerading practices (rather than discourses and representations). To discuss female homoeroticism would amount to "outing" these practices in contemporary Iran, something that for obvious reasons I am reluctant to do.

5. One "internal factor" that has been suggested, following Foucault, is the dynamic of producing governable bodies/citizens for a modern state. But the Qajar state was not centrally concerned with production of governable citizens until very late in the nineteenth century; production of modern governable citizenry became a state project during the early decades of the twentieth century.

6. The exhibition was initially staged at the Brooklyn Museum from 23 October 1998 through 24 January 1999 and subsequently traveled to Los Angeles and London.

7. See, in this connection, Bacharach 2001.

8. On the possibilities, problems, and challenges of using visual texts as an indispensable source for historians of women, see Miles 1985. For important observations and critical suggestions about the interaction between written and visual texts, see Bal 1991.

9. The intersection of psychoanalysis and history remains a much-contested problem. In many chapters of this book, I invoke psychoanalytical notions such as excess, fetish, masquerade, screen memory, and amnesia that I find analytically productive for historical explanation. Here I am using psychoanalysis neither in a diagnostic sense nor at the level of individual psyche. I am using certain psychoanalytical propositions as a useful narrative, much as Freud employed Greek mythologies as useful narratives. In this sense, my approach is possibly closest to that of Lynn Hunt (1992).

## CHAPTER 1

1. Compare features of any number of the young male and female figures in Diba and Ekhtiar 1998. In addition to headgear and other items of clothes, there are other gendered clues, such as relative composition of figures, gestures, and relation to spatial markers in the visual field, especially in paintings where both men and women are present. These points were brought to my attention by Heghnar Watenpaugh.

2. Melikian-Chirvani (1985) has argued that classical Islamic aesthetics was undifferentiated not only by sex but also by ethnicity and race. Once, for instance, central Asiatic (Turkish and Mongol) features became the prevalent icons of beautiful faces, all beautiful faces were depicted with those markings.

3. Examples abound in Diba and Ekhtiar 1998. Compare Nur'ali Shah (a male Sufi leader, 259) to "Ladies around a Samovar" (261), both by Isma'il Jalayir from third quarter of the nineteenth century. See also various full portraits of Fath'ali Shah, of young Nasir al-Din Shah (243), of the young prince Yahyá Mirza (195), the latter two looking very similar to the portrayal of

Joseph. The biblical figure of Joseph served as an icon of the most beautiful, the most desired, young male.

4. Hidayat 1960, 9:320. See also 10:103 for a praiseful description of Fath‘ali Shah, including details of his physique, in very similar terms. His description of Nasir al-Din Mirza (later Shah) at age fourteen (10:287) uses similar language.

5. Saravi 1992, 42–43. The book was written between 1785 and 1796. The last sentence is a paradoxical pun: Murtizá ‘Ali, both the name of the young man and the name of the first Shi‘ite imam and the affectionate figure of identification for Sufis, his love should have provided a figure of conversion the other way around.

6. Saravi 1992, 230–31. Similarly, according to I‘tizad al-Saltanah (1991, 48), written between 1837 and 1842, in addition to a great amount of wealth, “moon-bodied girls and silver-bodied boys and rose-faced women, close to fifteen thousand,” were taken after Aqa Muhammad Khan’s capture of Tiflis in 1794. For similar accounts, see Dunbuli 1826, 23, 85. Not all nineteenth-century historians and writers, of course, wrote of the slaves captured in Tiflis in paradisiacal terms. Rustam al-Hukama (1974, 454) referred to them as “women, girls, and boys”; Fasa‘i (1988, 2:662) as “boys, girls and young women”; and Bihbihani (1992, 332) simply as “eighty thousand, young and old.”

7. For a brief presentation of Islamic paradise, see the excellent essay by Reinhart 1991. For a thorough discussion of what the hur and the ghilman mean in the Qur‘an and the commentaries, and how they have come to mean “servitors of both sexes,” appreciated for good looks, good singing, and other skills, see Wendell 1974. I am grateful to Roger Owen for bringing this essay to my attention. As Wendell points out (58), in the Qur‘anic verses, unlike the hur, there is no connection made between the ghilman and sexual pleasure.

8. On this point, see also Rowson 1991a, 59.

9. Some of the figures of beloved young men reported in literary and historical chronicles—such as the famous figure of Ayaz—were, as Yarshater has argued, accomplished warriors and soldiers, or known for other valued skills: “Unless one is mindful of the fact that the beloved, as a type, is very often a young soldier-cupbearer, who combines the warlike qualities of a warrior with the refinements of a sociable wine server, many aspects of Persian love poetry, and for that matter, much of Ottoman, Urdu and Islamic Arabic poetry remain puzzling” (Yarshater 1961, 52). For similar observations, see Meisami 1987, 249.

10. That there is no similar literature lamenting aging for women is not because women grew no beard and thus retained their beauty eternally; women aged and stopped being desirable, too, but few lament their loss the way they lament the loss of youthfulness for men. The difference indicates the difference between the nature of male-female adult interaction and adult male-male interaction.

11. My thanks to Houman Sarshar for bringing the many layers of meaning for *mihrgiah* to my attention. *Lughatnamah*’s entry for *mihrgiah* (new edition, p. 19351) includes two lines of poetry to illustrate this meaning of the word: “Once khatt grew above your lips, my heart’s affection [*mih*r] increased /

Hence I named your khatt mihrgiah" (by Kamal Khujandi); and "We saw the green of your khatt and from the garden of Paradise / we came to demand this mihrgiah" (by Hafiz). Note that Hafiz was willing to abandon paradise in pursuit of *mihrgiah*!

12. Rumi 1984, 3:112. Rumi's definition accords with Razi's medical categorization. See Rosenthal 1978.

13. In modern commentaries on classical texts, frequently *mukhannās* is defined as "a man who behaves like a woman." See the editor's footnote to 'Ubayd Zakani 1995, 83. He quotes the Rumi verse noted in the text, seemingly oblivious to its incongruity with his own definition. This is an area that calls for more historical research. I have had productive conversations on this theme with Everett Rowson and Frédéric Lagrange and am thankful to them both.

14. See Rosenthal 1978; Nathan 1994. For broader discussion of issues of male homosexuality in Islamic cultures, see Dunne 1990; Wright and Rowson 1997; Murray and Roscoe 1997; and Schild 1988. For a review of recent literature, see Schmidtke 1999.

15. See Rowson 1991b. Since Wikan's article on *khanīth* of Oman (1977, followed by discussions in *Man* 13 [1978]: 473–75, 663–71), other anthropological studies have reported similar cultural practices. See part 4, "Anthropological Studies," in Murray and Roscoe 1997.

16. Similarly, whereas Tusi (1978, 195) called excess in loving one person (male) as the most corrosive of excesses, Fani called it the worst illness (1983, 105). On medieval medical discussions as to under what conditions love should be considered a malady, "a critical intensification of the natural desire of the soul for all beautiful things," see Biesterfeldt and Gutas 1984. Possibly the most common medieval discourse of love was that of slavery, that is, the adult man falling in love with the *amrad* as the latter's slave. For an insightful article on this issue in the context of South Asia, see Chatterjee 2002. Chatterjee argues that the shift from this discourse to one inflected through a lens of gender was an effect of "the onset on western European epistemologies" (68).

17. Notions of desire are not gender-symmetric. Women's desires seem to be aroused only by male beauty—which is another reason that one may think the privileged term in this discourse was the centrality of male beauty. When medieval sources do discuss female-female desire, most often it is linked to lack of satisfaction from men. This continued to inform much of the nineteenth-century discourse: "Women who are not satisfied by their husbands turn to *musahiqah*" (Vajid 'Ali Khan 1873?, 448).

18. See the essays in Wright and Rowson 1997, particularly those by Franz Rosenthal and Everett Rowson. See also Schild 1988. I will discuss the issue of love and gender of the beloved at greater length in chapter 6.

19. Rowson 1995, 24. See also Schimmel 1975, 289–91.

20. See Pellat, "Liwat," *EI*, 776–77. Many of these notions are very similar to those of the Judaic tradition. Much of Islamic interpretive and jurisprudential work in its first two centuries developed in close interaction with Judaism. Judith Wegner's comparative work has brought out certain aspects of this

interaction, especially as it concerns marriage and divorce laws. See Wegner 1982a, 1982b. I have not seen any similar comparative work with regard to issues of sexuality. Daniel Boyarin's many writings on gender and sexuality in Talmudic culture—which indicate similar concepts regarding notions of beauty and desire—are invaluable for a comparative work. See Boyarin 1993, 1995a, 1995b, 1997.

21. Meisami 1991, 187. The advice literature on the etiquette of gazing, and warnings against it, is enormous. See Wafer 1997 for an overview and references. Gazing was severely criticized by many religious authorities, as it was feared that it would be impossible not to be aroused sexually by a beautiful male face and that, unlike passion for a woman, there was no licit way of satisfying this desire. See, for instance, Ghazali 1989, 213–15.

22. Meisami 1991, 171. The Persian word translated here as “child” and in the previous quotation as “boy” is *kudak*. See Danish'pazhuh 1966, 267 and 242, respectively. *Sama'* is “(listening to) music, singing, or chanting, practiced particularly by Sufis, who see music and song as means to attaining an ecstatic state” (Meisami 1991, 390).

23. Some published examples of this genre are 'Azud al-Dawlah 1949; Mahmud Mirza 1968; and I'timad al-Saltanah 1966.

24. See, for instance, Shahri 1996, 1:355, 377, 389–97.

25. On *zurkhanah*, see Rochard 2002.

26. See, for instance, Shahri 1996, 2:5, 79, 98, 123.

27. See, for instance, Shahri 1996, 2:492. It is disturbing that these features of Shahri's work have gone unnoted by acclaiming reviewers.

28. See, in this connection, Stephen Murray's arguments in Murray and Roscoe 1997. See also AbuKhalil (1997), who rightly criticizes the sharp boundaries often drawn—that is, homosexual identity does (did) not exist in the Islamic world—as a move that renders homosexuality as Western, a move similar in its effects to Islamist contemporary political and moral claims.

29. See Fradenburg and Freccero 1996. For a similar set of concerns but in a different political and analytical context, see Sedgwick 1990, 51–54.

30. See also Naim 1979. This is, however, a possible overstating of the case. Social approbation is quite frequent in the sources, in particular in treatises of ethics and jurisprudential writings. Moreover, one cannot forget that at critical cultural and political moments, behavior did (and does) come under public scrutiny and state (and clerical) punishment.

31. In Fath'ali Shah's case, his marriages were not solely for sexual pleasure or procreative fulfillment: most of them were above all “peace-making obligations.” His first marriages, when he was only eleven and twelve years old, respectively, were arranged by his uncle, Aqa Muhammad Khan (Shah), the founder of the Qajar dynasty, to daughters of local rulers and heads of other branches of Qajar tribes, with a clear aim of building alliances, consolidating loyalties, and securing stability for Qajar rule. This was a pattern that Fath'ali Shah largely, though not exclusively, followed in adult life. Whereas Aqa Muhammad Khan (Shah) had consolidated Qajar dominion through brutal



wars, he seems to have set his nephew up for keeping that dominion through marriage—make love not war, he may have advised the young man. On Fath‘ali Shah’s earliest marriages, see Saravi 1992, 118–21, 335–36. See also Amanat 1997, 18–21.

32. Rustam al-Hukama (1974, 201), writing about Shah Tahmasb’s well-known preference for amrads, concluded that men of wisdom do not consider such behavior a source of general disrepute or incompetence for kings, since people need justice, benevolence, order, administration, protection, management, fairness, generosity, and care, not beauty, piety, and chastity.

33. Nonetheless, he seems to have admired the poet’s wit and sense of humor (Mahmud Mirza 1968, 245). He ended his entry on this poet with more than three pages of his poetry, all about his love of young boys (246–49).

34. For examples, see Sa‘idi Sirjani 1983, 609, 638, 707, 714. These entries all date to 1900 and later. The reporter clearly indicates his dismay about these reports, noting them as a recent turn that indicates more general deterioration of the country’s affairs (609).

35. Mahmud Mirza 1968, 184, 306. For other examples of noted excess, see pp. 484, 564–65, 591, 672–74.

36. Mahmud Mirza 1968, 177. A similar apprehension informed parents’ concerns over their young son’s involvement in same-sex relations, namely, that even after adolescence, they may remain interested in the kind of relation that was considered shameful, desiring to be desired by other men; in common language that they would become *kuni*, enjoying anal penetration.

37. Mu‘tamid al-Dawlah 1991, 97 (letters no. 11 [March 1865]); 107 (no. 13 [March 1866]); 165 (no. 23 [March 1868]); 183 (no. 27 [March 1869]).

38. Among the readers was Nasir al-Din Shah himself. I‘timad al-Saltanah 1966, 577, 831.

39. See I‘timad al-Saltanah 1978, 107–10. See also I‘timad al-Saltanah 1966, 73, 96. Sipahsalar’s three favorites were apparently Mirza Riza Khan Mu‘ayyid al-Saltanah, ‘Azizallah Mirza Zafar al-Saltanah, and Vajih‘allah Mirza Sayf al-Dawlah. On this latter relationship, see also Amin al-Dawlah 1962, 238; and Ihtisham al-Saltanah 1987, 209–10. Other figures of the Nasiri court about whose male (and female) liaisons a great deal is written in Qajar texts were Nasir al-Din Shah’s son, Nayib al-Saltanah, the Shah’s favorite adopted son/companion, ‘Aziz al-Sultan, and the powerful premier Amin al-Sultan. See I‘timad al-Saltanah 1966, 103–4, 118, 657–58, 671, 723–24, 726, 728, 730–32, 763, 822, 875, 1003, 1046, 1053, 1081, 1107–8, 1150; Amin al-Dawlah 1962, 117–18; ‘Ayn al-Saltanah (1995–2001), 2:1105. Muzaffar al-Din Shah was also recorded for his many male beloveds. See Sipihir 1989, 28, 84, 108–9, 120, 129, and 143 of the second part, *yaddasht‘ha*.

40. This fear and anxiety informed the passage of male children from the world of their mothers to the world of their fathers. I have discussed some aspects of this passage in Najmabadi 2000a.

41. Mont Fret 1879, 10–12, 20. The full text was serialized in the émigré paper (published in Istanbul) *Akhtar* 6, 6 (21 January 1880): 50; 7 (28 January

1880): 58; 8 (4 February 1880): 67–68; 9 (11 February 1880): 74–75. Criminalization of abduction appears in no. 7 and the mosque regulation in no. 9.

42. See, for example, Iʿtimad al-Saltanah 1966, 90, 238. An article on prostitution in Iran by the Viennese doctor Jakob Eduard Polak (1818–91, in Iran 1851–60) had one lengthy section devoted to discussion of male-male sexual practices and a much briefer section on female-female sexual practices in Iran (Polak 1861/1998).

43. See Shahri 1990, 1:88, where he says that according to the Tehran census, some 5 percent of the (male?) population were “same-sex keepers.” See, further, 1:536–37; 4:697; 5:247; and 4:17 for a photograph of “tough men with their beardless bachchahs.” He also reports that the rate of same-sex desire among women was 1.5 in 1,000. It is not clear how he has arrived at these figures, and I have not had access to the 1921 Tehran census. Women had several “public” forms of partnership; these included “vows of sisterhood” and arranging to be married as co-wives to the same man, without his knowledge of their relationship. Polak (1861/1998) assumes that all vows of sisterhood are pacts of lesbian relationships.

44. See Babayan 1998, 363–64. See also Afzal al-Mulk 2001, 124; Zhukovskii 1902, 245; Hidayat 1963, 158.

45. For a preliminary discussion of this ritual as reported in ‘*Aqayid al-nisa*’, see Babayan 1998, 363–64. Babayan has a work in progress on gender and sexuality in early modern Iran, in which *kamar bastan* (tying of the belt) as an important Sufi-related ritual of initiation is further analyzed.

46. See Traub (2000, 44) for a discussion of this point for early modern Europe.

## CHAPTER 2

1. Compare, for example, the portrayals of Fathʿali Shah (r. 1798–1834) and Muzaffar al-Din Shah (r. 1896–1907), plates 39 and 90, respectively, in Diba and Ekhtiar 1998.

2. Kathryn Babayan has suggested (conversations with author) that this shift was not simply a change in painting style influenced by European schools, as is often assumed, but one closely linked with the shifting “views of the cosmos,” to a cosmology that became more material, this-worldly, and nature-centered.

3. This is a point worth further research and analysis. The camera does not seem to have had a similar effect on European painting. What did photographic representation as truth of the real, and the camera as a witnessing capturing eye (*shahid-i ʿayni*) for the real mean in the nineteenth-century Iranian context? For a brilliant discussion of the effect of the camera and photography in Thai modernity, see Morris 2000, chap. 6.

4. I will discuss these political bodies in chapter 4.

5. For many examples of this genre, see Falk 1972.

6. This point was first brought to my attention by Dick Davis in the context of discussing Jami’s *Yusuf and Zulaykha* (correspondence with author, 9 November 1997).

7. I am grateful to Houman Sarshar, whose insightful suggestions opened up this reading possibility.

8. This is also the case with the two male figures in male-male couples of earlier periods, which implies that the circulation of desire between both figures and the viewer and the painter has been another case of a missed reading, with the common reading centering on the scene of desire in the text only. In other words, representations of male-male “amorous couples” are not of an elderly man and a young man. Book illustrations related to the latter theme are of a quite different character. Frequently, the older man is an abject figure, desperately in love with a cruel young beauty, as in “The Dervish Picks Up His Beloved’s Hair” and “The Fickle Old Lover Is Knocked Off the Rooftop.” See Simpson and Farhad 1997, folio 59a and folio 162a, respectively.

9. See, for instance, figure 1, “Shirin Presents a Jug of Milk to Farhad,” artist unknown, Iran, late fifteenth to early sixteenth century, in Diba and Ekhtiar 1998; or figure 34 (a), “Zal wooing Rudaba,” by Lutf ‘Ali Khan, dated between 1854 and 1864, in Avery, Hambly, and Melville 1991.

10. See Diba and Ekhtiar 1998, 121–22, for descriptions of two pen boxes, one from 1697 and attributed to Muhammad Zaman and the second by his son Muhammad ‘Ali, dated ten years later. Diba records many similarities and a number of simplifications and omissions that had occurred between the two boxes, from father to son. As she puts it, “The Persian beauty on [Muhammad ‘Ali’s] penbox, while still intertwined in an embrace with her lover, looks out boldly at the viewer, as in Muhammad ‘Ali’s other works, instead of being shown, as here [on Muhammad Zaman’s pen box], with downcast eyes” (122).

11. Casket described in Diba and Ekhtiar 1998, 123–24; quotation on 123.

12. The opposite possibility also exists: that it would work to reinforce, rather than disrupt, the homoerotic scene. Perhaps the fact that it worked one way and not the other is indicative of the workings of the next point I will make on the disappearance of the male object of desire.

13. This of course does not mean that no desire between the figures in the painting could be read as well. I am suggesting a multilayered scene of desire. As Mana Kia suggested to me, in such a reading the cup of wine would signal *badah-i ishq* (wine of love). Significantly, then, it is the woman, the figure of seductive sexual temptation, who is offering the wine of love to the man. Just as pertinently, some nineteenth-century poetry would depict the mixing of the hur and the ghilman, as well as of two young male figures (the equivalent of the male-male amorous couple paintings) as erotic. Qa’ani’s *ghazals* provide many such depictions. See Qa’ani 1857.

14. Iranians read or heard European writings about themselves, as attested to by their engagements with these texts. They also wrote at length about their own travels to Europe. See Sohrabi 2004; Tavakoli-Targhi 2001; Ghanoonparvar 1993; Rahimieh 1990; Lewis 1982.

15. I say to European eyes because young girls and boys were dressed in very similar outfits, and thus it is not clear what cross-dressing would mean. But to the European eye, the similarity in the dancers’ outfits was read as boys

cross-dressing as girls. On male dancers dressed as female, see also Serena 1883, 164, 254. Europeans also read other signs of masculinity and femininity differently. James Baillie Fraser (1783–1856), for instance, analogizes the soft down over the upper lip of a male figure (famous for his popularity as a young man) to a woman's soft down, and records his "features, particularly the mouth," as having "feminine softness." Fraser 1838a, 2:23–24. For Iranian eyes, as we have discussed, the analogy would work in the opposite direction.

16. See Ferrier 1996, 22, 118, 176 on Chardin's observations and judgment on prevalence of male homosexuality and unfavorable conditions of women in Safavi Iran. See also Ferrier 1998.

17. "I have occasionally named CHARDIN, the most accurate of all the French travellers who have written on this country, for an European visitor might even at this day go all over Persia with his book as guide, except as it regards the costume, which has undergone a total change," wrote the editor to the English translation of Tancoigne (1820, vii). Tancoigne himself, throughout his narrative, refers to Chardin as an authority. Among more well-known English travelers, James Morier, James Baillie Fraser, and Robert Ker Porter repeatedly refer to Chardin's descriptions as a point of reference for their own report, though Ker Porter also refers to Morier and Hartford Jones. See Morier 1812; Ker Porter 1990; Fraser 1836.

18. Tancoigne 1820, 67; Keppel 1827, 2:47–48. See also similar accounts by Drouville 1985, 212–13; von Kotzebue 1820, 103. For a selection of excerpts from nineteenth-century European reports of similar themes for many Islamic societies, including Richard Burton's famous "Terminal Essay," see Murray and Roscoe 1997, chap. 13. Many of the reports link dancing boys with male homosexuality and narrate both as a consequence of female seclusion. In some of the reports, there is more than a hint of the local people's awareness of European judgment and their attempted masquerades and denials. See also Dunne 1990, 60–61. More generally, see Bleys 1995, especially chap. 4; on Egypt, see Dunne 1996.

19. Ouseley 1819–23, 3:402. See also 1:190.

20. Ouseley 1819–23, 3:125, 156. Though a very astute observer, on occasion William Ouseley missed, misunderstood, or chose not to note the significance of some of what he recorded. For instance, in writing about one Farage Allah Khan, "a noble man of military habits," he recorded that "his favorite attendant seemed to be a young Russian who assisted in handing us the caleans and coffee; him he always addressed by some very coarse and opprobrious terms." One such appellation, he reported, was "Kaferbachchah," which he translated as "offspring of an infidel" (3:153–54). Yet *kafirbachchah*, constructed in analogy with *tarsabachchah* and *mughbachchah* (respectively, a very young Christian and Zoroastrian), means "a very young infidel" and carries the additional load of the young man being in a subordinate sexual relation with Farage Allah Khan.

21. Most commentators of *Hajji Baba* have concurred that the journey of Mirza Abu al-Hasan Shirazi to London in 1809–10 and his travelogue were the event and the text that inspired Morier. See Johnston 1998.

22. Morier 1828, 1:50–51. See also 1:88, 104–5.
23. Riza Quli Khan Hidayat (1960, 9:535) reported that “it is said that Morier has written two books, in which he has recorded everything about his journey, good and bad, whatever he has seen and heard, and has told many anecdotes and tales about the Iranian Ambassador, Hajji Mirza Abu al-Hasan Khan.” For other Iranian reactions, see Burnes 1987, 69–70; Fraser 1838b, 2:3. For a critical review of Iranians’ reaction to *Hajji Baba* from the earliest ones to those of later generations, see Mudarris Sadiqi’s introduction (Morier 2000, xxv–xxvii) to a new edition of the late nineteenth-century translation of *Hajji Baba*. See also Natiq 1975.
24. Letter from Morier to his brother David, dated 1 June 1811, quoted by Johnston 1998, 168; deletions in Johnston, presumably in original.
25. Johnston 1998, 212. Morier’s travelogues were published in 1812 and 1818.
26. See Johnston 1998, 216; see also Johnston 1995. Yet the reaction in Iran does not seem to have been uniformly hostile. In a letter to David Morier (James Morier’s brother), dated 30 January 1830, Henry Willock (British envoy in Iran 1815–26) reported that ‘Abbas Mirza was trying to find a translator for Hajji Baba—though he suggested that “although he [Abbas Mirza] might secretly acknowledge the faithfulness of the picture, yet too many unseemly features are impressed on the canvas to render it pleasing or gratifying to national vanity” (quoted by Johnston 1998, 216–17).
27. On the success of this book, see Johnston 1998, 214–16; Johnston 1995, 93.
28. See, among others, Polak 1861; Norden 1928, 196: “The extent of its practice in Persia is amazing. . . a common practice with all sorts and conditions of men.”
29. Garmrudi 1969, 962. For Fraser’s discussion of “the vice,” see Fraser 1984 [1825], 546. See also his far from complimentary section on “character of the Persian people” (1836, 258–91).
30. See Morris 1997, 71, for a discussion of a somewhat similar dynamic in Thailand.
31. Discussing transformations of sexualities in modern Thailand, Morris has similarly observed, “Reformations in the sexual domain are at least partly the result of transnational gazes and of the discourses that Orientalizing and self-Orientalizing desire produces” (1997, 53–54).
32. This masquerading move may have some similarities to one in eighteenth-century Urdu literature: “Avoiding the ambiguous *ghazal-e muzakkar* of Persian, i.e., the lyric in which a male lover seemingly addressed another male, the Urdu poets of South India . . . adopted the Indian tradition of having a female address a male” (Naim 1979, 121). Carla Petievich is currently working on a manuscript and translation of this genre of poetry from Urdu to English.
33. See, for instance, Diba and Ekhtiar 1998, plates 56, 57, 58, 65; and many of the reproductions of the paintings formerly in the Amery Collection in Falk 1972.

34. See, for instance, plate 48/folio 93, “Two Ladies with a Page,” ‘Ali Quli Jabbar, a.d. 1674, in *The St. Petersburg Muraqqa* 1996, described on p. 65.

35. Paradoxically, eroticization of the breast also demanded its linguistic veiling, which perhaps further intensified its eroticization. See chapter 5 for further discussion of this point.

36. A similar phenomenon happened in Persian literature, as the *sāqi* and *shahid* of classical poetry, as well as other figures, such as angels, began to be read as if female (something linguistically possible in Persian, unlike in Arabic, since the language has no grammatical gender markings). Already in the later decades of the nineteenth century we come across verses in which a beautiful male is said to be like a woman. See I’timad al-Saltanah 1966, 90, entry dated 10 June 1881, for verses that Muhammad Husayn Furughi (1839–1907) had composed for a young man, Hasan‘ali Khan, in which he is said to be really a woman but outwardly created as a man. Today’s illustrated copies of Hafiz’s *Divan* or Khayyam’s *Ruba‘iyat* depict these figures as women, and modernist interpreters of the poetry insist on the metaphoric nature of homoerotic love when the text does not allow reading the beloved as female.

37. For a synopsis of the story according to Islamic sources, along with a wonderful selection of illustrations from manuscripts and five nineteenth-century single-frame depictions—only one of which is not the women-of-the-town scene—see Brosh 1991, 54–81. For a discussion of the gender dynamic of this story, see Merguerian and Najmabadi 1997. The polygon of desire enacted in the “women-of-the-town scene” works as a gender mirror of the triangle of desire suggested by Sedgwick 1985; homosocial female solidarity is demanded and arrived at through erotic rivalry for a “trafficking” male figure—Joseph.

38. This point was first argued by Tavakoli-Targhi (1990b).

39. I am borrowing the notion of the “navel” of a visual (or literary) text from Bal 1991. The story of Shaykh San‘an was immortalized by ‘Attar’s twelfth-century versification (1962, 77–102). For an excellent English translation and informative introduction, see Attar 1984. The story of Shaykh San‘an is on pp. 57–75. Quotations from the story are taken from this translation and noted in the text by page number. See Schimmel 1975, 305, for the importance of the story and its dissemination through other mystical poetries (such as Sindhi, Kashmiri, Malay, and Turkish) and p. 432 for the significance of the story as one of Sufi love. On Rum, see s.v. “Rum” in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, entries by Nadia El Cheikh and C. E. Bosworth. On Rum as Asia Minor (Anatolia) in the Fifth Land along with “land of Slavs,” in premodern Irano-Islamic geographies, see Karamustafa 1992. Anatolia remained the designation of Rum in Iranian geohistorical narratives through the Qajar period.

40. For a thorough historical survey of love and wine in Sufi literature, see Purjavadi 1991–92. See also Purjavadi 1991.

41. For a partial description and reproduction of some of these works, see Karimzadeh Tabrizi 1985–91, 1:4, 66, 70–71, 371; 2:690, 785, 790–91, 981, 1020–21; 3:1379.

42. For a collection of vernacular versions of the story in Kurdish and Turkish, some collected in the 1960s and later, see Fayzi'zadah 1987.

43. Fayzi'zadah 1987, 230. On disaffiliation from Islam and affiliation with pre-Islam in the formation of modern Iranian nationalism, see Tavakoli-Targhi 1990c.

44. See Tavakoli-Targhi 1990b. A much-expanded version of this article appears in Persian (Tavakoli-Targhi 1997). I had argued similarly (1998a, 76–89).

45. We see this displacement in some of the vernacular versions referred to earlier. In one nineteenth-century allusion (Fayzi'zadah 1987, 46), the Christian maiden is replaced by a *farangizad*, born of Farangi or in Farang. In yet another version the Shaykh complains to the maiden that people are saying nasty things about him: that he has gone to Farang and has fallen in love with a girl whose state of chastity is like that of Hajji Husayn Farangi, and that the girl is just playing games with him (Fayzi'zadah 1987, 280). Alternative destinations also appear, such as land of Armenians (Fayzi'zadah 1987, 163), or the girl is called *dukhtar-i gurji* (Georgian maiden). By the nineteenth century, Georgia and Armenia had replaced the land of Rum in this tale of love. It is as if what the Qajar monarch lost to the czarist empire in the wars of the early decades of the nineteenth century, popular cultural imagination recaptured as the domain of paradisiacal love and pleasure of its women.

46. *Dukhtar* means not only a young woman/girl but also virgin, whereas *zan* means an adult woman but also nonvirgin.

47. Mirza Abu al-Hasan Khan Shirazi 1986, 143–44. Wherever possible, I have used the partial 1988 English translation of this text, above quotation on 78. The editor of the published Persian version has deleted many passages from the original, including part of the preceding passage, that he had found morally objectionable. A slightly different version of this passage is quoted in Tavakoli-Targhi 1997, 25, from which I have added “and ghilman” in square brackets in the quotation in the text. I am indebted to his article for having included, from a manuscript to which he had access, many of the passages that have been deleted from the printed versions.

48. For the disavowal of *liwat*, see Mirza Abu al-Hasan Khan Shirazi 1986, 65; for other descriptions of male and female beauties, see 76, 112, 143, 161, 190, 213, 224, 241, 281, 286. For similar descriptions of beauties (and occasional disavowals of *liwat*) expressed in other early Persian travelogues, see Tavakoli-Targhi 1997, 24–25, 32; Mirza Abu Talib Khan Lakhinaw'i Isfahani (traveled from India to Europe in 1799–1803) 1984, 16, 94–95, 109, 315, 368; Mirza Salih Shirazi (went to England in 1815) 1983, 90, 160, 196, 333; Rizaquli Mirza (visiting London in 1835–36) 1982, 232, 238, 263, 268, 271, 322, 360, 482; Garmrudi (traveling through Europe in 1838) 1969, 753–54, 757, 772, 823; and 'Izz al-Dawlah 1996, 188, 193. Such descriptions continue to the end of the nineteenth century, though gradually figures of desire become “realized”; more frequently, they are referred to as beautiful young men and women, rather than the *hur* and the *ghilman*. See, for instance,

Sarabi (accompanied Amin al-Dawlah to Paris in 1856) 1982; Nasir al-Din Shah Qajar (from his first journey to Europe in 1873) 1964; and Pirzadah (traveled 1886–89) 1981.

49. Mirza Abu al-Hasan Khan Shirazi 1988, 169. Rizaquli Mirza (1982, 394), however, gave a more realistic account of the effects of wine: “What God has promised his special slaves in the blessings of the other world, they [the English] enjoy in this world. The difference is that this drinking produces drunkenness and these pleasures are passing, whereas those blessings are eternal and drinking that wine produces joy without the trouble of a hangover and loss of senses.”

50. See Tavakoli-Targhi 1997, 29–35. As they went through Tiflis, some nineteenth-century travelers recalled that it was said that Shaykh San‘an’s grave was near that city. See ‘Alavi Shirazi 1984, 27; Mu‘tamid al-Dawlah 1987, 65; Muzaffar al-Din Shah 1901, 60; Nayib al-Sadr Shirazi 1983, 76.

51. See also “The Shaykh San‘an with Eight Followers, Beneath the Window at Which Appears the Christian Maiden with Whom He Is Infatuated,” folio 45a, and “The Shaykh San‘an Tending Swine Observed by Six Astonished Spectators,” folio 52b, both from a 1493 manuscript of ‘Attar’s *Mantiq al-tayr*, described by Robinson 1958, 48, and plate VI, respectively. Also “Le shaykh de Sana‘an et la belle chrétienne,” from a 1526 manuscript, described by Stchoukine 1959, 57. “Le Shaykh de Sana‘an et la belle chrétienne,” 1552 *Majalis al-‘ushshaq* manuscript, described by Stchoukine 1959, 108. Titley 1977, 35, Shaykh San‘an gazing at the Christian maiden (from a late fifteenth-century manuscript), and p. 35, Shaykh San‘an tending swine (a.d. 1472). Grube 1967, figure 7, folio 18, “Shaykh San‘an Sighting the Christian Maiden, Falling in Love Hopelessly, Sitting in Gaze.”

52. William Ouseley (1819–23, 3:257) describes a wall painting in the reception hall of Prince Muhammad Quli Mirza that is of a large group of followers of the Shaykh and a group of Christians/Europeans, similar to figure 11 here. The fascination with the scene of the Shaykh receiving wine from the Christian maiden continued through the early twentieth century. See Sayf 1997, plates 47, 67, 81, 89, for tileworks of this scene from late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century buildings.

53. Another powerful theme was how they (both men and women) dressed compared with us. The issue of women’s nakedness and men’s beards, though strong and distinct foci, formed part of the larger question of how one’s public bodily presentation defined one’s sense of a Muslim sexed and gendered social being. I will discuss these issues further in chapter 5.

54. Shushtari 1984, 295. For referential work to this writing, see Shirvani 1897, 213, 388; Mirza Abu Talib Khan 1984, 452–54.

55. Pirzadah 1981, 341–42. I will take up the debates over beards and beardlessness at greater length in chapter 5.

56. Often there is one bearded man among the Farangis who stands for a figure of Christian authority, since this whole episode was to have taken place near convent or a church complex (*dayr*).



57. Indeed, when Qajar illustrations were embedded in manuscripts, scenes similar to pre-Qajar renditions seem to have been chosen by artists. An early Qajar manuscript of *Mantiq al-tayr* with thirty-eight miniatures has the scene of “Shaikh San‘an, Overcome by the Beauty of the Greek Christian Maiden.” For a description, see Titley 1977, 35.

58. The relation of the scene to that of Adam and Eve, with its reversal (of fall into paradise) is intriguingly depicted in at least one tilework of this episode in which as the woman is offering the old man a cup of wine, the old man is offering the woman an apple! See Sayf 1997, plate 47.

59. See Southgate 1984, 426: “But in most poems the beloved’s sex is not identified, since Persian does not indicate gender and because the poet employs identical stock images to describe the beauty of boys and women.”

60. One could talk of the transformation of *ma’shuq* into *ma’shuqah*, but this would not be quite accurate; instead, *ma’shuq* was transformed in meaning from a male beloved to a female beloved in male-authored writings. Nouns with feminine endings, such as *ma’shuqah*, continue to carry a derogatory load in Persian. Thus *ma’shuqah* is commonly used to refer to a man’s mistress, whereas *ma’shuq* would be his beloved.

61. See Mirza Abu Talib Khan 1984, 94–95. For the “heavenly youth,” he wrote:

And that youth with heavenly features  
for whose shining face ghilman would serve as a slave.  
His stature as a cypress, his face like a rose garden  
like fresh basil, his trace of a mustache [nawkhatt] shines green. (95)

62. See Tavakoli-Targhi 1997 and the travelogues cited in note 48 for a description of some of these interactions. For Mirza Abu al-Hasan Khan’s socializing and popularity among English women in London, see Johnston 1998, 131–33. For an account of experiences of Rizaquli Mirza and his brothers, see Fraser 1838a.

63. Iranian men were quite conscious and proud of their heterosocial performance. For instance, they repeatedly noted if they did, or did not, accept invitations to dance with women. Sarabi reported that a M. Kulman (Coleman?), chair of the chamber of commerce (*ra’is al-tujjar*) of Lille (France), had joked that he was relieved that the Iranian ambassador (1856–57), Amin al-Dawlah, was departing Lille for Paris, because even though they enjoyed his company immensely, they were anxious that his prolonged stay would make their wives cold to them, as they seemed to be conversing with no one but him. See Sarabi 1982, 281–82. In Morier’s satirizing of Mirza Abu al-Hasan Khan’s London visit, he is said to have observed, “We had now been several months in England, and little by little began to adopt many of the customs of the infidels. When two of us walked together, instead of holding each other’s hands as in our own country, we proceeded arm in arm: moreover, we made no scruple occasionally to be seen in a similar predicament with a woman” (Morier 1828, 2:27). This could, of course, have alternatively been Morier’s embarrassed wish

that Iranians would stop holding hands in public. The homoerotic possibilities of some of these heterosocial occasions, especially masked balls, did not escape the Iranians' attention. Sarabi, in his description of a Boeuf Gras carnival in Paris, noted, "Some men dress as women, and some women as men; in the midst of this cross-dressing, all intercourse [*suhbat*, which in Persian carries the double meaning it has in English] is possible and any joking, flirtation, and fooling around acceptable" (Sarabi 1982, 214).

64. I'timad al-Saltanah 1966, entries dated, 24 April 1892, 13 January 1893, and 20 April 1893, on pp. 859, 971, and 992 respectively.

65. For a brief discussion of these issues, see Najmabadi 2000a.

66. See, for instance, Mirza Abu al-Hasan Khan Shirazi 1986, 105, 162–63, 315.

67. See, for instance, Farid al-Mulk Hamadani 1975. Traveling in 1884, he consistently speaks of beautiful ladies (*khanumha*) and women (*zanha*). See also Sahhafbashi (1978), traveling in 1897, whose report is written in a realist mode rather than as a phantasm of paradise.

68. The word used in Persian, *musahibat*, like English *intercourse*, has the same double meaning.

69. Akhundzadah 1985, 178–79. Among the classical Persian texts that came under modernist assault from this point of view was Sa'di's *Gulistan*. See Talibuf 1978 [1911], 198; and, from a later period, Kasravi 1944, 41.

70. This sentence appears in Arabic in the original and is a partial text of Qur'anic verses, 7:81 and 27:55, both in the context of narrating the story of Lot and his people.

71. See also Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani 1991, 72–73, 83–87.

72. To the extent that any earthly possibility is entertained for homoeroticism, strong moral repugnance is expressed against it and its celebration in classical Persian literature. One author has called it "the most polluted of all love [*aludah'tarin 'ishq*]" (Purjavadi 1991–92, vol. 12, no. 2, p. 8).

73. I am grateful to Negar Mottahedeh for bringing this point to my attention.

74. Premodern Islamic medical and legal treatises categorized *'ubnah* as illness. In the modernist redefinition, the concept of homosexuality as illness (while not a dominant interpretation) became inclusive of both desire and act, and covered both partners to the act and desire.

75. These reconfigurations are also deeply imbricated in class reconfigurations: male and female homosexualities are located by the emerging modern middle class either onto the decadent aristocracy (especially confounded with Qajar elite) or onto the lower uncultured classes.

76. See Tapinc 1992.

77. In contemporary Persian a trace of the former meaning of *bachchah* as young can be read in its usage (usually in plural form) to refer to a group of young peers, such as a group of students or young office workers, sports teams, and so forth.

78. In the second half of the twentieth century, several laws have been enacted to set a minimum age for marriage of young girls. Yet all such legislation

has a provision for its suspension if a state-certified doctor testifies that the girl is physically mature enough to marry, even if she is under the minimum age.

### CHAPTER 3

1. For a French translation of the 1836 decree, see Piemontese 1969b.
2. Throughout this chapter I have had to repeatedly use the awkward construction “fe(male).” As I have hinted in the introduction and discussed at greater length in chapter 1, facial and other bodily marks of human beauty were shared by young men and women in Qajar Iran. Though many nineteenth-century Qajar suns look female to twentieth-century eyes, their gender in their own context was indeterminate.
3. I am thankful to Kathryn Babayan for this observation.
4. I am using the shorthand “a certain kind of public visibility” to avoid current notions of modernity that mark the “premodern” as the time and space of female invisibility and the “modern” as the time and space of woman’s visibility. After all, a veiled woman in the street is just as visible, though differently, as an unveiled woman.
5. Nayyirnuri 1965, 148; Nafisi 1949, 79. Neither author gives a date for this decree, but official documents from as late as 1935 bear a sun with eyes, eyebrows, and hair. See, for instance, Iran 1935. Yahyá Zuka’ (1965) dates this to sometime around 1935–36. In a conversation (London, 3 September 1999), Yahyá Zuka’ suggested to me that the order may have been an oral rather than a written decree. According to Zuka’, many royal orders during Riza Shah’s period were oral, dutifully communicated by obedient attendants to appropriate state officials. That the facial features did not disappear immediately and uniformly—one can find occasional suns with small dots for eyes and noses on official stationery of later years of Riza Shah’s reign—gives credence to this suggestion.
6. I am taking the subtitle of this section from Muhammad Shah’s 1836 decree with a sense of historical irony. Within Iranian nationalist discourse it is often taken as an objective fact of history. For a recent example, see Inqita’ 1997. For brief informative essays on the many iconic meanings of the lion and the sun in Islamic art, see Kindermann, *El*; and Milstein *El*. For Persian sources, see Minuvi Tihrani 1948; Kasravi 1930; Shahidi 1971; Mushiri 1972–74; Yahaqqi 1990.
7. Aside from the mythohistorical significance of the sun as an icon of divinity in Zoroastrianism for modern Iranian nationalism, in nineteenth-century Zoroastrian practices the sun continued to be associated with blessings and good omens. For a beautiful collection of dowry embroideries from nineteenth-century Yazd (in central Iran), see Vahramian 1996. My thanks to Jane Howard for bringing this article to my attention.
8. The earliest modern reference to this story is Ouseley 1819–23, 3:564. For pre-Safavi coins with the lion-and-sun, see Turabi Tabataba’i 1971, 48, 81, 87. This narrative has now become a regular, though disputed, part of writing

a history of the lion-and-sun. See Nayyirnuri 1965, 87–88; Nafisi 1949, 53–55; Minuvi Tihrani 1948, 86. The sun with a human face and the lion appear on tileworks of several central Asian buildings, the most famous perhaps being the seventeenth-century Shirdar madrasa in Samarqand. See Blair and Bloom 1994, 205. The most likely source of the central Asian representations remains the astrological figurative tables, which associate good fortune with “the Sun in the House of Leo,” as indicated by similar usage of the icon on Mughal coins. See Falk 1985, figures 532, 541, 563, 564, 565, 566.

9. The significance of the lion-and-sun in Jewish wedding documents from mid-nineteenth-century Iran is not quite clear to me, especially because it seems to have been limited to documents from central Iran, in particular, from Isfahan and Yazd provinces. Shalom Sabar argues that, as in many other Jewish communities, it is an expression of the Iranian Jewish community’s loyalty to the larger national community, seeking a measure of self-protection. See Sabar 1993, chap. 4. My deepest gratitude to my late colleague Sorour Soroudi of Hebrew University of Jerusalem, who provided me with this source. See also Saghian 1997.

10. Herbert had accompanied Sir Robert Sherley, Lady Teresa Sherley, and Sir Dodmore Cotton (appointed by King Charles as ambassador to the Safavi court in 1626) in their journey to Iran. Kathryn Babayan (private communication, June 2000) has suggested that the origin of this perception, in particular the affiliation of the sun with the founder of the Safavi order, is the widely circulating story of the two dreams of Shaykh Safi and its narrative work for Safavi historiography. For an analysis of these dreams, see Quinn 1996. The second dream, in which Shaykh Safi is said to have dreamed as a child that he lifted a hat from his head and a sun shone from his head, may also be linked to one of many sun metaphors used in the Safavi to early Qajar period for the sovereign: *khawrshid kulah*, the sun-hatted.

11. In Rustam al-Hukama’s narrative, this genealogical claim justified the Qajar’s break from the previous pattern of ruling *on behalf of* a nominal Safavi king, as the Afshari and Zand rulers before them had done, and their move to establish a new dynasty.

12. To sign one’s name with a punning invocation of Muhammad, ‘Ali or, less frequently, other religious figures, was a common practice of the time with a long history. Kings invoked this pun on coins, artists on paintings or other objects, and poets in the last verse of a composition. For a sample of early Qajar royal distiches, see Poole 1887, lxxiii–lxxiv. For painters and illustrators, see Diba 1989.

13. The earthliness (*khaki*) of this shift, a sense of nationhood excavated from the depths of *khak* (soil), proved of long-lasting significance for Iranian nationalism, in particular for its notion of homeland. On the centrality of land to Iranian nationalism, see Kashani-Sabet 1999.

14. Sussan Babaie (2001) has argued that the move from “a tradition of painting, characterized by its miniature size, its deliberate emphasis on flat shapes and colors,” to one with “a striking predilection for life-size representation, modeling

of forms, use of cast shadows, and aerial and geometric perspectives,” marks the later period of Safavid rule (that is, the seventeenth century) as an early modern period. In this domain, too, the Qajars appropriated and expanded the Safavid legacy.

15. For a Safavid example, see Diba and Ekhtiar 1998, plate 3. Abu al-Hasan Ghaffari Kashani (1990, 286–87, 661) uses *khawrshidkulah*, in chronological entries for 1766 and 1782, to refer to the Russian sovereign (padhshah-i Rus). Abu al-Hasan Qazvini (1988) uses it in reference both to “the reigning monarch” (*sultan-i vaqt*, 1) and to King George III of England (104, 120, 128). Mahmud Mirza (1968, 155, 332) also used *khawrshidkulah* to refer to the Iranian monarch (shah-i Iran). It is possible that the later consolidation of *khawrshid* with femininity needed to forget these prior usages of the adjective for male monarchs, and thus the adjective became fixed on Catherine II.

16. Sun metaphors were occasionally used in reference to later Qajar monarchs, though with nowhere close to the intensity and frequency with which they pervaded the courtly prose and poetry of Fath‘ali Shah’s period. As late as the last years of the last Qajar monarch, Ahmad Shah (r. 1909–25), we come across such usage. See, for instance, Nasim-i Shumal’s poem on the occasion of Ahmad Shah’s return to Iran from Europe (either in June 1920 or in November 1923), in which the Shah is called the sun of Iran (*aftab-i Iran*). See Namini 1984, 706–7. In the last decade of the reign of Muhammad Riza Shah Pahlavi (r. 1941–79) the sun-related metaphor, *Aryamihr* (light of the Aryans), was officially designated for a reigning monarch, though not as a *khawrshid*—by then too much a lady—but as *mihr*.

17. Saba 1962, 381–84. Hamal (lamb, the Aries) is the name of the first month of spring, starting on 21 March; Kian, the name of a mythohistorical dynasty founded by Jamshid. This affiliation was taken up more aggressively and self-consciously by the Qajars (compared with the Safavis), with public representations including naming the royal crown as *taj-i Kiani* and the throne as *takht-i Kiani*.

18. Rustam al-Hukama 1974, 327. For a sample of his sun metaphors, see 51, 59, 63, 67, 69. He also refers to Catherine II as *khawrshidkulah* (66, 198, 442).

19. The verses around the inner rim of a bowl read: “The golden Cup in the hands of Khaqan / Consider to be superior to the Goblet of Jam(shid); In the silvery Tower with its five Supports / Consider the Moon as it glows; Nay, the Nine Heavens and the Twelve Signs / Consider them to be in the grasp of the Sun” (Robinson 1972, 26).

20. Goethe 1943, 303. My deepest gratitude to Heidi Walcher for translating Goethe’s German text into English and for researching this issue. These verses do not seem to have been recorded in any edition of Fath‘ali Shah’s collected poems. The only other source I have seen that refers to these gifts and verses is in the appendix to the English translation of Tancoigne’s travelogue. The appendix includes “Memoirs of the Persian Ambassador,” a reprint from the *Literary Gazette*, where the gifts are mentioned (1820, 402).

21. Goethe took the cloth to be the sash going with an order—presumably the Order of the Sun. But the Persian word *pardah* (curtain, shawl, drapery) is used, making it unlikely to have been an order of any kind.

22. Goethe 1943, 301. “Fath‘ali, shah-i Turk” indicates Fath‘ali Shah’s pride in his Qajar lineage, but also his attachment to the Turkish language, which was “the vernacular language” of Qajar households and which he used, along with Persian, to compose poetry.

23. See, for instance, Rustam al-Hukama 1974, 81, 206, 211, 217, 227, 366, 399; Saba 1867, 10, 15, 40. The most common expression was some variation of *Iran kunam-i shiran* (Iran the gorge of lions).

24. Rustam al-Hukama 1974, 402. One wonders if his own title, “Rustam of All the Philosophers,” and the title of his book, “Rustam of All the Histories,” were chosen to strengthen and benefit from this mythofolkloric invocation.

25. Compare, for instance, plate 41, “Fath ‘Ali Shah in Armor,” with figure 9, “Combat of Rustam and Isfandiar,” both in Diba and Ekhtiar 1998.

26. On Fath‘ali Shah’s and later Qajars’ sponsorship of ta‘ziah, see Amir Arjomand 1984, 240–41; quotation on 241. On ta‘ziah’s place in the development of Iranian modernity’s visibility and spectacularity, see Mottahedeh 1998b. See also Taqian 1995.

27. The house of strength, a nineteenth-century equivalent of a modern-day body-building sports club, intimately linked with a sense of brotherhood among the members. See Rochard 2002.

28. Other early Qajar buildings with similar configuration of the lion-and-sun and Rustam fighting the white giant indicate the popularity of this affiliation. See the photograph of a Tehran city gate, Muhammadiyeh or Darvazah-i naw, constructed in 1846 during Muhammad Shah’s reign. Zuka’ and Simsar 1990, 61.

29. A number of sources on the Iranian Order of Lion and Sun have suggested that this order was created in imitation of the French Legion of Honor. My research has not found any documented support for this explanation. It has been further suggested that the symbolism of the sun king may have been inspired by Louis XIV’s similar symbolic affiliations. Because the Iranian/Imami cultural universe was already so saturated with these notions and symbolics, the search for a European origin in this case seems redundant and unnecessary.

30. Robert Ker Porter (1821–22, 2:523), for instance, perceived his lion-and-sun as an honor received not for services rendered to the Iranian government or the king but as an act of gratitude for a portrait of Fath‘ali Shah that he had painted.

31. Kavusi ‘Iraqi and Ahmadi 1997, 28. For similar formulations, see Fath‘ali Shah’s letter to La Blanche (a French envoy in Iran from July to October 1807), accompanying his *nishan-i khawrshid*, dated 16 July 1808, *ibid.*, 58. Similarly Fath‘ali Shah’s 1809 farman, honoring Sir Harford Jones, the iconography of which he later incorporated into his coat of arms, bears the words *az shafiqqat-i khusruvani* (from the royal graciousness/kindness). See Raby 1999, plate 101, 24–25.

32. See Wright 1979, plate I, for a copy of Napoleon's badge and star, and plate IIa, Talleyrand's badge and star for *nishan-i khawrshid*, both of which bear the lion-and-sun. See the cover of Mélik Schahnazar 1817 for his nishan.

33. See Kavusi 'Iraqi and Ahmadi 1997, 58, 87. One indication of the later dominance of the lion-and-sun as the sign of Iran is that the editorial explanation of an accompanying letter (87) refers to it as "*nishan-i shir va khawrshid*" even though the text following specifically says "*nishan-i khawrshid*"—and this dates from 1997, that is, eighteen years after the lion-and-sun had been abolished as a national sign.

34. In 1873 Nasir al-Din Shah instituted a different sun medallion (*nishan-i aftab*); see below for further discussion.

35. Other flags continued to be in use throughout the nineteenth century until the flag's detailed specification in the 1906 constitution, later elaborated in 1910. See, for instance, Diba and Ekhtiar 1998, plate 52. For various nineteenth-century descriptions of Iranian flags, see Jahangir Mirza 1948, 45; Drouville 1985, 274, 277–78; Piemontese 1969a, 174.

36. See, for instance, Mu'tamid al-Dawlah 1987, 81, 102 (Mu'tamid al-Dawlah objected to the display of a flag with the wrong configuration of the lion), and 110 and 258 (approaching Beirut, Mu'tamid al-Dawlah refused to go on board an Ottoman welcoming boat because it did not display the lion-and-sun flag). See also a report on Farrukh Khan Amin al-Dawlah's mission to Paris in 1856: Sarabi 1982, 155; Garmrudi 1969, 769; Afshar 1970, 222. By the late nineteenth century, Iran had become the land of the lion-and-sun, as C. J. Mills, a doctor in Iran from 1866 to 1881 explained why he had opted for the primary title *In the Land of the Lion and Sun* (1883, v), in the introduction to his book *Modern Persia*. See also Nasiri 1984, 10, 60.

37. 'Abbas Mirza died shortly before his father, who then designated 'Abbas Mirza's son as heir apparent.

38. See Wright 1979, plate IIa, and his discussion of the gender of the sun on page 139. In Qajar Iran, the hint of a mustache was a cherished sign of young adolescent male or female beauty.

39. My repeated emphasis of the femaleness of the sun "in our eyes" arises from the fact that the sun associated with Persianate royalty had a history of being imagined male. See Shahbazi, *Elrb*, 18. Yet the later dominance of Lady Sun in modern iconography often makes us read any facially marked sun as female.

40. For illustrations of the various medallions, see Piemontese 1969b, figures 2–10.

41. For instance, medallions of honor instituted in 1853 by Nasir al-Din Shah for graduates of Dar al-funun all had seated lions and no swords (Piemontese 1969b, figure 20).

42. See Piemontese 1969b, figures 16–18. The swordless seated lion did not go out of official circulation completely until after the Constitutional Revolution and its decrees. Even after the 1910 decree, many ministries continued to use seated swordless lions on stationery. See, for instance, Iran 1916, 208.

43. The decree was issued on 20 Muharram 1252 (5 May 1836). According to Zuka' (1965, pt. 2, 21), the decree was drafted by Mirza Aqasi, Muhammad Shah's premier, upon the Shah's order. The reference to "every state" choosing a sign indicates that this move may have been made in part because of a desire for the Iranian state to be like others and to be recognizable as a modern state. As Selim Deringil has argued, "The nineteenth century was a period of standardized ceremony" (1998, 16). See also his discussion of the urge for uniformity of symbolics of the sultan's sovereignty on pp. 26–35.

44. Nonetheless, masqueraded by the cosmological imagination, the lion continued to carry its affiliation with 'Ali, as I have argued earlier, and as we shall see "its return."

45. For an insightful analysis of production of a modern national geobody through new concepts of geography, boundary, and maps, see Thongchai Winichakul, 1994. For Iran, see Kashani-Sabet 1999; Tavakoli-Targhi 1990c.

46. The lion-and-sun was frequently integrated into tilework of buildings from this period, whether state buildings and royal palaces (the most prominent is perhaps the tile work of Shams al-'Imarah) or private households (see figure 13). For photographs of Shams al-'Imarah's lion-and-sun tilework, see Semsar and Emami 2000, 8, 12–13; Kasra'ian 1990, 192. For a number of tile-works of private houses in Shiraz and Tabriz, see Sayf 1997, plates 123, 124, 135, 138, 203.

47. For a description of a set of playing cards that are similar to the set at the Brooklyn Museum, see Brugsch 1988, 2:398.

48. For the text of this decree, see Iran 1916, 246; see also Shahidi 1971, 40–42, 235–236; Mushiri 1972, pt. 1, 206. Aside from Queen Victoria and the queen of Belgium, other women who received this medallion include Nasir al-Din Shah's two favorite (and competing) wives, Anis al-Dawlah (in 1888) and Amin Aqdas (in 1889); the wife of the governor of India (in 1887); the wife of the Ottoman ambassador to Iran (in 1896); the empress of Russia and a nine-year-old daughter of the Ottoman sultan (both in 1900); Queen Alexandra (in 1902); and Queen Mary (in 1904). See the following sources: I'timad al-Saltanah 1988, 3:1943–44; Nasir al-Din Shah Qajar 1964, 82, 90; I'timad al-Saltanah 1966, 574, 681–82; Mirza'i 1997, 1:35; Muzaffar al-Din Shah 1901, 129, 225; Raby 1999, 32.

49. I am of course not suggesting that the artist who designed the erect lion with a bare sword in its hand necessarily implied these metaphoric meanings. But once there, the cultural condensation becomes unavoidable.

50. Zuka' 1965, pt. 1, 16. For a counterargument, see Nayyirnuri 1969. Whether in terms of actual classification of lions one can sustain a substantive difference between African and Persian lions, nineteenth-century sources do refer to lions with manes as African. See, for instance, Nasir al-Din Shah Qajar (1964, 223), where he describes some Ottoman marble lions in a garden as "shirha-yi yaldar-i Afriq."

51. On "moments of national recognition," see Siegel 1997, 7.

52. 'Ala'i 1965; Arjumand 1996; Siebertz.



53. Iran 1916, 242–45. A number of cabinet decrees were issued in 1958 and 1959, apparently in response to what was viewed as not a uniform enough usage of the flag and the national emblem. See Zuka' 1965, pt. 6, 21–27; Nayyirnuri 1965, 148–50. Regulations were also formulated specifying the manner of paying respect to the flag, for both men and women. See Iran 1937, 9:70–72.

54. Minuvi Tihrani 1948, 104, 106. The Iranian ambassador in London at the time was Sayyid Hasan Taqizadah. A similar proposition had already been made in the journal *Kavah*, published in Berlin and edited by Taqizadah. See *Kavah* 1, 1 (24 January 1916): 4. On Iranian nationalist activists in Europe in the 1910s and 1920s, see Bihnam 2000. On the nationalist redrafting of the *Kavah* story and darafsh-i Kaviani, see Tavakoli-Targhi 1990.

55. See "Naqsh-i shir va khawrshid," *Ayandah* 5, 7–9 (Autumn 1979): 703–8.

56. See, for instance, Shirka 1993; and the more substantive article by Inqita' 1994. See also Inqita' 1997.

57. Further discussion of this issue will be taken up in chapter 4.

58. Like an electoral poster, this pardah was produced in a number of variations. Karimzadah Tabrizi (1976) reproduces three versions in his article. There is another version in Shahri 1990, vol. 6, figure 170. This image and others of similar composition seem to have had a wide circulation in the early Riza Shah period. For a description of a pardah similar to figure 29, see 'Ayn al-Saltanah 1995–2001, 9:6782. In his memoir, writer and essayist Muhammad 'Ali Islami Nudushan refers to it as the "famous image of Riza Shah in which he was holding the head of 'mother homeland' [*mam-i mihan*] on his lap." He goes on to say, "Even though the image was comic, in our eyes at that time it was very meaningful. We imagined that this mother, after long periods of difficulties, was now leaning against strong legs" (1993–97, 2:128).

59. In these verses he uses three words that became the Pahlavi motto: "God, king, homeland," in that order. Two more lines at the bottom of the piece, presumably the artist's voice, address Riza Khan:

Once from your endeavors Iran became prosperous  
the nation of Dariush became freed from sorrow.  
With pure affections and a clear heart  
this picture was made from the mirror of justice.

The reproduction of the wall hanging in Karimzadah Tabrizi (1976), from which I have reproduced it here, is not legible. I have depended entirely upon Karimzadah Tabrizi's reading of the verses in his text.

60. See note 5.

61. Nafisi (1949, 79) uses *gisu* for hair, a word with similar overtones.

62. "The lower orders generally have the hair over the temporal bone long, and this is brought in two long locks, turning backwards behind the ear; they are termed 'zulf'; the beaux and youths are constantly twisting and combining them. Long hair, however, is going out of fashion in Persia, and the more

civilised affect the cropped hair worn by Europeans, and even have a parting in it" (Wills 1883, 321). Significantly, the recently adopted Qajari lion-and-sun by the International Qajar Studies Association, has elected to retrieve the eyes and nose of the sun, marking it from other recent adoptions that invariably have opted for the sun with no facial markers; yet no zulf is retrieved here either. See <http://www.qajarstudies.org/>.

63. The use of *private* and *public* often gives us trouble because the meanings these words have acquired through the historical narratives of Euro-American modernities do not quite correspond to the spatial and political markings of other developments. In particular, here I am using *private* for *khalvat*, as distinct from *public* for *'amm*. *Khalvat*, though an inner domain of a man's life, was not the same as the *andarun*, the inner domain of women and children (and female servants). A man's *khalvat* was for socializing with other men; it was a space of private fraternity.

64. See Schor 1987, especially introduction and chap. 4.

## CHAPTER 4

1. This chapter draws on an earlier article (Najmabadi 1997a), although I have added much new archival material and revised some of the main analytical arguments.

2. The literature on nationalism, gender, and sexuality is enormous. I have greatly benefited from the following works: Chatterjee 1993; Hunt 1992; Morris 2000; Parker, Russo, Sommer, and Yaeger 1992; Ramaswamy 1997a; and Siegel 1997.

3. On the centrality of "land" to the emergence of Iranian nationalist discourse in the nineteenth century, see Kashani-Sabet 1999.

4. For similar changes in Arabic and Turkish, see Lewis 1988, 40–41; Lewis 1964, 75–78; Ayalon 1987, 52–53.

5. For the concept of geobody, see Thongchai Winichakul 1994.

6. For premodern concepts of *vatan* in Persian literature, see Shafi'i Kadkani n.d.

7. "Maqalah-i makhsusah," *Shahanshahi* 1, 25 (17 July 1906): 4.

8. "Iran va Iranian," *Habl al-matin* 14, 46 (15 July 1907): 1–8, 17; quotations on 1 and 4, respectively. Note that the recitation of provinces, while it is meant to point to the necessity of disavowal of provincialism, at once scripts these provinces as components of Iran.

9. "Guftigu-yi Shaykh Buhlul va Mulla Nasr al-Din," *Nida-yi vatan* 1, 9 (27 January 1907): 3.

10. As Jeffrey Mehlman has aptly noted, morphologically, in the concept of *la patrie*, "we are served up a female father, a pater of feminine gender" (1993, 85). Grammatical ungenderedness of Persian spared Iranian nationalists this particular challenge.

11. Adamiyat (1970, 114–33; 1978, 267–87) credits Akhundzadah and Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani, more than any other nineteenth-century political

thinker, with constructing the new meaning of vatan in Iranian modernity. On Akhundzadah, see also Sanjabi 1995; Kia 1998.

12. These concepts are in turn related to how the figure of mother is written in Sufi biographical dictionaries. Many Sufis are depicted as devoted to their mothers, serving them unfailingly in their old age. The only earthly love that is not seen either as a manifestation or as disruptive of the Sufi's love for the divine seems to be his love for his mother. For a survey of *female* in Sufi writings, see Schimmel 1975, 426–35.

13. These Sufi concepts in turn influenced more orthodox interpretations of this narrative. See, for instance, Imami Isfahani 1953, 1:34–35.

14. See, for instance, Mahmud Mirza 1968, 144, 590, 615.

15. Iranian frontiers in this period, as Kashani-Sabet (1999) has powerfully argued, were anything but precise. Their “fragility” in part produced the nationalist desire for fixed territoriality.

16. For an even earlier earthly reversal of this verse, see a letter (signed M[im]. ‘[Ayn].) published in *Akhtar* 7, 15 (30 March 1881): 6–7 (122–23).

17. *Hadid* 2, 11 (30 August 1906): 4.

18. “Layihah-i yiki az danayan-i junub,” *Habl al-matin* 15, 18 (25 November 1907): 13–18. The preceding discussion is paraphrased from pp. 13–14.

19. The success of this process can be seen in the prevalent assumption among Iranians that Firdawsi's Iran is what they today consider their homeland. This is reflected in Shafi'i Kadkani's essay as well.

20. As Jean E. Howard and Phyllis Rackin have argued for the distinction between chronicles and chorographies, “Chronicle history constructs its readers as hereditary subjects of the English kings whose narrative of dynastic succession it recounts. To be English is to be a subject of the English king. Chorography, by contrast, constructs its readers as inhabitants of the geographical place called England. To be English is to be native to a particular place. . . . the emergence of the nation state increasingly privileged geographical difference as the defining mark of national identity” (1997, 49).

21. Similarly, when Muzaffar al-Din Shah was in Tiflis in 1900 on his way to Europe, the city's Shaykh al-Islam addressed him as “the kind father” and referred to the local Muslims as “sons of vatan” (*awlad-i vatan*) (Muzaffar al-Din Shah 1901, 62).

22. This other face of the emergence of the new sense of nationhood is often ignored in Iranian historiography. Kashani-Sabet, for instance, notes, “By making Iranian territory the birthright of all compatriots, not just the patrimony of kings and courtiers, the doctrine of *hubb-i vatan* reached out to a wide community of subjects who, although diverse in ethnic background, could share in this veneration of a common territory” (1999, 52). But the diversity of ethnicity had to be submerged, culturally, politically and at times by force, in this “outreach,” as twentieth-century Iranian history has repeatedly shown.

23. See Muhandis'bashi 1969, 146–47, 149–50, 165, 170–71. For a discussion of this boundary commission and Muhandis'bashi's report, see Kashani-Sabet 1999, 26–28.

24. For a discussion of memory as representation pertinent to the arguments of this section, see Jacobus 1995, chap. 1.

25. Amin al-Dawlah 1962, 3–4. Notice the assumption that Iran has “natural” borders and that its present size is an abnormality that resulted from “amputations and cuts.” One could be tempted to read a “castration anxiety” in the many repetitions of Iranians’ concern over lost territory. The notion of Iran’s “natural borders” is also voiced by the figure of Aqa Muhammad Khan in I’timad al-Saltanah’s dream sequence: “My overall plan was to stretch Iran to its natural boundaries, that is, to the Caucasus mountain range and the river Oxus [Jayhun], if not the Punjab” (1978, 46).

26. For an extended discussion of these mapping ventures, see Kashani-Sabet 1999, chap. 2.

27. I’timad al-Saltanah 1989. See, for instance, 1:438–57, where I’timad al-Saltanah integrated verbatim the report by Mirza Mihdi Khan, who had been officially sent to Baluchistan to measure and map that province.

28. On Nasir al-Din Shah’s travelogues, see Afshar 1984. See also Afshar 1998.

29. I am taking this point from Valerie Traub’s argument about bodies as maps. See Traub 2000, 45. My thanks to Kathryn Babayan for bringing this essay to my attention.

30. “Hubb al-watan min al-iman,” *Akhtar* 3, 8 (28 February 1877): 1–2 (25–26). The article continued in *Akhtar* 3, 9 (3 March 1877): 1–2 (33–34). See also “Baz az vatan bayad guft” (One must speak of vatan again), *Akhtar* 3, 10 (7 March 1877): 1–2 (41–42); and “Dinat az hubb-i vatan amad durust” (Your religion is set right through your love of vatan), *Akhtar* 3, 11 (10 March 1877): 1 (49). For a fuller discussion of this series, see Tavakoli-Targhi 2000, 178–80. See also Kashani-Sabet 1999, 50–52.

31. The article, by Mirza ‘Ali Muhammad Kashani, editor first of *Surayya* and then of *Parvarish*, both published in Cairo, was titled “The Strange Dream and the Wondrous Uncovering.” It was serialized in *Parvarish* 1, 1 (8 June 1900): 10–13, and subsequent issues: 2 (15 June 1900): 10–13; 3 (23 June 1900): 9–12; 5 (9 July 1900): 8–11; 8 (30 July 1900): 11–13; 10 (13 August 1900): 12–14; 22 (23 November 1900): 14–16. For a fuller discussion, see Najmabadi 1997a.

32. *Umid* 1, 11 (11 January 1907): 3.

33. “Iran va Iranian,” *Habl al-matin* 14, 46 (15 July 1907): 1–8, 17; quotation on 1.

34. This is a significant variation on a famous verse from Hafiz: “Never will I abandon wine in the season of flower / How could I do that? I brag of wisdom [‘aql]” (Hafiz 1980, 703).

35. The earliest usage of the expression “mushti az khak-i vatan” in a nationalist context that I have come across is in an article in *Akhtar* 5, 50 (10 December 1879): 7–8 (395–96), in a translation of the introduction of the memoir of a Hungarian writer, where the latter is translated as, before leaving homeland, “with the love of a child for the mother, I threw myself on the soil

of homeland, and with great desolation, I took a handful of the soil of dear homeland with me" (8/396).

36. For example, see Maraghah'i 1985, 66.

37. *Nida-yi vatan* 2, 114 (24 November 1907): 3–4.

38. In addition to more familiar scents and sights, new ones began to evoke nostalgia and pleasurable feelings that connoted a sense of Iranianness, among them the sight of the lion-and-sun emblem and the sound of Iranian national anthem. See Zill al-Sultan 1983, 473. Zill al-Sultan uses the phrase *ahang-i millati-i Iran*. The first Iranian national anthem was commissioned by Nasir al-Din Shah in 1873 on the eve of his first trip to Europe (Mallah 1976, 111). Subsequently, there are references to the song "Long Live the King of Iran," often performed at school ceremonies. See, for instance, *Ma'arif* 2, 57 (14 October 1900): 2–3; 3, 62 (3 December 1900): 1. During the years of the Constitutional movement and revolution (1905–11) a number of other pieces were composed and were in circulation. In 1933 Riza Shah commissioned an official national anthem that remained in use until 1979 revolution. See "Surud-i milli," *Asr-i jadid* 2, 8 (30 October 1915): 5–7. See also Mallah 1976, 135–37, 171–75; Mallah 1974.

39. Maraghah'i 1985, 25–26; see also 153–54, 367–68, 553. In a similar vein, leaving Iran in September 1903 from the port of Anzali, Mahdiquli Hidayat (1864–1955) took a farewell glance at a royal building and noted a cool breeze: "We were happy that it was blowing to us from the abode of vatan [*az ku-yi vatan*]" (1989, 7).

40. Maraghah'i (1985, 168) asserted that every handful of soil of vatan was soaked in the blood of our ancestors, and therefore demanded that we defend and protect it. The blood shed on *khak-i vatan* was celebrated as life-giving in the popular *tasnif* by Abu al-Qasim 'Arif Qazvini, "Az khun-i javanan-i vatan lalah damidah" (from the blood of youth of vatan tulips have bloomed). For the text and music of this *tasnif*, see Mir 'Ali'naqi 1995, pt. 1, 165.

41. Morris 2000, 13.

42. Here is how *Newsweek* reported it (29 January 1979, 41): "The Shah [during a walk around the palace ground in one of his last days there] at one point bent down and picked up a handful of soil. He would take it with him when he left the country—just as his father had done when he was sent into exile in 1941." See also p. 38 for a report of a small box of Iranian soil in the Shah's pocket as he departed. The *New York Times*, 17 January 1979, A8, noted a reported bagful of soil but indicated that "this could not be confirmed."

43. The accounts of his father's "handful of soil" are as numerous as those of the son's. Though most sources simply state that Riza Shah took a handful of soil with him (see the newspaper reports noted earlier; also reported by Houchang Chehabi to Benedict Anderson [1991, 86]), there are various accounts in Persian sources. 'Ali Asghar Hikmat (1976, 191) recalled in his memoir that in 1943 the deposed king, in exile in Johannesburg, asked for two mementos from Iran, a flag and a small box of Iranian soil. Husayn Fardust (1991, 1:72), however, recalls that it was Ernest Perron (a Swiss citizen and a

courtier of the Pahlavis) who took a box of Iranian soil as a gift for Riza Shah during the latter's exile, a gesture that immensely pleased the ailing ex-monarch. A similar account is offered by 'Ali Izadi, in Mirza Salih 1993, 471. For yet another version, see Shahri 1990, 2:607. That for both incidents various tales circulate indicates that more significant than the actual event is the performative and sentimental recalling of the gesture of keeping a token of what is about to be lost. The recent report that Layla Pahlavi, the youngest daughter of the former royal family, was buried with a handful of Iranian soil (*Iran Times*, 22 June 2001, 1) continues the work of reminding Iranian exiles of the family's sentiments for Iran and with it hopes to constitute the family as part of this nation-in-nostalgia.

44. Yahyá Mirza Iskandari, 'Arusi-i Mihrangiz (Mihrangiz's Wedding), serialized in the Constitutionalist paper *Iran-i naw*, from 24 October 1910 to 18 February 1911. Yahyá Mirza was a grandson of Muhammad Tahir Mirza Iskandari, the nineteenth-century translator of many French texts into Persian, including Alexandre Dumas's *Trois Mousquetaires* (1316/1899), *La Reine Margot* (1323/1905), and *Conte de Monte Cristo* (1312/1895). On these translations, see Navvabi 1984.

45. *Iran-i naw* 2, 9 (31 October 1910): 3.

46. Talibuf 1978, 181. For other samples of his vatan-worshipping poetry, see *Hadid* 2, 11 (30 August 1906): 3–4.

47. Many of these would first be published in the reformist press but circulated more widely. Sometimes books would also re-cite these poems. Maraghah'i, for example, included several *qasidah-i vatani* from *Habl al-matin* in his *Siahatnamah*. See pp. 337–38, 340–41, 342, 347–48, 349.

48. For samples of such poetry, see *Adab* 1, 11–14 (10 March 1899): 14; 3, 12 (1 February 1904): 5–6; 3, 14 (22 February 1904): 7; 3, 30 (14 November 1904): 8; 3, 36 (31 December 1904): 8; *Azarbayjan* 1 (19 February 1907): 2; 3 (7 March 1907): 3, 6; 8 (14 April 1907): 3, 6; *Nida-yi vatan* 1, 4 (18 January 1907): 7; 1, 14 (5 March 1907): 5; *Habl al-matin* (Tehran edition) 1, 76 (24 July 1907): 3–4; *Gul-i zard* 2, 8 (1 December 1919): 3; 2, 9 (17 December 1919): 3; 2, 10 (31 December 1919): 2; 2, 11 (14 January 1920): 3; 2, 12 (29 January 1920): 2; 2, 14 (24 February 1920): 3.

49. For samples of such poetry, see Adib al-Mamalik Farahani 1934; Namini 1984; Bahar 1965; 'Arif Qazvini 1980; 'Ishqi 1971; Lahuti 1979; Farrukhi 1978. See also Mir 'Ali'naqi 1995; Chehabi 1998, 1999; Panahi 1990. For examples of another genre, *bahr-i tavil*, put to patriotic use, see a number of "bahr-i tavil-i vatani" published in *Habl al-matin*, vol. 15, the following issues: 21 (16 December 1907): 7–8; 26 (20 January 1908): 10–11; 30 (24 February 1908): 17–18; 34 (23 March 1908): 18–19; 38 (27 April 1908): 18. For the general transformation of poetry in this period, see Karimi-Hakkak 1995. For a translation of some of this poetry into English, see Browne 1983. Some of Browne's translations, however, are unfortunately not very useful for the purposes of my argument. For instance, in Lahuti's "Mother's Lullaby," the verse "gardidah ghamin madar-i Iran" (mother Iran has become sorrowful) has been translated

as “Sorrow we may, but struggle we must” (224–25). The verse following this “taw kudak-i Irani-u-Iran vatan-i taw’s’t” (thou art child of Iran and Iran is your vatan) has been translated as “A Persian boy art thou, and Persia thy fatherland” (226).

50. See, for example, the program for a concert, probably from the mid-1920s, reprinted in Mir ‘Alinaqi 1998, 104–6.

51. Mir ‘Alinaqi 1998, 110–12. This short piece focuses on a central theme of the period, the cultural critique of Iranian men who were marrying European women while they were students abroad.

52. *Iran-i naw* 1, 134 (16 February 1910): 1. See also Tavakoli-Targhi 1990c, 98–99.

53. See, for instance, *Habl al-matin* 17, 1 (5 July 1909): 2. For equivalence of loss of mother Iran with loss of one’s honor and good name, see also a qasidah by Adib al-Mamalik, in *Adab*, 36 (30 December 1904), reprinted in Arianpur 1973, 2:142.

54. *Sur-i Israfil*, 18 (23 November 1907): 3, reprinted in Ettahadieh 1982.

55. Overall, in the Constitutionalist press, mother is the more dominant trope. But female beloved continues to be in circulation and perhaps underwrites the love for mother. See, for instance, parliamentary proceedings of the first Majlis (Sadr Hashimi 1946a, 235), where a speaker refers to “this country that is our female beloved” (in mamlikat kah ma’shuqah-i mast). In a famous *tasnif* from 1910 by Bahar, vatan is first addressed in terms borrowed from erotic poetry, yet by the end of the *tasnif* she becomes a mother (Arianpur 1973, 2:136). An English translation of this *tasnif* appears in Browne 1983, 278. The recurrent doubling of mother/beloved for patriotic men of this period is possibly linked to particular dynamics of the son-mother relationship in the context of child-rearing practices in which all children, including sons, grew up largely within the “mother’s world” until the “age of recognition,” marked by their no longer being able to go to the public bath with their mother. Usually occurring before puberty, perhaps between eight and ten, the age of recognition was when a boy was judged to have become cognizant of sexual difference through display of signs of desire, perhaps through gaze or touch. For a discussion of some of these issues, see Najmabadi 2000a. In memoirs of statesmen of this period, such as I’timad al-Saltanah’s *Ruznamah-i khatirat* (1966), the special relationship of the adult man to his mother (and in his case possibly to his wife as well) comes through strongly. Whenever I’timad al-Saltanah was away from home and became sad or ill, he would express the depth of his feeling through the pain of being away from his mother and wife and his desire to be reunited with them, as well as the fear of never being with them again. His grief over his mother’s death is recorded repeatedly and intensely. See pp. 27, 53–54, 722–23, 743, 749, 1004, 1007, 1159, 1167, 1169, 1174, 1214. See also Kia 2001.

56. *Nida-yi vatan* 1, 1 (27 December 1906): 5–6; 2 (3 January 1907): 8; 3 (10 January 1907): 3.

57. Talibuf 1977, 194. For other essays (and nationalist poetry) in which the king is cast as the father and the nation as his children, see *Hadid* 1, 40 (15 April

1906): 5; 1, 44 (13 May 1906): 6; *Tamaddun* 1, 1 (1 February 1907): 1; 1, 2 (February 1907): 1; 1, 3 (15 February 1907): 1; 7 (21 March 1907): 2; 1, 11 (13 April): 2; *Nida-yi vatan* 2, 156 (18 January 1908): 1; *Musavat* 1, 24 (24 May 1908): 3; *Majlis* 2, 16 (5 January 1908): 4; 2, 18 (7 January 1908): 4; *Ayinah-i ghayb'numa* 16 (21 September 1907): 2; 28 (3 March 1908): 4; *Iran-i naw* 1, 74 (25 November 1909): 2.

58. On the significance of the execution of Shaykh Fazl'allah Nuri as "the cultural equivalent of the execution of Louis XVI," see Tavakoli-Targhi 1990c, 101.

59. For example, see Maraghah'i 1985, 166–67; "Iran va Iranian," *Habl al-matin* 14, 46 (15 July 1907): 1–8, 17.

60. For examples of the latter, see I'timad al-Saltanah 1966, 111–12, 149, 188, 192, 212, 214, 296, 426, 457, 725, 819, 992, 1098.

61. "Surud-i milli va taranah-i vatan," *Habl al-matin* 11, 44 (10 August 1904): 10–13. For similar formulations, see Maraghah'i 1985, 224. The king was often referred to as the (crowned) father in the Constitutionalist press. See, for instance, *Huquq* 1, 10 (13 September 1907): 4; *Huquq* 1, 21 (7 December 1907): 1–2; *Huquq* 2, 6 (4 June 1908): 1–2.

62. "Iran va Iranian," *Habl al-matin* 14, 46 (15 July 1907): 1–8, 17; see pp. 8, 17.

63. See "Savad-i dastkhatt-i a'lahazrat humayuni," *Majlis*, 104 (3 June 1907): 2, for the first and Sharif Kashani 1983, 1:305, for the second.

64. For an expanded discussion of this point see Najmabadi 1995.

65. "Qabil-i tavajjuh-i 'umum-i baradaran-i vatan," *Habl al-matin* 15, 26 (20 January 1908): 14–16. See also *Ayinah-i ghayb'numa*, 27 (23 February 1908): 4, where the author proclaims that a true constitutionalist is one who considers women of all of Iran as vatani sister and men as vatani brothers.

66. See chapter 8 for further discussion of this issue.

67. In fact the Constitutionalist paper, *Huquq* (Rights, first issue published on 10 July 1907), was already and explicitly premised on the notion that there were two kinds of rights: those of vatan over us and those of us over vatan.

68. This shift in meaning of *haqq* was intimately linked to the shift in meaning of *siasat* from the ruler's (and parent's) prerogative to *punish* his subjects (children) to citizen's rights of participation in *politics*, as explicated by Tavakoli-Targhi 1990c, 2000.

69. For an English translation of a poem of this genre, see the 1913 poem by Purdavud in Browne 1983, 289–91, from which I have taken the subtitle of this section: "Fevered, Tormented, and Grieved." For a political essay that scripts Iran as a sick body in need of a knowledgeable physician and a caring nurse, and that narrates a history of Iran as cycles of health and illness, see *Surayya* 2, 25 (26 May 1900): 17–18. For a dialogue between two sons of vatan in which mother vatan is diagnosed as having contracted many diseases over the centuries from foreign intruders, see "Tashkhis-i amraz-i vatan ya diagnustik-i Iran," in *Rahnuma*, beginning in 1, 1 (6 August 1907), 5–7, and continuing through almost every issue (exceptions are nos. 4 and 21). For a fuller



discussion of this series, see Tavakoli-Targhi 2000, 184–86. See also Kashani-Sabet 2000.

70. For a powerful example, see “Ru’ya-yi sadiqanah,” *Habl al-matin* 2, 43 (7 June 1908): 1–5. I discuss this essay more fully in Najmabadi 1997a.

71. For examples of such a shift, see “Iran va Iranian,” *Habl al-matin* 14, 46 (15 July 1907): 1–8, 17; “Layihah-i yiki az danayan-i junub,” *Habl al-matin* 15, 18 (25 November 1907): 13–18.

72. On differential effects of forms of address, see Culler 1981, chap. 7.

73. See Tavakoli-Targhi 1990c. For a prime example of efforts to forge Persian anew to form the nation, see the introductory remarks by Majd al-Islam Kirmani to his translation of an English article in the *Parsee*, published by Parsees of Bombay, in *Nida-yi vatan*, 2 (3 January 1907): 4–5. The serialization of this article began under the title, “Parsi gu garchah tazi khawshtar ast” (Say It in Persian Even Though Arabic Is More Pleasant). After a critical response by a member of the clergy (yiki az ‘ulama-yi jalil), published in no. 9 (9 February 1907): 5, and subsequent issues, the title was changed to “Parsi gu zankah naghz-u-dilkash ast” (Say it in Persian because it is elegant and attractive). See *Nida-yi vatan*, 10 (12 February 1907): 5–6.

74. “Dukhtar gham'khvar-i madar ast” (Daughters Care for Mother), *Shukufah* 4, 6 (23 February 1916): 1–2; quotation on 1.

75. For some examples, see *Tamaddun* 1, 15 (7 May 1907): 2–3, *Tamaddun* 1, 12 (17 April 1907): 3–4, *Iran-i naw*, 13 (8 September 1909): 2, *Iran-i naw*, 43 (18 October 1909): 2; *Iran-i naw*, 114 (18 January 1910): 4; *Iran-i naw*, 148 (4 March 1910); *Iran-i naw*, 151 (8 March 1910); *Iran-i naw*, 157 (17 March 1910); *Iran-i naw*, 165 (29 March 1910): 3; *Iran-i naw*, 228 (12 June 1910); *Iran-i naw* 3, 83 (3 July 1911): 3. Formulations of women as caring (*dilsuz*) daughters of mother vatan also appear in later women’s journals. See, for instance, *Shukufah* 4, 6 (23 February 1916): 1; *Shukufah* 4, 7 (11 March 1916): 4.

76. “Maqalah-i makhshusah,” *Shahanshahi* 1, 25 (July 17, 1906): 4.

77. *Iran-i naw*, 124 (3 February 1910): 4. The letter, following the practice of women at the time, is signed by reference to the father of the woman, “daughter of Imam al-Hukama.” The signature is preceded by another domestic expression used by women at this time: “servant of vatan” (*khadimah-i vatan*).

78. This is a proverbial phrase, used in the political language of this period to call upon men to take up the struggle and prove themselves superior to women. For a discussion of the inner tensions of the Constitutional discourse about women, see chapter 8.

79. For a discussion of somatics of Tamil language as a mother figure—fertility of her womb, richness/nourishing quality of her milk, honor of her bodily inviolability, her tears, her health, and so forth—see Ramaswamy 1997a, 97–112.

80. *Shukufah* 1, 17 (8 November 1913): 2.

81. *Majlis*, 6 (3 December 1906): 3.

82. *Iran-i naw*, 19 (15 September 1909): 3.

83. For a discussion of this point, see Tavakoli-Targhi 2000, 191. Tavakoli-Targhi further argues that the filiative metaphors authorized women as national sisters to shed the veil that segregated them from their national brothers. This is debatable. Many women who considered themselves national sisters of men at the same time opposed unveiling. See chapter 5 for further discussion.

84. *Shukufah* 1, 12 (2 August 1913): 2. Note that these formulations also gender knowledge as female through her embodiment as a nurturing mother.

85. *Shukufah* 2, 8 (17 March 1914): 3. See also *Shukufah* 3, 19 (13 October 1915): 2.

86. The essay was serialized in several issues. *Iran-i naw*, 65 (13 November 1909); 69 (18 November 1909); 78 (30 November 1909); 84 (8 December 1909); 92 (18 December 1909). Reprinted with a number of her other writings and an introduction about her life in *Nimeye Digar* 2, 3 (Winter 1997): 146–95.

87. *Iran-i naw*, 78 (30 November 1909): 3. In an earlier essay, she had similarly called women “the educators and the true vatan of humankind.” *Iran-i naw*, 17 (13 September 1909): 2.

88. The most incongruent solution was to cross-gender vatan as male. The satirical journal *Kashkul* (1, 22 [21 October 1907]: 4) depicted Iran as a *man* being undressed; this was when Russia and Britain were dividing Iran into zones of influence. The cartoon played on the Persian expression for being robbed (undressed), *lukht'kardan*.

89. I have no explanation for this phenomenon. Why is it that something that was poetically encouraged, imagining Iran as a beloved, was visually unimagined? What is it that stops the crossing from the written, read, and heard to the seen? Depiction of Iran as an unveiled female body (mother) nonetheless may have contributed to the gradual presentability of women more generally.

90. For a description of a pardah similar to figure 34, see ‘Ayn al-Saltanah 1995–2001, 9:6782.

91. “To make us love our country, our country ought to be lovely.” See Wolstonecraft 1997, 377.

## CHAPTER 5

1. See, for instance, Sayf al-Dawlah (traveling in 1863) 1985, 52, 72–74, 96–97; Mu‘tamid al-Dawlah (traveled to Mecca through Istanbul and Cairo in 1875–76) 1987, 98–99, 134–35. See also Pirzadah 1981, 2:114–17. Pirzadah’s observations are about Istanbul, which he visited on his return from Europe in the fall of 1887.

2. See, for instance, Sarabi 1982, 201, 241.

3. On Qurrat al-‘Ayn, see Amanat 1989; Milani 1992; Maneck. On the signifying work of the fablized representation of her public performance of unveiling, see Mottahedeh 1998a, 1998b.

4. Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani and Shaykh Ahmad Ruhi n.d., 9. Later in the text, on page 122, this prohibition is modified: women could talk to strange

men, but no more than twenty-eight words, and only when matters of necessity arose. On the significance of Babism for the emergence of Iranian modernity, see Bayat 1982; Cole 1998b.

5. For Talibuf's position, see Talibuf 1977, 2:11, where the unveiling of women is seen as one of the ill consequences of falling under foreign Christian rule; and 2:34, where he refers to "the good custom of our women's *hijab*." See also Talibuf 1978, 124, where he writes of *hijab* as the institution that prevents unlawful fornication among Muslims. For Nasim-i Shumal's popular songs in support of girls' education, see Namini 1984, 309–12, 363–66, 513–14, 729–31; for his support of women's veil and opposition to unveiling, see 474–77, 515–17, 766–68, 769–71. In one poem, he suggests that women appearing unveiled is one of the signs of the end of time (471–74).

6. *Akhtar* 8, 38 (9 August 1882): 3.

7. *Akhtar* 7, 4 (30 December 1880): 5.

8. *Chihrah'numa* 1, 15 (22 December 1904): 5–6.

9. *Rahnuma*, 2 (13 August 1907): 4.

10. Fakhr al-Islam 1911, 36–37. For a critical discussion of this book, see Tavakoli-Targhi 1991. This is also true for the virulently antiunveiling book *Hikmat al-hijab va adillah al-naqab* (no author 1931), which begins by arguing that a woman's veil did not prevent her from getting education or employment, though he himself opposed women's work outside the home.

11. Fakhr al-Islam 1911, 37. For a similar argument, see Hajj Sayyid Nasrallah Taqavi, "Su'al va javab dar favayid-i Majlis" (A Dialogue on the Benefits of the Parliament), written in the fall of 1906 (reprinted in Zargari'nizhad 1995, 261–72). Taqavi rejects the suggestion that a constitutional government would pass laws allowing drinking of wine and abrogating *hijab* (265–66).

12. "Maktub-i yiki az khavatin," *Habl al-matin* (Tehran edition) 1, 65 (11 July 1907): 2–3.

13. "Az nutq'ha-yi farigh al-tahsilat-i madrasah-i unas-i Amrika'i," *Iran-i naw* 3, 81 (1 July 1911): 2–3; quotation on 3.

14. "Qashangi-i lab va dahan," *Danish* 17 (9 February 1911): 3–4; quotation on 4. In early twentieth-century Iran, an urban woman's outdoor attire consisted of a *chadur* (a full-length, loose, enveloping robe); a *rubandah* (face veil, made of transparent material); and, for more strict circumstances, a *chaqchur* (legwear that protected one from a stranger's eyes, in case a wind should blow away the *chadur*; by the early twentieth century it was used far less frequently than in the nineteenth century). For further information and sources, see Algar, *Elr*. The unveiling (*raf'-i niqab* and *kashf-i hijab*) that some men and women began to advocate in the early decades of the century consisted of removal of the face veil and changing to a scarf and a loose, long manteau instead of the full-length *chadur*.

15. See, for instance, *Shukufah* 1, 14 (31 August 1913): 3; *Shukufah* 1, 15 (21 September 1913): 2–3; *Shukufah* 2, 5 (1 February 1914): 1–2; *Shukufah* 2, 6 (16 February 1914): 4; *Shukufah* 2, 7 (2 March 1914): 3; *Shukufah* 2, 19 (27 September 1914): 3–4; *Shukufah* 3, 8 (29 March 1915): 2–3; *Shukufah* 4, 7 (11 March 1916): 1–2.

16. *Shukufah* 4, 4 (24 January 1916): 2–3; *Shukufah* 4, 8 (5 April 1916): 3–4.
17. Taj al-Saltanah 1982, 98–102; English translation 1993, 283–94. Later in her memoirs, however, she wrote bitterly that her change of clothes and unveiling was the first step toward her loss of religious faith and her “mad desire to go to Europe” (1982, 109–10; 1993, 308–10).
18. For a preliminary discussion of the 1930s state-sponsored and later coerced unveiling campaign and its impact on reconfiguration of women’s rights activism in Iran, see Najmabadi 2000b.
19. For an insightful analysis of the significance of these “mundane accoutrements” to one’s sense of being in the context of Thai modernity, see Morris 2000, 194–99.
20. For a discussion of a similar figure, *alafranga*, in Turkish literature of a comparable period, see Kandiyoti 1988.
21. My attention to the analytical productivity of the concept of excess for my concerns in this book was drawn through the work of my colleague Ann Pellegrini. Marilyn Ivy also invokes this concept in her discussion of Bhabha’s formulations on mimicry: “The mimetic attempts of the colonized also contain an element of menace because of their dangerous doubling and excess, a slip-page that reveals mimicry as something more (and less) than the object of mimesis” (1995, 7).
22. The play was so popular that Ja’far-Khan-has-returned-from-Europe became a common way of referring sarcastically to any man thought to be guilty of cultural mimicking. The play and historical notes and letters, in addition to a long interview with Muqaddam’s brother, have been republished. See Jamshidi 1994. A facsimile of the original 1922 printing of the play appears on pp. 309–56. “Ja’far Khan az Farang amadah” has a textual precedent that has gone unnoticed. *Gul-i zard* 3, 17 (24 November 1920): 1, published a versified tale of that very title and of similar plot line in terms of the characterization of the Europeanized dandy, his brief return from and desire to immediately go back to Europe.
23. The shift from the male to the female as the central figure of modernity’s excess is possibly one effect of the unveiling campaign of the 1930s.
24. See Dihkhuda’s *Lughatnamah* under *ma’ab*. This pedigree is quite unlike that of the later coined and now most popular word *gharbzadigi*, which was constructed in affiliation with fatal epidemics, such as cholera (*vabazadigi*), or devastating natural disasters, such as an attack by locusts (*malakhzadigi*). *Gharbzadigi* also consolidated the shift from *farang* to *gharb*. For a history and analysis of Iranian intellectual engagements with Europe, see Boroujerdi 1996; Gheissari 1998.
25. See *Rahnuma*, 3 (20 August 1907): 2; *Tamaddun* 1, 76 (5 May 1908): 4; Sharif Kashani 1983, 2:465; Mirza Yusuf Fazil Khurasani Turshizi, in Zargar-i’nizhad 1995, 637. Unsurprisingly, in *Kavah* (under Taqizadah’s editorship), positive inscription of *farangi*’ma’ab continues into the 1920s, as in “*farangi*’ma’ab is someone who opens a school for girls in Shiraz but is forced to shut it down because the Eulama’ oppose it” (*Kavah* 5, 8 [16 August 1920]: 3). For an

example of a more neutral usage, see ‘Ala’ al-Mulk 1973, 38. I’timad al-Saltanah (1966, 584) uses the word (quoting Nasir al-Din Shah) for political designation, specifically for anyone oriented to either Russia or Britain. For his critical references to *farangi* ‘ma’abs, see pp. 657, 790.

26. Speaking of certain people who were ill advising Nasir al-Din Shah, I’timad al-Saltanah, in an entry dated 1 November 1875, wrote, “Incidentally, these people were among those who accompanied [the Shah] in his European journey. But where is their sense? Going to Europe does not increase one’s intelligence. Some people have become *mufarrang*, but only in appearance they have become *mutalla*, their inner core is the same old iron, actually terrible iron” (1966, 40).

27. See *Lughatnamah*. In Maraghah’i (1985, 296), a critique of the superficial imitation of Farang begins with *mustafrang*, but later (300–301) *farangi* ‘ma’ab is used as well. In *Tanbih*, 15 (4 January 1911?): 3–4, sons of mothervatan who let their mother be devoured while they dress up in the latest fashion, wear bow ties, and are devoid of any knowledge, experience, or wisdom, are referred to as *mufarrang*.

28. See, for instance, Maraghah’i 1985, 384–88, 419–20; *Parvarish* 1, 16 (8 October 1900): 3. Many of the satirical verses by Nasim-i Shumal and in *Gul-i zard*, and of course the whole text of the play *Ja’far Khan az Farang amadah* were similarly focused.

29. See the pictorial depiction of such a figure in *Adab* 3, 40 (6 February 1905): 8; see also *Gul-i zard* 1, 14 (31 December 1918): 3, where the signs of an old-style street guy (*mashdi qadim al-ayyam*) are listed as a series of Iranian items of clothes and accoutrements plus one last one of honor (*ghayrat*), and those of the *fukuli* through a series of foreign commodities ending with ellipses, presumably standing for some unprintable lack of honor.

30. *Huquq* 1, 19 (22 November 1907): 2.

31. Mujahid 1994, 2, 4. For a favorable appraisal of this essay, see Nategh 1980, 120–29. The author of this text is not known; the date of its writing and initial circulation is uncertain; Nategh (120) has suggested sometime between 1892 and 1895.

32. See *Gul-i zard* 1, 8 (18 September 1918): 3; 2, 3 (20 August 1919): 4; 2, 6 (30 September 1919): 1–2; 2, 15 (9 March 1920): 4; Namini 1984, 500–503. Paul Sprachman (1998) has coined “WOG” as an English equivalent: western-oriented gentleman, referring “to Iranians who traveled abroad or who were exposed to European ideas in Iran, and who were so taken by the West and its liberal ways that they became slavish followers of Westernism.” Such people were “*fukul[i]*” (i.e., ‘French Collar,’ faux col) and, in more contemporary Persian *Gharbzadah* (literally ‘struck by the West’ or ‘Euro-maniac’)

33. See *Gul-i zard* 1, 8 (18 September 1918): 3; Namini 1984, 500–503.

34. “Ja’far Khan az Farang amadah,” *Gul-i zard* 3, 17 (24 November 1920): 1. Notice that his Majnun heart seeks not a Layli.

35. Faghani Nava’i, “Su’al va javab-i Mashhadi Asghar [ba Dash Hasan],” *Gul-i zard* 3, 20 (22 December 1920): 1–2.

36. I am using *conservative* in its literal meaning and in preference to Islamic *countermodernist*, a more common designation in current Iranian historiography. Not all who were wary of change in the sociocultural life of Iran in the nineteenth century used Islamic discourse to articulate their concerns. Nor all Islamic thinkers and theologians were conservative. Many among them were reform-minded and became Constitutionalist by the end of the century. See Zargari'nizhad 1995 for a selection of Constitutionalist and anti-Constitutionalist writings by a number of turn-of-the-twentieth-century men of religion.

37. A generation earlier, Zayn al-'Abidin Khan Kirmani's father, the Shaykhi leader Muhammad Karim Khan Kirmani (1810–71) had expressed in his writings a similar fear of and prohibitions against taking a liking to, befriending, eating with, adopting manners of, and wearing clothes like the Farangis (Kirmani 1967–69, 1:296–98, 382–98). On Muhammad Karim Khan Kirmani's political and religious thought, see Bayat 1982, 63–86; Tavakoli-Targhi 2001, 71–72.

38. This is a continuing concern in Islamic writings on the prohibition against shaving the beard. *Hikmat al-hijab va adillah al-naqab* (1931, 97), while arguing that the abjection (*zillat*) of liwat and of *maf'uliyat* (passiveness) prevented corruption and made it unnecessary for amrads to veil themselves as women ought to, nonetheless argued against men's shaving their beards on the grounds of looking like women (230–37) and argued at length about the forbiddenness of shaving (which had become common among all Muslims, 258 ff.). The author went so far as to declare that selling shaving blades to men was forbidden (139). See also Qarani Gulpayagani (1954), where under the section "Cleanliness Is One of Islam's Pillars," starting from removal of all body hair (192), the longest subsection (193–99) is devoted to prohibition of shaving, this abominable act (*hurmat-i in fi'l-i shani'*). Qarani suggests that torment in the afterlife (*'azab*) for shaving is the same as for masturbation and sodomy (194), thus making the connection with "sexual deviation" at the level of both worldly actions and the disciplinary consequences in the afterlife.

39. Shaving one's beard, if not imposed to shame a person guilty of some transgression, would be considered scandalous. Mahmud Mirza (1968, 415) recorded that Safar Bayg Fardi, a Shaykhi and witty old man from the Zand, had caused clamor among the public and among the young (*atfal*) because he shaved his beard when he was the governor of Tuysirkan.

40. See, for instance, Shushtari 1984, 295. I am borrowing the notion of "anthropology of Europe" from Tavakoli-Targhi 2001; see chapter 3.

41. There are in fact some photographs from late nineteenth-century Iran that show young men with semicovered faces or in womanly clothes, sometimes standing in close proximity to older men, as if forming a couple. See Jalali and Tahami 1998, 107, 111. I do not know of any study of these photographs and whether the covered faces have implications such as that suggested by Qazvini in this proposition. Deniz Kandiyoti (1997, 114–15) discusses the young man's face veil in the case of late Janissary culture.

42. ‘Abbasi and Badi’i 1993, 30. This is a compilation of telegraphic reports from various cities to Tehran (from 2 April 1889 to 24 October 1889). It includes many personal reports, as well as scandals of gender and sexuality. If this published sample is anything to go by, these reports would constitute an invaluable source for study of gender and sexuality in nineteenth-century Iran.

43. ‘Ayn al-Saltanah (1995–2001, 1:485) relates a similar story, which ends by noting how the populace believed the cholera outbreak was a result of men shaving their beards and women wearing the new style of shoes. ‘Ayn al-Saltanah (1995–2001, 4:2883/26 October 1909) also reported that one prominent Constitutionalist reformer, Mirza Husayn Khan Kasma’i, had opted to immigrate to Russia in his youth because his clerical teacher had reprimanded him when he had shaved his beard and mustache and changed to European clothes.

44. I’timad al-Saltanah 1966, 113, 334. See also ‘Abbasi and Badi’i 1993, 46, 86, 105; Dunbuli 1826, 388. Occasionally it was done for the king’s amusement (I’timad al-Saltanah 1966, 100). I’timad al-Saltanah obsessively recorded when Nasir al-Din Shah shaved (e.g., 1966, 76, 81, 124, 183) and seems to imply this as one of the many signs of Iran’s regression: “Hazrat-i Humayun (the King), now that he is fifty-three or fifty-four years old, has begun to shave his beard. I remember the beginning of his reign . . . when his blessed age was only seventeen or eighteen, he would forcefully grow a beard. When he was twenty-two he had an impressive black beard. Now, from this we can draw conclusions about other affairs of this country. Are we heading toward civility and orderliness [*madaniyat va tarbiyat*] or are we regressing?” (1966, 82, entry for 12 May 1881). On one occasion (1966, 452, entry for 28 December 1885), the king told him off for having too long a beard and told him to trim it. I’timad al-Saltanah used reference to beard as a sign of seniority calling for respect (1966, 248, 368) and beardlessness (and dancing) as a dishonorable epithet, “birish (ya’ni raqqas)” (377). Yet he recorded that he himself on 11 March 1887 shaved off his beard. (549) A sign of changing times? Similarly, he recorded when premier Amin al-Sultan shaved off his beard (827; 22 October 1890).

45. *Silsilah* has multiple meanings: it is used to refer to waves of hair, as well as to dynasties and kingdoms, among other meanings.

46. Sipihri 1989, “Yaddasht’ha”: 222, 226, 286–87. In 1907, Tehran’s city council instituted new carriage regulations, which barred all women from being transported after sunset. *Habl al-Matin* (Tehran edition) 1, 113 (10 September 1907): 3.

47. See Shahri 1996, 2:103–37. See the satirical poem entitled “Salmani” (Barber), where the art of the barber is said to be in making a hundred-year-old man look like a ten-year-old boy. *Gul-i zard* 3, 31 (19 March 1921): 2. See also *Gul-i zard* 3, 34 (10 April 1921): 2.

48. See ‘Ayn al-Saltanah (1995–2001), 3:1922, 2312; 6:4494.

49. See the cartoon narrative to this effect in *Tanbih*, 19 (25 March 1911): 2–3, and an article explicating the same argument in *Tanbih* 7, 15 (May 1913): 2–3.

50. For a series of educational essays, staged as conversations between a son and his enlightened father in which the world of his mother and women more

generally is the world of ignorance and superstition, see “Hikayat-i hammam-i jinnian,” *Tamaddun*, serialization began with issue 1, 42 (5 November 1907): 3–4, and continued in almost every issue for the next seven months.

51. Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani 1991, 71–87. See also Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani, *Sad khatabah*, 124a, 137b, 138a, 138b.

52. My own earlier discussion of this poem (Najmabadi 1993) is an example of such obliviousness.

53. Throughout, I use Sprachman’s translation of this poem, though with occasional modifications, as I am interested in a closer literal rendering.

54. The Islamic Republic, on the other hand, has been trying to preserve the modernist achievement of normative heterosexuality while reinstituting compulsory homosociality. Ironically, like the nineteenth-century accounts, the enforcement of public homosociality has allowed visitors to the country to imagine it as a homosexual paradise. See, for an example, Nigahi 1996, 82–85.

55. “The concept of a ‘screen memory’ as one which owes its value as a memory not to its own content but to the relation existing between that content and some other that has been suppressed,” I am taking from Freud 1962.

56. For a protest against men’s harassment of good Muslim women on the streets, written through a woman’s voice in the pages of *Mulla Nasr al-Din*, see Siegel 1995.

57. See Nasim Shumal’s “lalah‘zar,” in Namini 1984, 781–84; “Gardish-i ‘asr,” *Gul-i zard* 2, 14 (24 February 1920): 4.

58. Mu‘ayyir al-Mamalik 1982b, 38–39, 56, 72, 105–6, 114, 148, 156.

59. Mu‘ayyir al-Mamalik 1982b, 56, 58, 148, 156. Ja‘far Shahri’s multivolume histories of Tehran (1990, 1996) are saturated with his narrative of urban modernity as moral corruption, as inappropriate male and female presence in public. He also claims (1990, 6:336–39) that the expression *zan‘baz* (womanizer) was coined to confront (*dar muqabil*) the expression *bachchah‘baz* (pederast) in the late Ahmad Shah period, that is, in the early 1920s, and that men’s womanizing was encouraged in order to combat same-sex practices.

60. *Danish* 1, 2 (28 September 1910): 2; *Shukufah* 2, 8 (17 March 1914): 3–4; *Shukufah* 2, 20 (21 October 1914): 4; *Shukufah* 2, 21 (9 November 1914): 4; *Shukufah* 3, 2 (16 December 1914): 2–3.

61. *Shukufah* 1, 14 (31 August 1913): 3; *Shukufah* 1, 15 (21 September 1913): 2–3; *Shukufah* 2, 5 (1 February 1914): 1–2; *Shukufah* 2, 6 (16 February 1914): 4; *Shukufah* 2, 7 (2 March 1914): 3; *Shukufah* 2, 19 (27 September 1914): 3–4; *Shukufah* 3, 8 (29 March 1915): 2–3; *Shukufah* 4, 7 (11 March 1916): 1–2; *Shukufah* 4, 10 (13 May 1916): 1–2.

62. For an example of this kind of ambivalent double message, see the satirical poem “Niqab,” in *Gul-i zard* 3, 15 (10 November 1920): 4.

## CHAPTER 6

1. On Akhudzadah’s critique of gender relations in Iran, see Abadi 1993; Kia 1998; Parsa 1992.



2. The one exception perhaps is Mirza Aqa Tabrizi, a contemporary and the translator of Akhunzadah's plays from Turkish into Persian, who wrote a number of plays on similar themes. See Mirza Aqa Tabrizi 1975.

3. See Shuja' 1971. For a comparison of these two texts, see de Fouchécour 1998.

4. The use of *ma'shuqah* (grammatically feminine word for the beloved) in the chapter on love seems to have led to Richter-Bernburg's conclusion (2000, 7n22). But as 'Ali Asghar Halabi has noted (in 'Ubayd Zakani 1995, 107n3) in the texts of this period, the *-ah* ending (*ta marbutah*) in *ma'shuqah*, is not for feminizing the beloved; rather, it is for exaggerating the qualification of the noun. It is similarly employed in other words, such as *nadirah*, which does not mean a female rare person but a very rare, perhaps exceptional and unique, person. In the chapter "On Loving" the word *ma'shuqah* appears only twice (*ma'shuq* is used five times).

5. Shuja' 1971, 180. Initially (p. 152) he had not excluded loving men with lustful passion from the category of love; he had merely placed it under disapproved love (*mazmum*), in contrast with praised love (*mahmud*), which limits itself to gazing (*nazarbazi*).

6. For a brief, insightful discussion of Ghazali's intellectual history and contribution, see Hodgson 1974, 2:180–92.

7. al-Ghazali 1984, 47. I use the English translation, unless noted otherwise.

8. al-Ghazali 1984, 57, 60; see also Ghazali 1975, 301–3.

9. Ghazali 1989, 214–15, 221. See also al-Ghazali 1995, 174–75, 187–88.

10. al-Ghazali 1995, 167–68; Tusi 1978, 193, 218–19.

11. Fani Kashmiri 1983, 229. There is yet another body of literature that one would need to study in this connection: the various tales in adab and other compendiums pertaining to men falling in love with women, usually slave girls, and the effects of such love on men. See, for instance, the sixteenth-century Majd al-Din Muhammad al-Husayni Majdi 1983, 716–43.

12. For examples of affirmation of the procreative-centered concept of marriage, see fifteenth-century Davvani 1866, 192, 200; Fani Kashmiri 1983, 115, 127. Even in a late Nasiri text of ethics, written in 1885, similar views on marriage and love are echoed. See Khalvati 1887.

13. On these readings, see Tavakoli-Targhi 2001, chap. 4.

14. For some of the contemporary treatises on marriage centered on satisfaction of a taken-for-granted heterosexuality, see Haeri 1989.

15. Khusravi 1950. On Khusravi and a discussion of *Shams va Tughra*, see Arianpur 1973, 2:240–52. For a discussion of women in this novel, see Naficy 1994, 118–19.

16. Khusravi 1950, 1:44. See also 1:265, where a woman speaks of herself falling in love with Tughra, which makes her appreciate how a man would fall in love with her.

17. Khusravi 1950, 1:105. At this stage of the novel Shams is referred to as a beardless young man with long locks of hair (*pisar-i sadah-i muzallaf*) who

would be a target of sexual predators of the city. See 1:91, 97, 106. The author speaks of a desire for beardless young male adolescents rather neutrally and nonjudgmentally (e.g., see 1:128), and when Tughra transdresses as a young man to be able to go after Shams, the latter's concern for her is that she now looked attractive to lovers of young men (*ghulambarah'ha*) (1:250–55). In the second volume, however, in conversation with a woman, Abish Khatun, who asks Shams if he is inclined to ghulams, Shams responds that he intensely dislikes amradbazi, men are created by God for women (2:94). Khusravi's *Divan* (1984) includes many homoerotic *ghazals*.

18. Khusravi 1950, 3:55. Firdaws is married to Muhammad, Huma's brother, but despite her love for him she has no desire to have sex with him (3:98).

19. In an editorial signed by Taqizadah, spelling out the orientation of the new post–World War I *Kavah*, he wrote: "Its aim and policy is above all propagating European civilization in Iran" (1–2), ending in bold letters: "Iran must become, in appearance and in substance, physically and spiritually, oriented to Europe [*farangi'ma'ab shavad*] and that is it" (*Kavah* 5, 1 [22 January 1920]: 2).

20. Editorial, *Kavah* 5, 8 (16 August 1920): 1–3; quotation on 2.

21. Editorial, *Kavah* 5, 11 (13 November 1920): 1–4; quotation on 2.

22. Editorial, *Kavah* 5, 11 (13 November 1920): 1–4; quotation on 1.

23. Points from his program included: "3. Adoption of principles, manners and customs of European civilization and their unconditional acceptance. 4. Widespread encouragement of physical sports of all kinds. . . . 12. Freedom of women and their education and rights . . . 15. Eradication of the shameful practice of unnatural love which from time immemorial has been one of the worse vices of our people and is one of the chief obstacles to civilization." Editorial, *Kavah* 2 (new series), 1 (11 January 1921): 1–4; quotation on 2. Modern sports, such as gymnastics, with an emphasis on individual bodily discipline, were to replace the kind of group bodybuilding that was a feature of *zurkhanah*, so affiliated with male homoerotic brotherhoods.

24. "Falaj-i shiqqi: Pasti-i halat-i ijtimai-i zanān," *Kavah* 5, 12 (13 December 1920): 1–2; quotation on 2.

25. Qasim Amin invoked male-male friendship similarly: "Friendship provides us with a good example of the power of true love between individuals. It exemplifies how those who treasure friendship value genuine love as one of the greatest sources of joy in the world. . . . A man and woman whose upbringing and education differ cannot experience this type of love" (1992, 20).

26. I am deeply indebted to Shannon (2002) for thinking through the challenges of friendship for modernist discourse.

27. Similarly, to take Doris Sommer's (1983) argument for the centrality of "identification of the nation with the family" at the core of populism in the Dominican Republic, I would have to add that in the case of Iran while familial rhetoric articulated love of country, love of country worked to rearticulate family into a romantic family.

28. Yahyá Mirza Iskandari (d. 1910), '*Arusi-i Mihrangiz*, serialized in *Iran-i naw*, from 24 October 1910 to 18 February 1911.

29. *Mihrangiz* means one who arouses affection and love.

30. The choice of Suwayda's name is significant. Meaning melancholy, gloom, and sadness, it is also the name of one of the four humors of ancient medicine. The figure of wise old woman/wet nurse, so central to love stories in Persian classics, here in her name embodies the melancholy of love and separation from the beloved and the potential power of cure by ancient medicine and wisdom. In its association with blackness, it connotes that the old servant/companion of *Mihrangiz* could be a dark, perhaps black, domestic (possibly bought) servant. Suwayda is from a village near Sirjan in the southeastern province of Kirman. Turn-of-the-century accounts of this province report of poor peasants selling their daughters to pay taxes. Several times in the text Suwayda refers to herself as a *kaniz* (slave girl), and in response to *Mihrangiz's* inquiry about conditions of life in the countryside, she refers to the damages that tax collectors from the central government have heaped on the countryside. On slavery in nineteenth-century Iran, particularly in Kirman province, see Bastani Parizi 1991. For the significance of the figure of the old wise woman in love stories, see Mustasharnia 1978; Milani 1993; Rouhi 1999.

31. *Iran-i naw* 2, 3 (24 October 1910): 3. "The new fashion" of long house dress is in contrast to the late Qajar style of wearing *shalitah*, a layered miniskirt, worn over long, full trousers (*shalvar*). See Layla S. Diba, "Clothing X. In the Safavid and Qajar Periods," *Elr*, 785–808.

32. Later in the story, when Suwayda wants to swear that she would not divulge her mistress's secret of the heart, she swears upon the "honor of her womanhood and peasanthood" (*zaniyat va dihatigari*). *Iran-i naw* 2, 4 (25 October 1910): 3.

33. *Iran-i naw* 2, 4 (25 October 1910): 3. The sentiment expressed here indicates that already in 1908 (when the novella was written) women's possible presence in public spaces (bringing them under "lustful city eyes") was provoking anxiety and concern. It is noteworthy, however, that in the reformist modernist discourse, the responsibility is shifted away from the woman's body as source of sexual and social disorder and put onto men's gaze: where such "lustful eyes" are fewer, women's conditions are better and more orderly.

34. This young woman's confession of love to the trusted nanny, as well as the subsequent development of the plot in which Suwayda acts as a go-between for the two lovers, connects the story with classical love literature. Like many classical stories, the tale is motherless; rather, the maternal figure is not the biological mother—an issue I will discuss in the next chapter. One significant difference is that whereas in the classical plot the wet nurse/old woman usually takes verbal messages between lovers, here the two young, educated lovers exchange letters.

35. Later, when *Mihrangiz* writes a letter to her beloved, the text again uses the word *dust* (friend) and not *ma'shuq* (beloved). *Iran-i naw* 2, 7 (29 October 1910): 3. *Mihrangiz* refers to her beloved as her best friend at her wedding

night as well, though on that occasion she also uses the word *ma'shuq* (my husband, my beloved, my best friend). *Iran-i naw* 2, 57 (29 December 1910): 3.

36. Hushang, Faridun (Mihrangiz's brother), and Hurmuz (Hushang's servant) are all names of kings from the *Shahnamah* of Firdawsi. For the significance of new namings after the ancient mythohistorical names in this period, see Tavakoli-Targhi 2001.

37. A term that signifies parity of social status between husband and wife. See Y. Linant de Bellefonds, "Kafa'a," *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 404.

38. *Iran-i naw* 2, 7 (29 October 1910): 3.

39. Competing female loves in modernist narratives are not always constructed in a positive way. A woman's love continues to have murderous consequences for men, as in Iraj Mirza's celebrated poem "A Mother's Heart," in which a woman asks her lover to kill his mother and bring her the mother's heart to prove his love. The woman's challenge also echoes the Sufi challenge of fitting two loves in one heart; yet the challenge is now squarely in a heteroerotic context. For a full discussion of this poem, see Karimi-Hakkak 1995, 152–61.

40. Neatness and order are emphatic modernist themes in the literature of this time, particularly wherever desirable domestic spaces are constructed. Glassed-in bookshelves became an icon of enlightened display of modernity.

41. Some of these titles were available in Persian translations by the turn of the century, including Fénelon, *Télémaque*, translated by 'Ali Asghar Khan Nizam al-'Ulum, 1886; Polybius, *History of Greece (Tarikh-i Yunan)*, translated by Mirza 'Ali Khan Nasr, 1910; Hugo's *Les Misérables*, translated by Yusuf I'tisami, 1897. The periodical *Majlis* (1, 202 [4 November 1907]: 4) ran an advertisement for the sale of a Persian translation of *Paul et Virginie*. More generally, see Navvabi 1984; Balaÿ 1998.

42. Faridun and Hushang are both graduates of Dar al-Funun. Hurmuz is also said to have attended Dar al-Funun—modern education producing the egalitarian brotherhood of master and servant. On Dar al-Funun, see Ekhtiar 1994.

43. Sommer 1991, xi. This section owes a great analytical debt to Sommer's book.

44. A similar plot line informs *Siahatnamah-i Ibrahim Bayg*, where Ibrahim Bayg dies from love of Iran and Mahbubah dies of grief over his death. See Maraghah'i 1985, 366–67.

45. Night letters, so named because they had to be distributed under the cover of night, as distinct from *ruznamah*, which could be distributed in the light of the day.

46. *Iran-i naw* 2, 39 (6 December 1910): 2.

47. *Ibid.*, 3. The unknowability of women's world to men, men's ignorance of women's lives, in modernist discourse is frequently translated into ignorance (*jahalat*) of women.

48. *Iran-i naw* 2, 40 (7 December 1910): 2.

49. *Ibid.*, 2–3.

50. Ibid., 3.

51. *Iran-i naw* 2, 45 (14 December 1910): 2–3.

52. I am depending on Sommer's discussion of this dynamic between national and sexual politics. See Sommer 1991, 48–50.

53. Sédighé Dolatabadi (1882–1961), *Dastan-i riqqat'angiz* (A Pitiful Tale), serialized in *Zaban-i zanan*, published in Isfahan, from its first issue on 18 July 1919 through no. 23 on 27 April 1920. It is reprinted in Sanati and Najmabadi 1999, 476–501. Sédighé Dolatabadi was a tireless women's rights activist, writer, and publisher.

54. In Shahab (1980, 74–75), a remarkably similar episode is narrated as a real event. Furugh Shahab is a niece of Sédighé Dolatabadi, and it is possible that she integrated into her novella a recollection that circulated in the family.

55. Bibi Khanum Astarabadi 1992; 'Alamtaj Qa'im'maqami (Zhalah) 1967; Huma Mahmudi's poems remain largely unpublished. I thank Maryam Pir-nazar for making some of them available to me.

56. In fact in the text itself, when Nusrat dies, a wise woman is present who observes, "She was a victim of the skilled physician"—meaning Hushang, who had been brought to her bedside as a physician. Sanati and Najmabadi 1999, 499.

57. For a fuller discussion of marriage as a contract within Iranian Shi'i Islam, see Haeri 1989. For Sunni law, see Johansen 1996.

58. This has sometimes been interpreted as allegiance and loyalty of the wife to her paternal family as opposed to her husband's. I am suggesting that we may perhaps more fruitfully read this as allegiance to the world of the mother (and women) than to the world of the father. See Agmon 1998.

59. See Kandiyoti 1998, 284.

60. Bibi Khanum Astarabadi 1992, 60–61. In many other passages, she critiques men's consorting with young male adolescents and their lack of desire for women. See pp. 56, 61, 63, 80–82.

61. What was not acceptable within the procreative marriage contract was a man's failure to impregnate his wife. Some of the rituals women engaged in that have often been categorized as rituals of fertility are in fact rituals to ensure the husband's having vaginal intercourse with his wife in the first place, as discussed in chapter 2.

62. Taj al-Saltana 1993, 273; see also 270, 272. For the Persian original, see Taj al-Saltanah 1982, 90–92.

63. See, for instance, Namini 1984, 604–5, for a song about a woman complaining to her aunt about her husband's affairs with young men.

64. See, for instance, the series of articles published in *Iran-i naw* from 13 November 1909 to 17 December 1909, by Ta'irah, reprinted in *Nimeye Digar* 2, 3 (1997): 183–95. Doalatabdi's many essays on marriage and divorce can be found in Sanati and Najmabadi 1999. Similar arguments were voiced in the pages of *Shukufah*, *Namah-i banuvan*, and *Majjalat-i jam'iyat-i nisvan-i vatankhvah-i Iran*.

65. Having been disappointed by her own marriage, arranged at the age of sixteen by her father to a man some thirty years her senior, she divorced herself

according to a *vikalat* (power of delegation of the right to divorce) her father had gotten for her at the time of marriage. Although she never remarried, she not only wrote extensively in support of alternative modern marriages but also tried to produce the ideal new couple, first by arranging her younger sister Qamar's marriage, then by dreaming of the marriage of Qamar's daughter Mahdokht to a physician cousin as an ideal modern romantic marriage. Ironically, both ended in divorce as well. See Dolatabadi's letters to Qamar and her husband in Sanati and Najmabadi 1999, especially 84–93, 149–52.

66. *Majjalah-i jam'iyat-i nisvan-i vatankhvah-i Iran*, 2 (1923): 15.

67. *Majjalah-i jam'iyat-i nisvan-i vatankhvah-i Iran*, 5–6 (August/September 1924): 10–14.

68. For a discussion of representational work of gender in this play, see Miskub 1994, 83–91.

69. The best known of this genre is Mushfiq Kazimi's *Tihiran-i makhawf*. See Arianpur 1973, 2:258–64. According to Arianpur, *Tihiran-i makhawf* (initially serialized in *Sitarah-i Iran* in 1922) initiated a whole series of "social novels dedicated to depicting the terrible conditions of Iranian women" (Arianpur 1973, 2:264). Many depict the naive young girl who falls madly in love with a man who exploits her sexually, then abandons her to a life of prostitution or death at childbirth. An alternative plot centers on marriages arranged by heartless parents and forced upon unhappy young girls with similarly dire consequences. For an analysis of the gender dynamic of *Tihiran-i makhawf*, see Miskub 1994, 125–50.

70. Musá Nasri Hamadani (1882?–1953) 1999; first published in Hamadan, in 1918, written in 1915. See Arianpur 1973, 2:252–54. Significantly, Cyrus's conquest of Babylon and release of its Jewish community to return to Jerusalem form an important part of the plot, perhaps not surprising given that the author was a native of Hamadan, a city with an important Jewish community at the time, near which the tomb of Esther is believed to be located.

71. Salur 1932 [1927]. For further discussion of *Juft-i pak*, see Arianpur 1995, 233–34.

72. For an early attempt in that direction, see Najmabadi 2004.

## CHAPTER 7

1. See Sarabi 1982, 201, 241; Mirza Abu al-Hasan Khan Shirazi 1986, 105, 162–63, 315; Farid al-Mulk Hamadani 1975, 15. See Tavakoli-Targhi 2001, chap. 4, for a fuller discussion of this point.

2. Reports in early influential Persian-language travelogues include Mirza I'tisam al-Din 1827, 157–64; Shushtari 1984, 262. For later accounts, see Mirza Abu al-Hasan Khan Shirazi 1986, 201; Mirza Salih Shirazi 1983, 87–88, 122, 147, 190–91, 331–32; 'Alavi Shirazi 1984, 156–57; Rizaquli Mirza 1982, 52; Amin al-Dawlah 1962, 325, 339; Pirzadah 1981, 1:287, 2:168–69; Sahhafbashi 1978, 80–81, 87; Afshar 1970, 243–47; Hidayat 1989, 165. I'timad al-Saltanah (1966, 733, 736) reported on Nasir al-Din Shah's visit to girls' schools in Tiflis

and in Warsaw, adding sarcastically that the king visits these schools to have a good look at the girls (*bara-yi tamasha-yi dukhtarha*), not to see their educational system.

3. Afzal al-Mulk 1982, 167. Mushir al-Dawlah was posted in Istanbul from 1872 to 1890. See Ihtisham al-Saltanah 1987, 283–85. Bibi Khanum's eventual divorce, however, has been attributed by several authors to political alliances and misalliances between her father and her father-in-law. See Afzal al-Mulk 1982, 167–78; Mu'ayyir al-Mamalik 1982a, 70; Sipihir 1989, 247–48; Amin al-Dawlah 1962, iv; 'Ayn al-Saltanah 1995–2001, 2:1195–96.

4. "Ta'lim," *Nawruz* 1, 14 (21 June 1903): 1–2; quotation on 1.

5. For his usage, see Mirza Malkum Khan 1948, 10–11. For a similar usage from the same period, see *Akhtar* 7, 42 (5 October 1881): 8. The *Akhtar* article reported on a reception in Paris for male and female teachers, arguing that "for educating sons of the homeland [*abna'-i vatan*], schools are like manufacturing plants [*fabrik*]." By the century's end, this idea had become so hegemonic that even a princely memoir would refer to schools as *karkhanah-i adam'sazi* and as "our first resolution for ending our miseries." See Zill al-Sultan 1983, 359, 457, for the former, and 407 for the quotation. Later, women found the expression empowering of their claim to education, as they were in charge of manufacturing humans as well. See *Shukufah* 1, 5 (6 March 1913): 1; 2, 5 (1 February 1914): 3; 2, 14 (29 June 1914): 2; 2, 16 (2 August 1914): 2; and 3, 6 (23 February 1915): 4.

6. Akhundzadah 1978, 154; see also 4, 262, 316, 324, 329, 341. For an emphasis on women's education as a marker of difference between Europe and Iran, see also Mustashar al-Dawlah's 1871 essay, *Yik kalamah* (1985, 9, 58–59, 61).

7. *Akhtar* 6, 9 (11 February 1880): 5–6; quotation on 6.

8. See, for instance, Tusi 1978 (thirteenth century); English translation: Tusi 1964; Davvani 1866 (fifteenth century); Fani Kashmiri 1983 (seventeenth century). For a discussion of ethics in Islamic premodern writings, see Walzer and Gibbs, "Akhlak," *El*, 325–29; Rahman, "Aklaq," *Elr*, 719–23. See Gil'adi (1992, 4) on the Greek origins of some of the important ethical, psychological, and pedagogical notions in these texts.

9. A note of clarification is warranted here. Although the books of ethics that I draw upon range from the thirteenth to the seventeenth century, I am not presuming that the discourse on ethics remained unchanged in this period. My use of *The Nasirean Ethics*, however, is a recognition that this text had acquired a "model for imitation" status. Later texts took a great deal from this text (in many cases verbatim reproduction of large sections and arguments) and modeled their rhetorical and formal structures upon it. This does not mean that the discourse, much less child-rearing practices, had remained identical. I will note some of these differences in the text. Beyond these differences, however, it is their common assumptions that concern me here.

10. Tusi 1964, 166–67; Fani Kashmiri 1983, 136. To what extent these ethical discourses provided living guidelines for management of households is a

question that I am not addressing here. For the nineteenth century, it seems that at least some upper-class men aspired to run their households according to these precepts. See a 1877 text by Mustafá Khan, instructing his cousin on how to run his household in his absence, printed in Adamiyat and Natiq 1977, 525–77.

11. Twentieth-century commentators on these classical texts found it necessary to disavow the classical preference for wet nurse over the mother. Najmi Zanjani (1940, 43), for example, takes issue with Ibn Sina, suggesting that as far as possible one must not entrust children to nannies.

12. Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani, *Sad khatabah*, 126b; in *Nimeye Digar*, 103. The second school was the family; the third was religion; the fourth was the government; finally, the fifth school was the climate and natural circumstances of the land (*Sad khatabah*, 127b–128a; in *Nimeye Digar*, 103).

13. On the significance of this shift in self-constitution for the emergence of nineteenth-century Iranian modernity, see Tavakoli-Targhi 1988.

14. For a similar shift in turn-of-the-century Lebanon, within the context of the socioeconomic transformations of that country, see Khater 1996.

15. Mirza Aqa Khan Kirmani and Ruhi, 122. The word *edict* (*hukm*) refers to Babi religious commands.

16. On premodern Islamic educational institutions and concept of knowledge, see Berkey 1991, 1992.

17. My argument here is greatly influenced by the writings of Tavakoli-Targhi (see the bibliography). In particular, I take from his writings the importance and meaning of conceptual shifts in notions such as science/knowledge, nation, and politics in nineteenth-century Iran.

18. See, for instance, al-‘Amili (1950, 30) on the division of knowledgeable people (*danishmandan*) into three categories: ‘*alim bi-allah*, ‘*alim bi amr-allah*, and ‘*alim bi-allah and amr-allah*.

19. On changes in concepts of *ta‘lim* and *tarbiat* as it pertains to Egypt, see Mitchell 1988; Shakry 1998. For Morocco, see Eickelman 1985.

20. *Tarbiat* began publication in 1896 and was devoted to the idea that the contemporary differences among nations had nothing to do with any innate differences but arose from different educational regimes. See “Aghaz-i sukhān,” *Tarbiat*, 1 (17 December 1896): 1–3. It advocated that “any nation that sees itself behind any other nation, is obligated by requirements of humanity . . . to race after education and to go with its head instead of its feet [i.e., to move at top speed] on the path of civilization to catch up with the caravan that has gone ahead of it.” *Tarbiat*, untitled lead article in no. 2 (24 December 1896): 1–4; quotation on 1.

21. Lead article dubbed as a parenthetical remark (*jumlaḥ-i mu‘tarizah*) to clarify some points and avoid misunderstandings, in *Tarbiat*, 4 (7 January 1897): 1–4; quotation on 1.

22. *Ibid.*, 2. For similar formulations, dividing science into two domains of “‘ulum-i mu‘adiyah” and “‘ulum-i mu‘ashiyah,” see the essay titled “Introduction,” *Adab* 1, 1 (3 November 1898): 3. The division between the domain of



*mu'ad* and the domain of *mu'ash* was a secularizing move that became quite popular in late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century political writings, in particular in the debates between pro-Constitutionalist religious leaders and those opposing the Constitutional regime as contravening Islamic tenets. See, for instance, Fazil Khurasani Turshizi, "Kalamah-i jami'ah-i Shams-i Kashmari," in Zargari'nizhad 1995, 610–56.

23. See, for example, the untitled lead article in *Tarbiat*, 29 (1 July 1897): 1–3.

24. "Makatib va madaris," *Tarbiat*, 48 (11 November 1897): 2.

25. Mirza Taqi Khan Kashani published two journals, *Fars* and *Farhang*. *Farhang* (Culture) began publication on 24 April 1879 and for ten years was published regularly as a weekly of urban news and discussion of culture and education. See Sadr Hashimi 1985 [1953], 4:73–75. I have not been able to find any information on *Fars*.

26. Kashani 1881. The book, he explained, had been written in 1875, based in part on an article he had penned in *Fars*, 12 (8 November 1872), fulfilling a promise to one of his brothers of the homeland. The book is addressed to "Dear brother" (*baradar jan*).

27. Kashani 1881, 5–7. He recounts his appointment in charge of the health of soldiers and head of the Military Hospital by Nasir al-Din Shah, his journeys as part of Iran's official delegation to many countries abroad (8), his appointment to the Health Commission of Tehran, under the French Court doctor Tholozan (9), his assistance to Minister of Justice Mirza Husayn Khan Mushir al-Dawlah in the formation of the Chamber of Law (Majlis-i Qanun), his appointment as tutor to Prince Mas'ud Mirza and his relocation to Shiraz as a result (10), and his work as editor of *Fars* (published there for one year in 1873), and later as founder of an association of physicians in Isfahan.

28. Kashani 1881, 29–30. On the importance of hygiene as a central concept to the emergence of Iranian modernity, see Kashani-Sabet 2000.

29. Kashani 1881, 46. Similarly, Mahmud Afshar in the pamphlet "On the Benefits of Education and Progress of the World of Civilization," serialized in *Farhang* (issues 167 through 176), would write that it was "incumbent upon every nation to education itself" (*Farhang*, 167 [7 September 1882]: 1–3; quotation on 2).

30. Untitled lead article, *Tarbiat*, 21 (6 May 1897): 1–4.

31. See Mahmud Afshar, "On the Benefits of Education," *Farhang*, 170 (28 September 1882): 3–4; 171 (5 October 1882): 3–4.

32. Afshar, "On the Benefits of Education," *Farhang*, 174 (26 October 1882): 3–4; quotation on 3.

33. *Ibid.*, 4.

34. Miftah al-Mulk 1897, 1:5, 11, 21, 32, 42, 96; 2:19, 32, 60, 105, 117. In contrast, a depiction of a Qur'anic school had all the students sitting on the floor and the teacher in the act of caning a pupil (2:11).

35. *Akhtar* 3, 21 (18 April 1877): 1–2. The use of this narrative became a common authorizing move for women's education. For some early references, see *Nawruz* 1, 4 (12 April 1903): 1–2; *Nawruz* 1, 17 (12 July 1903): 1–2.

36. *Ma'arif* 1, 15 (9 July 1899): 1–2. *Ma'arif* was the organ of an association by the same name founded in 1898 with the specific agenda of establishing schools throughout the country, “the best means for progress of religion and the state and the biggest capital for training sons of the nation” (*Ma'arif* 1, 1 [15 December 1898]: 1). On the formation of Anjuman-i *ma'arif* and its statement of purpose, see Sipahr 1989, 263–65; Ihtisham al-Saltanah 1987, 314.
37. Untitled lead article, *Tarbiat*, 36 (19 August 1897): 1–4; quotation on 1–2.
38. For an English translation, see Amin 1992. There is a large critical literature on Amin's works in English. See, for instance, Ahmed 1992; Baron 1994; Badron 1994; Shakry 1998. Here I am concerned with Amin's text, through its Persian translation, as a text within the educational debates of this time in Iran.
39. I'tisam al-Mulk 1900. A fuller translation was published later (Muhazzib, 1937) “under instructions from the Ministry of Education,” under the title *Zan va azadi* (Woman and Liberty). Muhazzib also translated Amin's *al-Mar'at al-jadida*, “under instructions from the Ministry of Education,” under the title *Zan-i imruz* (Today's Woman, Muhazzib, n.d.).
40. I'tisam al-Mulk 1900, unnumbered initial pages. The titles he listed are Amin's *Tahrir al-Mar'a*; *Falsafat al-zuwaj*; *al-Mar'a fi al-sharq* (Marqus Fahmi 1894); *al-Mar'a fi qarn al-'ashrin*; and *al-Mar'a fi al-'usra*.
41. I'tisam al-Mulk 1900, 12; Amin 1992, 6. I have used the English translation unless the Persian was significantly different.
42. 'Ali Zanjani, “Tarbiat-i dukhtaran,” *Danish*, 22 (15 March 1911): 2–3; quotation on 2.
43. “Dar bicharigi-i zanan,” *Iran-i naw* 3, 102 (26 July 1911): 3.
44. This refers to the czarist takeover of these provinces in northern Iran in various military campaigns in the nineteenth century, delineating the contemporary borders of Iran in the north.
45. From the speech of one of the students of Hunar School, on the occasion of the examination of its students, *Iran-i naw* 3, 83 (3 July 1910): 3.
46. See, as an example, “Dard-i bi'darman-i giriftari dar dast-i khadamah-i nadan” (The Incurable Pain of Being in the Hands of Ignorant Servants), *Shuk-ufah* 3, 9 (13 April 1915): 2–3.
47. See the letter from Talibuf to I'tisam al-Mulk, dated 15 December 1900, reprinted in *Bahar*, 9–10 (May–June 1911): 551–52. *Tarbiat* 4, 221 (24 January 1900): 3–4, reported its publication with enthusiastic approval.
48. See, for instance, “Dar islah-i vaz'-i makatib-i Iran,” *Parvarish* 1, 17 (15 October 1900): 7–10; 'Abd al-Husayn, “Mukhatirat-i Urupa,” *Parvarish* 1, 21 (16 November 1900): 2–4.
49. “Maqalah-i makhsus dar ta'lim-i 'awrat,” *Habl al-matin* 9, 12 (6 January 1902): 16; “Maqalah-i makhsus dar ta'lim-i 'awrat,” *Habl al-matin* 9, 16 (6 February 1902): 5–7.
50. “Maqalah-i makhsus dar ta'lim-i 'awrat,” *Habl al-matin* 9, 16 (6 February 1902): 5–7.
51. “Maqalah-i makhsus dar ta'lim-i 'awrat,” *Habl al-matin* 9, 17 (10 February 1902): 15–16.

52. Ibid.

53. Ibid.

54. "Huquq al-mar'a va hurriyat al-nisvan," *Habl al-matin* 12, 38 (26 June 1905): 12–14; 39 (3 July 1905): 20–22; 43 (31 July 1905): 6–7; 44 (7 August 1905): 10–11.

55. Muhammad Tahir 1891. The author/translator tells us in the preface that he had been asked in 1890 by Hasan'ali Khan Amir Nizam, provincial director (*pishkar*) of Azarbayjan, to translate into Persian "the book of one of the French scientists about education and care of very young children [literally, breast-fed, *atfal-i razi*]" (1). He does not specify the original French book but mentions "one famous French doctor in Paris by the name of Zhiuks" (2) as the author of that text. I have not been able to determine this text.

56. Muhammad Tahir 1891, 5–6. The class implication of this argument is worth noting. Women "of leisured classes" are assumed to engage in giving their infants to wet nurses. The practice, however, was much more widespread. Though not hiring professional wet nurses, women of other classes widely breast-fed each other's infants, especially if a neighbor or a friend was ill. The prevalence of this practice is reflected in the articulation of rules of wet-nursing (*adab va ahkam-i riza*). These rules covered the etiquette of wet-nursing and dealt with the concerns over ties of kinship (and prohibition of marriage) that prolonged wet-nursing was believed to engender. See Giladi 1999; Altorki 1980.

57. Sayyid Husayn, "Dar farayiz-i murabbian-i haqiqi-i mardan ya'ni nisvan," *Hadid* 1, 13 (25 September 1905): 4–6.

58. See "Maktub-i shahri," 'Adalat (formerly *Hadid*) 2, 19 (26 October 1906): 5–8; Sayyid Husayn, "Dar farayiz-i murabbian-i haqiqi-i mardan ya'ni nisvan," *Hadid* 1, 13 (25 September 1905): 4–6; "Vakhamat-i nadani-i madaran," *Hadid* 1, 15 (8 October 1905): 2–3. Zia'allah, untitled article, *Hadid* 1, 20 (14 October 1905): 5–6; Muhammad Riza, "Talab al-'ilm faridatun 'ala kull Muslim wa Muslima," *Hadid* 2, 13 (16 September 1906): 1–2; Na'mat'allah, "Hayat-i 'a'ilah ya sa'adat-i haqiqi," 'Adalat 2, 43 (18 April 1907): 8; and 44 (27 April 1907): 5–8 (this two-part essay was particularly critical of men as absent fathers and husbands who preferred to spend their time, sometimes weeks at a time, away from their own home and avoided socializing with their wife and children); Mu'avin al-Tujjar, "Maktub-i yaki az khiradmandan," 'Adalat 2, 46 (? May 1907): 7–8; "Madrakah-i bunat," *Vatan* 1, 1 (6 January 1906): 3–4; "Tarbiat-i bunat shart-i a'zam-i tamaddun va tahzib-i akhlaq ast," *Subh-i sadiq* 2, 27 (11 March 1908): 1–2; Vasiq al-Saltanah, "Talab al-'ilm faridatun 'ala kull Muslim wa Muslima," *Iran-i naw* 1, 56 (1 November 1909): 4; Munir Mazandarani, "Talab al-'ilm faridatun 'ala kull Muslim wa Muslima," *Iran-i naw* 1, 91 (17 December 1909): 1–2.

59. In an effort to buttress their case for the establishment of schools for Muslim girls, reformers reported extensively on girls' schools in non-Muslim communities. See, for instance, *Chihrah'numa* 1, 15 (22 December 1904): 10, on Zoroastrian schools in Kirman and *Chihrah'numa* 1, 19 (21 April 1905): 12, on Jewish schools in Isfahan.

60. The information on girls' schools has been extracted from newspaper reports of the period and from the following sources: Iran 1927, 62, 74, 110, 112, 124, 130, 132, 142, 158, 162; "Tarikhchah-i ma'arif," pt. 2, in *Ta'lim va tarbiat* 4, 7/8 (October–November 1934): 459–64; Rushdiah 1983, 148; Qavimi 1973, 128, 131, 142. For more information on women's education and in particular the establishment of schools, see the entries on education in *The Encyclopaedia Iranica*.

61. Mansur al-Saltanah 1911, appended tables, no page number or table number.

62. *Umid* 1, 10 (3 January 1907): 4.

63. See *Tanbih* 7, 33 (7 October 1913): 3.

64. For some of these stories, see Qavimi 1973; Bamdad 1968–69. For a contemporary account, see the letter by Bibi (Khanum Astarabadi), "Maktub-i yiki az nisvan," *Tamaddun* 1, 15 (7 May 1907): 2–3. See also Mallah and Najmabadi 1996.

65. Rizvani 1983, 28, 62. Many other religious leaders, however, such as Hajj Mirza Hadi Dawlat'abadi, father of Sédighé Dolatabadi, Shaykh Hadi Najmabadi, father of Agha Baygum and Bibi Najmabadi, and Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Yazdi, husband of Safiyah Yazdi, supported the establishment of new schools for girls, and their own female family members were active educationalists. Even some anti-Constitutionalist religious figures supported women's education, disassociating education from other changes feared to ensue from the new politics of the nation, such as unveiling. See Muhammad Husayn ibn 'Ali Akbar Tabrizi, "Kashf al-murad min al-mashrutah wa al-istibdad," in Zargari'nizhad 1995, 113–46.

66. "Layihah-i yiki az khavatin," *Habl al-matin* (Tehran) 1, 105 (1 September 1907): 4–6. For another protest letter by a group of women, see "Tazallum-i jama'at-i nisvan-i Tihran bah anjuman-i muhtaram-i ittihadiyah-i tullab," *Musavat* 1, 18 (22 March 1908): 5–6.

67. Dar al-Mu'allamat is often referred to as a teachers training college, but as Camron Amin (1999) has pointed out, women received several types of post-secondary education there, most prominently in midwifery.

68. For descriptions of the old schools, see Takmil Humayun 1975–76, 21–23; Shahri 1990, 4:447–56.

69. See Iran 1938, 954, for the full text of the ordinance.

70. See Iran 1936, 87–88, for the full text of this ordinance.

71. In fact, some of the women educators sought their own growth at the expense of the former *maktabdars*. Shawkat Salami, appointed the principal of the first state girls' school in Bushihr in 1926, sought "to gain the leadership of women of Bushihr. The first step she took was to remove Mullabaji the principal of the first private girls' school in Bushihr. Mullabaji had been running a maktab of religious sciences and Persian language in Bushihr for some forty years. She had then opened Mu'iniyah school and was very popular with women of the south of Iran. Nonetheless, Mrs. Salami succeeded to remove her." Qavimi 1973, 167. For two poems, one as a critique of the old maktab, followed by one in praise of the new schools, see Rawhani, "Maktab-i Mulla Baji,"

*Gul-i zard* 4, 13 (28 October 1921): 1–2; “Madrasah,” *Gul-i zard* 4, 14 (4 November 1921): 1–2.

72. Persian expressions—constructed in parallel, house management, husband management, child management (*khanah'dari*, *shawhardari*, *bachchah'dari*)—were distinct and remain largely so, indicating rather distinct tasks and preoccupations. A combined construct, such as housewife (*zan-i khanah'dar*), was not opted for until recently and even then largely as a statistical category.

73. She is often wrongly referred to as the wife of one Dr. Kahhal, perhaps an indication of historians' disbelief that a woman ophthalmologist could exist, reading *khanum duktur Kahhal* as *khanum-i duktur Kahhal*. For an informative essay on Dr. Kahhal and *Danish*, see Elahi 1994.

74. For numerous articles on these topics, see “Khanah'dari,” *Danish*, 1 (14 September 1910): 4–5; “Rasm-i shawhardari,” *Danish*, 1 (14 September 1910): 5–6; 4 (26 October 1910): 7–8; 6 (9 November 1910): 4–6; “Shawhardari,” 7 (16 November 1910): 4–6; 8 (1 December 1910): 8; “Bachchah'dari,” *Danish*, 10 (20 December 1910): 2–3; and “Hifz al-sihhah-i atfal,” *Danish*, 1 (14 September 1910): 2–3; 3 (13 October 1910): 4–6; 4 (26 October 1910): 2–4; 5 (3 November 1910): 8; 8 (1 December 1910): 2–4; 17 (7 February 1911): 2–3; 23 (28 March 1911): 5–7; 25 (25 April 1911): 5–7; 30 (23 July 1911): 2–4.

75. For Ta'irah's writings, see *Iran-i naw* 1, 19 (15 September 1909): 3. See also Ta'irah, “Maktub-i yiki az khanumha-yi Irani,” *Iran-i naw* 1, 17 (13 September 1909): 2; and her long essay serialized in the same paper, “Layihah-i khanum-i danishmand,” *Iran-i naw* 1, 65 (13 November 1909): 3; 69 (18 November 1909): 3; 78 (30 November 1909): 2–3; 84 (8 December 1909): 3; 92 (18 December 1909): 3–4. For a reproduction of Ta'irah's writings from *Iran-i naw* and her other writings and poetry more centered on her faith (she was a prominent Baha'i), along with some biographical sketches, see *Nimeye Digar* 2, 3 (1997): 146–95.

76. *Danish*, 7 (16 November 1910): 6–7; 8 (1 December 1910): 7–8; 9 (13 December 1910): 6–7; 10 (20 December 1910): 5–8; 17 (7 February 1911): 3–4; 25 (25 April 1911): 8; 26 (11 May 1911): 4–7.

77. “Maktub-i yiki az dukhtarha-yi tarbiat'shudah-i Yurup,” *Danish*, 27 (26 May 1911): 2–3. For a satirical poem attributing marital discord to illiteracy, see *Gul-i zard* 3, 30 (12 March 1921): 4.

78. “Rasm-i shawhardari,” *Danish*, 1 (14 September 1910): 5–6; quotation on 5. See also “Shawhardari,” 7 (16 November 1910): 4–6.

79. *Danish*, 3 (13 October 1910): 7–8. See also “Zan'dari,” *Danish*, 6 (9 November 1910): 8.

80. “Khitab bih mardan,” *Danish*, 13 (12 January 1911): 2–4.

81. *Danish*, 13 (12 January 1911): 4–7; *Danish*, 14 (18 January 1911): 4–6.

82. “Izdivaj-i ahl-i Istanbul,” *Danish*, 26 (12 May 1911): 3–4; quotation on 3. The Constitutional period refers to the second Ottoman Constitutional period starting in 1908.

83. See, for instance, “Falsafah-i zan va shawhari,” *Shukufah* 2, 10 (16 April 1914): 1–2, and 2, 11 (6 May 1914): 1–2. “Mu'amilah-i bi'ru'yat aghlab

asbab-i nidamat ast," *Shukufah* 3, 19 (13 October 1915): 4, and 3, 20 (30 October 1915): 2–3.

84. Letter from wife of Haji Mirza Yahyá, *Danish*, 2 (28 September 1910): 7.

85. "Dayah az madar mihraban'tar nimishavad," *Danish*, pt. 1, 3 (13 October 1910): 2–4; pt. 2, 5, (3 November 1910): 2–4.

86. "Dayah," *Danish*, pt. 1, 2.

87. "Dayah," *Danish*, pt. 1, 3–4.

88. "Dayah," *Danish*, pt. 2, 2.

89. See, for instance, R. H. M., "Ma'arif zanha-yi Iran: Yiki az sar-chashmah'ha-yi badbakhti-i ma," *Shukufah* 1, 9 (10 May 1913): 1–2; 10 (31 May 1913): 2–3; 11 (17 June 1913): 3; 14 (31 August 1913): 3; "Dar asas-i zindigi-i khanumha-yi muhtaram," *Shukufah* 1, 17 (8 November 1913): 3; 18 (25 November 1913): 4; 19 (19 December 1913): 3; 20 (29 December 1913): 4; 23 (16 February 1914): 3–4.

90. Maliktaj, untitled article, *Shukufah* 1, 4 (18 February 1913): 2–3; 5 (6 March 1913): 2–3; 7 (6 April 1913): 1. For other articles on the importance of educated wives and scientific mothers for the political fate of the country, see N. R. (An Iranian girl), "Agahi ya haqiqat-i matlab," *Shukufah* 1, 6 (17 March 1913): 2–3; article by the principal of an elementary school, Hurriyah-i Sadat, "Basat-i sabzah lagadkub shud bih pay-i nifaq," *Shukufah* 1, 7 (6 April 1913): 1–2.

91. "Madrasah chah nam ast va sharayit-i 'u kudam ast?" *Shukufah* 1, 5 (6 March 1913): 1–2; 7 (6 April 1913): 2–3; 8 (24 April 1913): 2–3; 9 (10 May 1913): 3; 14 (31 August 1913): 2–3. "Fa'idkhalu al-buyut min abwabiha," *Shukufah* 1, 12 (10 July 1913): 2–3; 14 (31 August 1913): 1.

92. "Taqlid-i bad," *Shukufah* 1, 1 (November–December 1912): 3; 5 (6 March 1913): 3; 7 (6 April 1913): 3. See also "Dukhtar-i khub kudam ast?" *Shukufah* 1, 11 (17 June 1913): 3.

## CHAPTER 8

1. My use of the notion of conflicting integration of contradictory elements within the same discursive space is largely informed by Terdiman 1985.

2. For example, in a series of articles on the reforms of the Persian language, the author suggested using *dukhtar* for *sabiyah* and *zan* for *zawjah*. *Nida-yi vatan*, 7 December 1908, 2.

3. For a discussion of discursive contestations in many central political concepts in this period, see Tavakoli-Targhi 1988, 1990c.

4. For a discussion of women's activities in this period, Afary 1989, 1996.

5. An influential figure of the Constitutional Revolution, Sayyid Hasan Taqizadah (1878–1970) articulated some of the most consistently secularist and modernist arguments within the debates of this time. Perhaps because he later supported the Pahlavi dynasty, he has remained underappreciated. A full elaboration of his contribution to Iranian modernity remains to be done. For some recent publications on his life and thought, see Afshar 1980; Taqizadah 1970–78; Afshar and Zaryab 1980; Afshar 1989.

6. The full debate appears on pp. 1528–35. For an account of this debate through the reports of the *London Times*, see Bayat-Philipp 1978, 300–301.

7. The implication of the ambiguous statement could be that women do not belong to the voting category as evidently as they cannot be put in the same category as the mad or the idiot. It is so evident, it should go without saying. It could also mean that women's explicit exclusion is redundant and unnecessary, as the further development of his argument indicated. This latter interpretation is evoked, since in some Islamic legal texts women are categorized along with minors and legally incompetents [*asghar* and *mahjurin*]*—*all those under male adult guardianship.

8. Mudarris here was quoting the Qur'anic verse 4:34.

9. The question of women's vote did not appear on the national political agenda until the 1940s. Despite years of women's struggle for the vote, the Majlis did not agree to discuss women's suffrage in that period. Nor did Muhammad Musaddiq include women in the electorate in his revised electoral bylaws of 1952. Women continued to agitate for the vote throughout the 1950s. Finally, Muhammad Riza Shah Pahlavi included women's vote in his 1962–63 reforms—a measure opposed by Ayatollah Khomeini at the time, though he did not reverse it in the aftermath of the establishment of the Islamic Republic, unlike a number of other measures concerning women from that period.

10. *Iran-i naw* 3, 104 (8 August 1911): 3.

11. For my analysis of gender and political language, I am deeply indebted to essays in part 2 of Scott 1988.

12. The sermon is reported in Nazim al-Islam Kirmani 1983, pt. 1, 295–96. In years following the Constitutional Revolution, gender and sexual disorder as signs of the end of time were adopted by anti-Constitutional clerics. In his “*Dala'il barahin al-Furqan fi butlan qawanin nawasikh muhkamat al-Qur'an*” [c. 1921], Shaykh Abu al-Hasan Najafi Marandi (Zargari'nizhad 1995, 193–255) invoked Islamic narratives on signs of appearance of the promised Mahdi; these signs included a time when men are content with men and women with women, when women ride saddled horses, when men accept advice from women and from eunuchs, and when husbands obey wives (210–11). Later in the same text he locates the place for the occurrence of such signs of gender and sexual disorder as Tehran, where women are riding saddled horses, do not obey their husbands, and get divorced, men are content with men and women with women, and women become like men and men like women (239). Similar points are repeated later: women get together and form associations and give speeches like men (243–44).

13. For one pointed example, reportedly circulating in the spring of 1904, see Sipih 1989, 78–79. See also Sharif Kashani 1983, 1:19, 275; 2:481, 487, 501, 538. Similar accusations were invoked in a later period against some of the statesmen of the new parliamentary government. Their political incompetence was signaled through moral approbation. See Sharif Kashani 1983, 3:752, 755, 764, 789.

14. For a famous *tasnif* (popular song) of the period, “*abji* Muzaffar amadah/barg-i chughundar amadah,” see Kuhan 1983–84, 1:245. This *tasnif* is reported by many sources, including Zhukovskii 1902, appendix pages 6–8, recorded in Tehran in 1899.

15. Taymuri 1982, 152–53, as quoted by Nahid 1989, 32. *Baji*, like *abji*, means sister. Both were also used for general polite address to kin-unrelated women, that is, the use of kinship idiom to make clear the female addressee was respected and not sexually marked. By addressing a man as *baji*, however, sexual and gender derogation were intended.

16. For an example, see Qazi Ahmad Tattavi 1999, 360.

17. Abu al-Hasan Qazvini (1988, 164–65) relates two stories as wondrous tales and strange narratives (*‘ajayib hikayat va gharayib ravayat*) circulating about the early Timur years in Khurasan. The first concerned an army of cats being defeated by a hoard of mice; the second, an attack by Uzbeks against a village whose adult men had been away, where for five days five hundred women and girls, dressed as men, held the Uzbeks back and eventually drove them away. The power inversion in both tales, their one common theme that makes the author recall them one after the other, makes them both instances of the wondrous and the strange. In a different historical and geographic context, Howard and Rackin (1997, 72) have noted, “It was a commonplace of early modern thought that mannish women—that is, those who assume the prerogative of men—emerge when men are womanish and fail to assert control over their women and daughters.”

18. “Surud-i yiki az vatan‘parastan,” *‘Adalat* 2, 46 (undated issue, sometime in April 1907): 5–6; quotation on 5.

19. See, for instance, *Ruh al-Quds*, 10 (14 October 1907): 3; *Nida-yi vatan* 2, 153 (14 January 1908): 4.

20. See, for examples, “Suz-i daruni ra muqi‘-i izhar risid,” *Musavat* 1, 18 (22 March 1908): 3; Nazim al-Islam Kirmani 1983, pt. 2, 204–5.

21. “Iran dar chih halast,” *Musavat* 1, 12 (9 February 1908): 1–4; quotation on 3. See, similarly, *Habl al-Matin* (Tehran edition) 1, 154 (29 October 1907): 1–3; Sharif Kashani 1983, 2:43–45.

22. See Tahirzadah Bihzad 1984, 84–85; Sipahr 1989, 298, of *yaddasht‘ha*.

23. This is recorded in several sources. For a report by the daughter of one of the participants, see Mallah and Najmabadi 1996, 17; see also Mu‘ayyir al-Mamalik 1982b, 129. For a historical tale narrated in the Constitutionalist paper *Musavat* about a valiant woman sending her scarf to Shah Tahmasb Safavi to shame him for his inaction on behalf of his coreligionists, and the analysis of the tale, see Najmabadi 1998b, 146–48.

24. Rizvani 1983, 58–59. The figure of the transgressive woman was quite frequently linked with other figures of transgression, most important, that of the Babi.

25. Part of a poem by Shaykh al-Ra‘is, published in *Nida-yi vatan* 2, 142 (4 January 1908): 4. On Shaykh al-Ra‘is, see Cole 1998a.



26. Daughter of Imam al-Hukama, principal of Umm al-Madaris (a school for girls), “Khitab bih khvahan-i vatani,” *Iran-i naw* 1, 124 (3 February 1910): 4. Women at this time rarely signed articles or were publicly identified in their own names. They were referred to as daughter of, wife of, and sometimes sister of an adult male.

27. “Dukhtar gham'khawr-i madar ast,” *Shukufah* 4, 6 (23 February 1916): 1–2.

28. “‘Arizah-‘i khavatin-i Sangilaj bih ‘umum-i millat,” *Habl al-matin* (Tehran edition) 1, 214 (25 January 1908): 4. Sani‘ Hazrat was a Qajar statesman who was implicated in the anti-Constitutionalist events of December 1907. He was executed in August 1909 after restoration of the parliament.

29. From a leaflet dated 19 June 1910, in Sharif Kashani 1983, 2:531. The “burning of infants” refers to an attack by the Cossack soldiers in Tabriz on a women’s public bath, in which the bath was set on fire. It was reported that a number of infants, there with their mothers, burned to death. The incident was recounted in many texts of this period as condemnation of the autocratic Muhammad ‘Ali Shah. See, for instance, Sharif Kashani 1983, 1:258, 266; Nazim al-Islam Kirmani 1983, pt. 2, 321.

30. ‘*Adalat* 2, 31 (5 January 1907): 1; my emphasis.

31. Widowed women and orphaned children, having lost their protectors, were considered the most vulnerable.

32. For a fuller analysis of this story, see Najmabadi 1998b.

33. From an unsigned leaflet, dated 27 March 1906, reprinted in Sharif Kashani 1983, 1:52. “Kavah, the Blacksmith” refers to a figure in a liberatory myth in which a popular uprising led by a blacksmith saves the people from the tyrant king Zakhak, who had two live snakes growing out of his shoulders. The snakes fed daily on fresh brains of slaughtered youths. For the significance of recovering/reconstituting pre-Islamic mythologies as history in the modernist discourse, see Tavakoli-Targhi 1990c.

34. The bazaar had been shut down, in December 1908, to protest the mistreatment of the merchants by Iqbal al-Dawlah’s soldiers. Sharif Kashani 1983, 1:224. For numerous other statements in which sexual and gender shame are invoked as signs of political trouble or to incite men to action, see also Sharif Kashani 1983, 1:53, 57, 77, 79, 242, 258, 259, 266, 303, 317, 337, 351.

35. The intimate connection in the discourse of this period between national and sexual honor is also invoked to demarcate the difference between Iranian and European masculinities: “Even though they [Europeans/European men] are very strong and we are weak on the surface, yet our self-assurance is based on our zeal; that is, Iranians according to their religion and their customs do not consent that their wives would speak with or show their faces to anyone. We have a similar zeal in our loyalty to our king and state. We are thus prepared. Should a fight break out between Iranians and foreign powers, we Iranians are an army of 15 million [i.e., the entire population of the country], who, with no fear for their lives or property, with no military training would attack the enemy and conquer it. . . . But you people of Europe who have opened

up a bureau of liberty for letting your wives sleep around and if your wife sleeps with someone you have no right to stop her, how could you protect your state and your nation/people [*millat*]? If you have no zeal in protecting your honor, how could you be steadfast in protecting your state and your nation, when there is a question of force?" Afzal al-Mulk 1982, 405. This statement dates to 1899/1900 A.H. 1317).

36. Nazim al-Islam Kirmani 1983, pt. 1, 610–11. Note that in this text *sahib* (owner, proprietor) is used for "husband." This was not an uncommon usage.

37. "Iran dar chih halast," *Musavat* 1, 12 (9 February 1908): 1–4; quotations on 2.

38. Sharif Kashani 1983, 1:358. A similar argument is presented in another leaflet; see Sharif Kashani 1983, 1:337–40: "Why are the ministers putting up with so much dishonor, profanity, and shamelessness? Why do they behave like women prostitutes, with no consideration for good and bad, engaged in nothing but making themselves up, going unveiled, and dancing in the feasts of foreigners? They seem oblivious to what is good and acceptable and what is bad and shameful" (339). See also 'Ayn al-Saltanah (1995–2001, 3:4348–49), who considered the Nasiri court as harbinger of mukhannas (mukhannas 'parvar).

39. *Iran-i naw* 1, 151 (7 March 1910): 2.

40. For an example of this paired usage, see Dabirkhaqan, "Qabil-i tavajjuh-i khavatin," *Shukufah* 3, 16 (26 August 1915): 1–2.

41. For the text of this letter, see Nazim al-Islam Kirmani 1983, pt. 2, 222–24. Also implied in this passage is that women and Jews were equally abject figures. The Constitutionalist discourse set in motion a similarly conflicted dynamic toward non-Muslim Iranians as it did toward women. On the one hand, by insisting on the inclusiveness of the category "Iranian," it pointed toward parity of all Iranians in the new order—a point that, along with loss of control of men over their women, formed one of the most central issues in the attacks by anti-Constitutionalist Islamists. On the other hand, non-Muslim Iranians, in particular Jews, were relegated to the abject position that is articulated in this leaflet. In criticizing foreigners' roles in Iran, if the person in question was Jewish, more often than not his Jewishness would provide the frame of attack. See, for example, "Tawhin-i millat va dawlat ya barbadi-i namus-i Iran," *Musavat* 1, 4 (13 November 1907): 9–10. Jews were viewed as in some sense lesser citizens. In a rhetorical move reminiscent of "Where are you men of honor if women are fighting on the streets?" gains made by non-Muslim communities were invoked to call for action by Muslims. A woman's journal, *Shukufah*, used the educational gains made by Jewish girls to call for serious attention to be paid by the Ministry of Education and Sciences to girls' education "if we have any national zeal and Islamic virtue." *Shukufah* 1: 1 (November–December 1912): 1–2; quotation on 2. Babis and Baha'is, like the amrads, constituted the complete alterity of this discourse. Until recent years, and even now only as a small minoritarian voice, Iranian modernity has not openly and explicitly inscribed Baha'is in the category Iranian. The amrad's turn does not seem to be coming yet.

42. Here is another instance of the woman/wife ambiguity. *Zanha-yi ahl-i shahr* could mean “women residents of the city” or “wives of the city residents.”

43. She has been identified by other sources as the wife of Qazi Muhammad Qazvini. When in the late summer 1907, the Cossack soldiers were attacking Constitutionalist forces in Azarbayjan, she wrote to the press and suggested that since men were failing to do anything to put a stop to the killings and pillage, women ought to rise up and help, and that it was erroneous for women to think that they could not do anything. She proposed that women should not let their men return home until they went to the rescue of their suffering sisters and children in Azarbayjan. “Maktub-i yiki az khavatin,” *Habl al-Matin* (Tehran edition) 1, 123 (23 September 1907): 4.

44. See also *Nida-yi vatan* 3, 22 (18 August 1909): 3: “The first person who understood the significance of this great national honor [of receiving a medal from *anjuman-i ’ukhuwwat* (Brotherhood Association) for contributing to the national fund] was a respectable lady who sent us one hundred and ten *tumans* along with an exciting manly essay which we here reprint in full so that it will act as a whip of admonition for men of the country.”

45. See, for instance, Nazim al-Islam Kirmani 1983, pt. 2, 447–48; *Musavat*, 28 (7 February 1909): 8; *Iran-i naw* 1, 93 (19 December 1909): 3; *Iran-i naw* 3, 116 (14 December 1911): 4.

46. This is a classical move to restore gender order. In *Tadhkirat al-awlia’*, Farid al-Din ‘Attar in his entry on Rabi’a states: “If I should be asked why I have brought her in the line of men [*rijal*], I would answer that . . . when a woman takes to the path of God as a man, one can no longer call her a woman . . . and one can bring her description among men” (‘Attar 1991, 64).

47. See, for example, *Nida-yi vatan* 1, 12 (26 February 1907): 7–8; *Nida-yi vatan* 1, 15 (9 March 1907): 2–3; *Nida-yi vatan* 1, 96 (3 November 1907): 3–4; *Iran-i naw* 1, 151 (8 March 1910): 2. Sometimes the expression was used as a straight insult to men, as in *Azarbayjan*, 15 (26 June 1907): 7.

48. See, for example, Kasravi 1968, 313; Sayyah and Gulkar 1967, 605; Muhit Mafi 1984, 202; Nazim al-Islam Kirmani 1983, pt. 2, 17; *Iran-i naw* 1, 150 (6 March 1910): 1.

49. For the paradox of speaking as women and claiming women’s equality through claiming universal humanity in a different historical context, see Scott 1996.

50. “Maktub-i yiki az mukhaddarat,” *Tamaddun* 1, 12 (20 April 1907): 3–4.

51. *Iran-i naw* 1, 13 (8 September 1909): 3.

52. *Nida-yi vatan* 3, 22 (18 August 1909): 3–4.

53. See *Iran-i naw* 1, 226 (9 June 1910): 3; *Iran-i naw* 1, 228 (12 June 1910): 2; *Danish*, 28 (24 June 1911): 3.

54. *Iran-i naw* 1, 228 (12 June 1910): 2.

55. “Dar madrasah-’i khavatin,” *Iran-i naw* 1, 153 (10 March 1910): 2.

56. *Shukufah* 3, 18 (25 September 1915): 1.

57. In 1916 the reported number of female students in Tehran (all in private schools) was 2,761, of which 1,935 were fee-paying students. *Shukufah* 4, 11 (30 August 1916): 3–4.

58. *Zaban-i zanan* 1, 11 (12 December 1919): 1–2; *Zaban-i zanan* 1, 13 (11 January 1920): 2.

59. *Zaban-i zanan* 1, 52 (19 November 1920): 3–4; quotation on 3.

60. When, in 1906, Bibi Khanum Astarabadi's husband, a military man, was assigned to go to Shiraz and took his two elder sons with him, Bibi Khanum found her twelve-room house, now empty of adult men, a perfect place to open one of the first schools for girls in Tehran. For a full description of this venture, see Mallah and Najmabadi 1996, 15–16.

61. See, for instance, Sharaf Nisa' Gilani, "Tarbiat-i dukhtaran," *Iran-i naw* 1, 80 (3 December 1909): 2; and report from the seventh meeting of the Tehran Women's Association, *Iran-i naw* 1, 157 (17 March 1910): 2.

62. For a discussion of these women's activities, see Afary 1989; Bamdad 1968–69; Bayat-Philipp 1978, 295–308; Mansur 1984; Nahid 1989; Natiq 1983; Sanasarian 1982; Paidar 1995.

63. Ironically, women becoming named has made it more difficult for us today to identify who they were, since no family name or affiliation was in use at the time. They were simply given first names because their familial belongings were known and taken for granted.

64. Occasionally, women participated in other national debates, such as the discussion on per capita taxation to pay for a regular army. See Akram al-Dawlah, "Shayan-i diqqat," *Iran-i naw* 1, 26 (23 September 1909): 2.

65. For a selection of reports concerning women's fund-raising activities and financial contributions to national causes, see *Iran-i naw* 1, 13 (8 September 1909): 2; *Iran-i naw* 1, 92 (18 December 1909): 2; *Iran-i naw* 1, 121 (31 January 1910): 3; *Iran-i naw* 1, 124 (3 February 1910): 4; *Iran-i naw* 1, 148 (4 March 1910): 1, 2; *Iran-i naw* 1, 149 (5 March 1910): 2; *Iran-i naw* 1, 153 (10 March 1910): 2; *Iran-i naw* 1, 156 (16 March 1910): 2; *Iran-i naw* 1, 157 (17 March 1910): 2; *Iran-i naw* 1, 158 (18 March 1910): 2; *Iran-i naw* 1, 167 (31 March 1910): 2; *Iran-i naw* 1, 168 (2 April 1910): 4; *Iran-i naw* 1, 170 (5 April 1910): 2; *Iran-i naw* 2, 88 (7 February 1911): 1.

66. "Taghayyur," *Habl al-matin* (Tehran edition) 1, 64 (10 July 1907): 3. The essay was subsequently published, "Maktub-i yiki az khavatin," *Habl al-matin* (Tehran edition) 1, 65 (11 July 1907): 2–3.

67. For a selection of these court reports and women's litigative letters, see *Habl al-matin* (Tehran edition) 1, 79 (1 August 1907): 3; *Habl al-matin* (Tehran edition) 1, 213 (24 January 1908): 4; *Iran-i naw* 1, 45 (20 October 1909): 3; *Iran-i naw* 1, 51 (27 October 1909): 3; *Iran-i naw* 1, 56 (1 November 1909): 4; *Iran-i naw* 1, 64 (11 November 1909): 2; *Iran-i naw* 1, 74 (25 November 1909): 4; *Iran-i naw* 1, 103 (2 January 1910): 4; *Iran-i naw* 1, 104 (3 January 1910): 1; *Iran-i naw* 1, 127 (7 February 1910): 3; *Iran-i naw* 1, 152 (9 March 1910): 3; *Iran-i naw* 1, 154 (13 March 1910): 3–4; *Iran-i naw* 1, 196 (5 May 1910): 3; *Iran-i naw* 2, 78 (15 January 1911): 4; *Iran-i naw* 2, 119 (18 March

1911): 2; *Iran-i naw* 3, 8 (4 April 1911): 3; *Iran-i naw* 3, 9 (5 April 1911): 3; *Iran-i naw* 3, 11 (8 April 1911): 2; *Iran-i naw* 3, 37 (8 May 1911): 1; *Iran-i naw* 3, 39 (10 May 1911): 2; *Iran-i naw* 3, 41 (15 May 1911): 2–3; *Iran-i naw* 3, 44 (17 May 1911): 3; *Iran-i naw* 3, 47 (21 May 1911): 3; *Iran-i naw* 3, 48 (22 May 1911): 3; *Iran-i naw* 3, 50 (24 May 1911): 4; *Iran-i naw* 3, 71 (18 June 1911): 4; *Iran-i naw* 3, 85 (5 July 1911): 4.

68. *Iran-i naw* 1, 60 (7 November 1909): 4.

69. *Iran-i naw* 1, 240 (4 July 1910): 4.

70. *Iran-i naw* 3, 20 (18 April 1911): 4. For her second appeal asking for release of her innocent son, see *Iran-i naw* 3, 53 (28 May 1911): 4.

71. In addition to the earlier reports of women's call for use of domestic textiles, in particular in the context of talks given at girls' schools ceremonies reported frequently in *Iran-i naw*, *Shukufah* regularly ran articles on this topic. See *Shukufah* 2, 21 (12 January 1914): 3–4; *Shukufah* 2, 23 (16 February 1914): 1–3; *Shukufah* 3, 11 (16 May 1915): 1–3; *Shukufah* 3, 13 (4 July 1915): 2–3; *Shukufah* 3, 19 (13 October 1915): 3.

72. *Shukufah* 3, 15 (13 August 1915): 1–2.

73. *Shukufah* 3, 17 (11 September 1915): 3; *Shukufah* 3, 18 (25 September 1915): 1–2.

74. Agha Baygum Khanum (1882–1949) was the daughter of Sakinah Kandashlu and Shaykh Hadi Najmabadi. Like many women who were engaged in Constitutionalist activities during this period, she was also involved in establishing a school for girls, *madrasah-i dukhtaran* (school for girls) in the Darvazah Qazvin area of Tehran. Along with a number of other principals of girls' schools, she participated in the series of meetings that resulted in the formation of the Association of Women of the Homeland (*Anjuman-i mukhaddarat-i vatan*). On these meetings, see *Iran-i naw*, 156 (16 March 1910): 2; 157 (18 March 1910): 2; 166 (30 March 1910): 1. At the first meeting of the board of directors of the association, she was elected chair. Agha Shahzadah Amin and Sédighé Dolatabadi were elected, respectively, as treasurer and secretary of the association. See Bamdad 1969, 13–14.

75. The speech was reported in full in *Habl al-Matin*, 18 July 1910, 9–10.

76. The letter was dated 23 of Sha'ban, that is, she was giving roughly a forty-day notice to the Majlis.

77. *Nida-yi vatan*, 2 October 1907, 2–4.

78. *Nida-yi vatan*, 14 October 1907, 2–3.

79. *Iran-i naw* 1, 124 (3 February 1910): 4. The association of stillness and passivity with women and/as the dead, under challenge here, was a point of classical misogyny.

80. *Iran-i naw* 1, 92 (18 December 1909): 4.

81. *Shukufah* 4, 4 (24 January 1916): 2–3.

82. *Shukufah* 4, 8 (2 April 1916): 8–9. As Abbas Amanat has suggested (personal communication), Kasma'i's language and imagery in this poem have much in common with the Baha'i language of the time. Kasma'i lived a number of years in Ashkabad, at this time a strong center of Baha'i faith. The

politico-cultural interactions of this community with the overlapping community of Iranians in that city deserve study. For a study of the Baha'i community of Ashkabad, see Momen 1991.

83. *Zaban-i zanan* 1, 23 (1 May 1920): 1.

## EPILOGUE

1. Serena 1983, 236 [1883, 259–60]. Daughter of Nasir al-Din Shah and Taj al-Dawlah, 'Ismat al-Dawlah (1854/55–1905) was wife of Mu'yyir al-Mamalik Sr. and mother of Dust'ali Khan Mu'yyir al-Mamalik.

2. Serena 1983, 230 and 175, respectively [1883, 252 and 188]. Gertrude Bell, traveling to Iran in 1892, wrote in very similar terms of her visit to a daughter of Nasir al-Din Shah, describing her hostess as "a woman of middle age, very fat and very dark; her black eyebrows met together across her forehead; on her lips there was more than the suspicion of a moustache" (1928, 79).

3. See, for instance, Mu'ayyir al-Mamalik 1982c, 29.

4. 'Iffat al-Muluk Khvajah'nuri, "Intiqad-i mud-i libas-i ma," *Nisvan-i vatankhvah* 1, 7–8 (1924): 12–18; quotation on 16.

5. This latter meaning is so forgotten by many Persian speakers that sometimes it is mistranslated into "simple" in English when in Persian the second meaning pertains. See, for an example, Taj al-Saltana 1993, 270, where Taj al-Saltanah, speaking of her husband's attraction to young men, writes, "This beloved husband of mine was a devotee of the god of hedonism. He derived enormous pleasure from being with simple youths." It would have been far more accurate to translate *sadah* into "beardless youth" rather than "simple youth." For the Persian original, see Taj al-Saltanah 1982, 90.

6. Howard and Rackin 1997, 143–47, quoting Richard Halpern's work (1991), argue that for the English aristocracy "conversion from a militarized to a consuming class" felt emasculating; luxury and display seen as effeminate; modernity was received as a polluting effeminizing force. Perhaps Iranian modernity could be said to have been received by some conservative forces not simply as effeminizing but perhaps more threateningly as amradizing, farangis and farangi'ma'abs inscribed as sites of modernity's polluting force, through their similitude with amradnuma.

7. I am taking the notion of inappropriate presence from James T. Siegel (1997, 30–31), although he is discussing the inappropriate presence in the different colonial Dutch-Indonesian cultural intersections.

8. "It must be said, even if no one listens!" *Shukufah* 3, 17 (7 September 1915): 2–3.

9. For examples from the women's press, see *Danish*, 28 (24 June 1911): 7; *Shukufah* 1, 6 (17 March 1913): 3; 2, 12 (26 May 1914): 3–4; *Nisvan-i vatankhvah*, 7–8 (1924): 22–23; and 10 (1926): 12.

10. I am not suggesting a reversal; I suspect that the kind of divisions between carnal/divine and earthly/transcendental that inform the transcendental proposition may not have been relevant to the earlier paradigms of Sufi love.

11. See, for instance, Schimmel 1975, 289; Southgate 1984, 426. Southgate extends that argument to female homoeroticism: “It stands to reason that in a sexually segregated society, where unmarried men and women had little opportunity to meet, some women would be driven to lesbianism. . . . Not unlike the modern women’s prison, the harem could encourage lesbianism among women deprived of male company” (430). The highly informative entry by Pellat, *EI*, 776–79, concludes, “It is indeed difficult to measure precisely the extent of the phenomenon [male homosexuality], but it should be recognised that the separation of the sexes, which is a particular feature of Islam, has played a significant role in promoting it . . . , among women as much as among men, and the precautions taken against such behaviour . . . did not succeed in preventing it” (779).

12. Young 1998, 22. This is a very problematic review. For instance, the author uses homosexuality, pederasty, and sodomy, among other categories, as synonyms, with no explanation or qualification. The prime drive of his narrative is categorical disassociation of homosexuality from Islam. Though the author accuses Murray and Roscoe of neo-orientalism, his own argument of a correlation between homosexuality and gender segregation, as we saw in chapter 2, is a squarely “orientalist” argument introduced into the Islamic world through European–Middle Eastern interactions.

13. ‘Arifi 1999, x–xii. The assessment of the “black down on the upper lip” as a not “appealing feminine characteristic” is also a late modernist aesthetic judgment, as we have seen. In the nineteenth century, it was considered a mark of beauty for women, possibly for the same reason that the editors find it “unattractive” today, that is, as a sign of a different kind of beloved.

14. Meisami 1987, 245–46. For a sample of some of the most explicit forms of male same-sex love and sex, see Sprachman 1995. As Meisami (1987, 250) notes, in addition to the more familiar model of the love of an older man for a male adolescent, there is the love of man for man in the ghazal. One wonders how much this familiarity of one model at the expense of making the other unfamiliar, largely forgotten, is linked to the later modernist attempt to mark all male homoeroticism with the disrespectful brush of “boy-love.”

15. See Tavakoli-Targhi 1990b for this argument.

16. In much of the late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century Iranian writings, the *fukuli* and *Babi* often appear together as twin figures of excess and alterity. See, for instance, ‘Ayn al-Saltanah (1995–2001): “We have three types of people. One is the *Babis* and the irreligious who today translate into ‘*fukuli*’ ” (3:1816; see also 3:1851). See Mottahedeh 1998b for the *Babi* as the figure haunting historiographies of Iranian modernity.

17. For a recent biography of Amir ‘Abbas Huvayda, see Milani 2000, especially 67–68, 186–87, 191, 206–7, 256.

18. The success of Iranian modernity in forgetting the *amrad(uma)* may explain why in the post-1979 era there has been much harsher treatment of women’s veils than of men’s beards or their neckties and bow ties. Under the Taliban, equally harsh punishments were meted out on both gender fronts.

Perhaps the Taliban's policy was related to the fact that practices such as "keeping" young male adolescents by adult men, in at least parts of Afghanistan, has continued to the present day, as we witnessed its resurfacing in post-Taliban days. See Craig S. Smith, "Shh, It's an Open Secret: Warlords and Pedophilia," *New York Times*, 21 February 2002; Maura Reynolds, "Kandahar's Lightly Veiled Homosexual Habits," *Los Angeles Times*, 3 April, 2002.

19. This marking of "danger" as centered on "moral looseness and homosexuality" is not limited to dominant Islamist discourse. It is a ground shared with much of the oppositional discourse, inside and outside the country. *Homan*, a journal published by Iranian gay and lesbian communities in Europe and the United States, has kept up a courageous critical engagement with the exilic opposition.

20. I want to thank Dina al-Kassim for remarkably productive critical comments on my MESA 2001 paper that started me thinking in these directions.

21. As Carolyn Dinshaw (1999, 15) has argued in the context of discussing Foucault's *History of Sexuality*, what at first glance may seem merely a nostalgic and idealized vision of the past could be considered an indication of a desire for an ethical and political vision for "a future that is not straitened by modern sexuality."

22. For a preliminary discussion of the so-called youth crisis in Iran, including the repeated statements of panic over young teenagers' homoerotic experimentations, as reflected in the "advice columns" of a magazine for women, *Payam-i zan*, see Najmabadi 2004.

23. Butler 1994.

24. Though first raised as an alarming phenomenon in the context of runaway girls, the continued press reports (and the cinematic production) about transdressed young women seem to point to a wider social practice among female teenagers. See *Zanan*, 58 (December 1999): 6–13; *Huquq-i zanan*, 13 (January–February 2000): 12–17, 64–65; *Zanan*, 61 (March 2000): 27; *Iran Times*, 29 June 2001, 11. See also *Iran Times*, 30 March 2001, 1; *Iran Times*, 21 September 2001, 11, for reports on young men dressed as women apparently for sexual solicitation.





# Glossary

amrad	A young beardless male, in contemporary terms an adolescent teenager, or even older, into his early twenties, so long as he did not have a fully visible beard.
amradnuma, mukhannas	An adult man who made himself look like a young beardless man.
andaruni	Inner private quarter of a household.
bachchah	Literally child in modern Persian; in the nineteenth century it would be used more commonly to refer to a young male adolescent.
biruni	Outer quarter for public reception.
farangi'ma'ab	One who is inclined toward a European way of life.
fukul	Persianization of the French <i>faux col</i> , bow tie. <i>fukuli</i> : The person who wears it consistently, making a cultural statement.
ghilman	Paradisiacal, beautiful, young beardless males.
hadith	Narratives attributed to the prophet Muhammad.
hijab	The most general term for covering, the veil.
hur	Paradisiacal, beautiful, eternally young, and virgin females.
khak	Soil, a central concept in imagining a territorialized concept of homeland.
khatt	Literally line, trace of a mustache.

liwat	Through affiliation with the story of the people of Lot, it is the most common word used for sodomy.
Majlis	Iranian parliament, first established in 1906.
maktab	Old elementary schools, centered on oral and religiously inspired traditions.
millat	Community of people, identified through shared religious belonging in classical Islam, transformed into the modern concept of nation in the nineteenth century.
mukhannas	See amradnuma.
nawkhatt	Adolescent male with the first trace of a mustache.
nazar	Gazing at a beautiful young male face, associated with Sufi practices.
niqab	Women's face cover.
nishan	Medallion of honor.
pahlavan	A chivalrous man, member of fraternities formed around traditional body-building sports.
pichah	Women's face cover, traditionally made of horse hair.
rubandah	Women's face cover, traditionally made of white cloth.
sadah	Beardless young male adolescent.
shahid	Beautiful, young male face, witness to divine beauty.
shari'a	Islamic jurisprudence.
shirmard	Literally lion-man, it draws its meaning from association with 'Ali, the Shi'ite first imam, one of whose appellations was lion of God.
tafsir	Interpretations of the Qur'an.
tasnif	Popular songs with short, highly rhythmic stanzas, usually used for love lyrics, in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries used for political and patriotic purposes.
ta'ziah	Passion plays, associated with the martyrdom of Husayn, the Shi'ite third imam, in the battle of Karbala'.
vatan	Classically referred to the place of one's birth; in the nineteenth century it became re-identified

	with the modern notion of a national homeland. vatani: Patriotic.
zulf	Hair lock, usually used in poetical language to refer to hair locks of a beloved. It carried the connotations of seductive or shameful display of hair.
zurkhanah	Literally house of strength, equivalent of a modern-day body-building sports club, intimately linked with a sense of brotherhood among its members.



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Permission for illustrations were generously granted by many individuals and institutions. I thank them all.

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