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Forgotten Territories in the Iranian Home: Issues of Segregation

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ABSTRACT

This article addresses issues associated with segregation and gender discrimination in the traditional culture of Iranian home. The concept of Iranian home with an emphasis on its territories and social characteristics, as well as segregation and gender aspects, was investigated. Using expert opinions, seven house samples were analyzed. Following a review of plans and maps, interviews, and visual observations, a content analysis of activities, social relations, and physical features was conducted. The results show that individual values have been forgotten, and the privacy is defined as a collective state for a family. Under the management of the father, home has a biological and economic nature. All household activities and social relationships are determined by gender. Among the things having distinct segregation attributes are permanent house elements, such as walls and entrances. Finally, it seems that the culture of Iranian home further emphasizes such concepts as confidentiality, purity, cooperation, and humility.

KEYWORDS

home values, space syntax, territory, segregation, gender discrimination

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Introduction

The concept of home is a result of complex, dynamic, and competitive processes developing under the action of external and internal factors. In recent years, the meaning of home has attracted much attention within the disciplines of sociology, anthropology, psychology, human geography, history, architecture, and philosophy (Mallett, 2004). Critical studies into the material realm of this concept indicate that home is created by numerous cultural, economic, and social factors (Lewis et al., 2018; Peil, 2020). These approaches reflect that all architectural spaces are determined by the underlying social-cultural contexts. A possible approach to identifying socio-cultural contexts in architecture consists in studying spatial patterns or space syntaxes. Home syntax seeks to describe living spaces in terms of spatial configurations that express social or cultural meanings. This approach can also be used for developing practical solutions to the problems of segregation and gendering (Luisa Maffini & Maraschin, 2018; Peil, 2020; Zerouati & Bellal, 2020).

In this research, we aim to elucidate whether the traditional culture of Iranian home, including the concepts of sanctity and privacy, may lead to segregation and gender discrimination. Personal syntaxes in Iranian households seem to be ignored, while gender segregation is emphasized. Using space syntax criteria, we investigate forgotten territories, spatial segregations, neglected values, and gender discrimination in Iranian homes.

The study was conducted according to the following logic. First, we describe the specifics of Iranian home with an emphasis on its gender aspects and territories. Second, the home syntax and its social characteristics are reviewed. Third, the research methodology is explained. Then, according to three concepts of space syntax (i.e., activities, social relations, and physical features), the questions of socio-spatial meaning and gender segregation in the culture of Iranian home are discussed.

Home Concept: Territories and Syntaxes

Various aspects of the concept of home were discussed in relation to issues concerned with segregation or gentrification (Peil, 2020). Home spaces are seen as those shaped by inclusion, exclusion, and power relations. Lived experiences, social relations, and emotional significance contribute toward making a living space a site of personal history and memory (Ellis et al., 2004; Hall et al., 2019; Peil, 2020). Feminist research has pointed out that the concept of home entails political implications both at the family and society levels (Hurdley, 2013; Scicluna, 2017). Geographical works also examine the use of space, for example, the spatial separation of men from women and children at home, and discuss the implications of gendered spaces such as the kitchen, suburbia, or home as work (King, 2013; Scicluna, 2017). The gendering of home informed by feminist research since the 1970s, and more recently by postcolonial theory, has formed a prominent field focusing on issues of housework, house design, and the house as an expression of status. Feminist theory has been used to challenge the idea of home as a bounded place of security and retreat, and to criticize the public–private dichotomy (Lonergan, 2018; Madigan & Munro, 1991; Smith & Johnson, 2020). Feminists also identify home as

a site of oppression, where women are constrained to reproductive and domestic labor with no economic control over its management. Recent research has introduced a more varied approach, examining home as a site of resistance where repressed groups in a family (women, girls) or society (minorities) can gain control over certain aspects of their lives. This allows home to be viewed as a potential site for radical subversive activity. For example, this can be the case in an autocratic society where home may become a center for opposition. Discussions held at home, or inside activities undertaken in private, may have an effect on public life, thus distorting the established division between the private and public spheres (Brickell, 2012; Domosh, 1998; Duncan & Lambert, 2004).

As Davidoff and Hall (2018) pointed out, the concept of home as a private realm resulted from the realignment of economic, political, moral, and spatial orders at the end of the 18th century. At that time, the middle class redefined home and dwelling culture through the lens of a spatial moral and gendered separation between collective (public) and personal life (private). As a “territory of the mind” (p. 319), the distinction between public and private was reproduced in the rules of etiquette, regulating social interactions, and, importantly in the bricks-and-mortar understanding of home. For instance, bricks represent order and organization in a house, while the outer walls represent social structure, strength, and security. Family relations were played out in private homes, which were physically distinct from the marketplace; productive work was banished from dwellings, or was restricted to domestic servants (Blunt, 2005; Domosh, 1998; Dowling, 2012). For example, family and home life of English middle class was created according to an idea that home should be a place enclosed from the intrusion of people who were neither family nor friends. Hence, the late 18th century treated home in terms of privacy parameters, viewing it as a sanctuary or haven for a family with specific class and gender characteristics (Blench, 2001; Brickell, 2012; McDowell, 1989).

Regarding home as a haven or sanctuary forms the central idea in the concept of home privacy. While public space outside someone’s home is seen as imposing and dangerous, the inside home space is enclosed and safe. Home is a sanctuary, a place to retreat into, providing a respite from the uncertainties of commerce and the messiness of politics. Home is also a respite from work, a place of relaxation, a haven (Dowling, 2012). However, feminist researchers question the pertinence of home as a sanctuary to women, who bear primary responsibility for domestic labor and childcare. As such, home is a space of work for many women and cannot, by definition, be a sanctuary or respite from work. Moreover, in the context of domestic violence and emotional abuse, home becomes a site and source of alienation and upheaval, rather than a haven. Indeed, the presumed sanctity and privacy of home, in legal and cultural terms, can lead to an underreporting of domestic violence and work to exacerbate these situations (Bowlby et al., 1997; Scicluna, 2017).

Home Territories

Home as a private space or realm is one of its key meanings. In defining the privacy of home, comparisons are often made with what home is not. Home is not a state/government, home is not work, home is not a church, home is not the realm of politics, and home does not encompass commercial activities. Hence, the contrast

with the public is central to the definition of the private (Birch, 2008; Madanipour, 2003). Essentially, home as the private denotes its separateness from the collective nature of public life. Important concepts in this field include such terms as privacy, intimacy, and territory interactivity. Private, familial, and social territories are defined, respectively, by solitude, confidentiality, and interactive realms, (Dowling, 2012; Fahey, 1995; Sciama, 1993).

Personal space is a behavioral and environmental concept. Sommer (1969) believed that personal space is a protective, small, and invisible territory that makes a bubble between oneself and others. Private space is dynamic and creative. A person may feel annoyed because of the infringement of others to this space. Personal specifications (personality, emotions, gender, and age) along with physical environmental contexts like social norms and cultural rules affect personal space (Hecht et al., 2019; Wells et al., 2016). Personal syntax can be regarded as a bubble with a person at its center, forming an area, which the person does not wish to be invaded. It is a spatial and behavioral hierarchy that manifests itself most clearly at home.

Confidential syntax is reserved for close friends, lovers, children, and family members. The confidential syntax in Islamic sexual jurisprudence is related to the word *Mahram*. A Mahram is a trustworthy family member who is allowed to enter the house. Thus, Mahram syntax brings intimacy, kinship, and closeness (Aryanti, 2013; Majid et al., 2015). In-home confidentiality is formed by separating inner space from the outside world. Strict admission formalities are necessary to enter a house, as well as any inside space. Strangers are supposed to have a special entrance permission (Habib et al., 2013; Hajian et al., 2020; Karimi & Hosseini, 2012). Each space in a house has its own identity.

According to the presented classification, semi-private spaces are home territories that guests can attend upon arrival. These spaces are clearly distinct from the inner spaces where privacy is guarded.

Home and Space Syntaxes

Space syntax is mainly used to analyze spatial configurations. This theory was developed by Hillier and Hanson in their work *The Social Logic of Space* published in 1984. The researchers outlined a syntactic theory for the organization of spaces in buildings and settlements. It was argued that buildings, towns, and cities exhibit particular spatial properties, which are governed by social rules regulating human interaction. The spatial configuration of a dwelling or settlement is believed to present a fairly precise map of the economic, social, and ideological relations of its inhabitants (Dursun, 2007; Hillier, 2007; Hillier & Hanson, 1984; van Nes & Yamu, 2021).

The theory of space syntax assumes that space is the primary core of sociocultural events. However, since space is shaped through social, cultural, and economic processes, it is usually regarded as invisible. As a result, its form is not taken into account (Asif et al., 2018; Pafka et al., 2020). Spatial and social forms are in such a close relationship that a certain spatial configuration may define a number of social patterns, including the distribution patterns of land use, movement, urban crimes, and location of immigrants (Rashid, 2019).

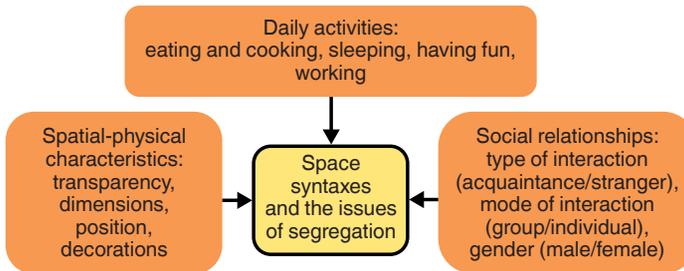
Early space syntax approaches offered mostly quantitative solutions, neglecting all design traditions and spatial cultures. However, in developing various methodological aspects of this theory, Apiradee Kasemsook proposed qualitative approaches to analyzing society and human beings, including the relationship between humans and the physicality of a city (Kasemsook, 2003).

According to Canter (1983, 1997, 2016), spatial syntax can be analyzed based on four factors: land-use differentiation, place goals, interaction scale, and design aspects. Land-use differentiation is connected with current activities occurring in the space; place goals and interaction scale are linked with personal, social, and cultural aspects; design aspects are related to physical features.

Based on this, the syntax of home can be considered in relation to the following three factors: (a) activities, values, and goals; (b) physical characteristics; (c) communication. The factors of activities, values, and goals describe daily activity patterns. Physical characteristics determine how to separate spaces, their sizes and positions, decorations, etc. Communication factors determine relationships between various house spaces, including a range of semi-public, semi-private, and private spaces. Figure 1 shows a theoretical framework for studying the space syntax of Iranian homes.

Figure 1

The Theoretical Framework of the Research



Note. Source: The Authors.

Methodology

Content analysis is a widely used qualitative research technique, whose current variations include conventional, directed, or summative approaches. Although all three approaches can be used to derive meaning from textual data, they differ in terms of coding schemes, origin of codes, and threats to trustworthiness. In conventional content analysis, coding categories are derived directly from the textual data under investigation. In the directed approach, analysis starts with a theory or relevant research findings as a guidance for initial codes. Summative content analysis involves counting and comparisons, usually based on keyword lists or summaries followed by the interpretation of the underlying context (Kyngäs & Kaakinen, 2020). Content analysis expresses relationships between the components of a research topic, which can include, e.g., paintings on the wall of caves, music, books, articles,

handwritings, post cards, films, maps, direct and indirect observations, etc. (Banks, 2018; Flick, 2018).

In some cases, a research topic needs further description based on an existing theory. The directed content approach aims to conceptually extend a theoretical framework or theory. The existing framework can lead to a more focused investigation of a research question. It can provide a way to identifying the key concepts and main components followed by their classification. In addition, it helps to determine the initial coding scheme or relationships between the codes.

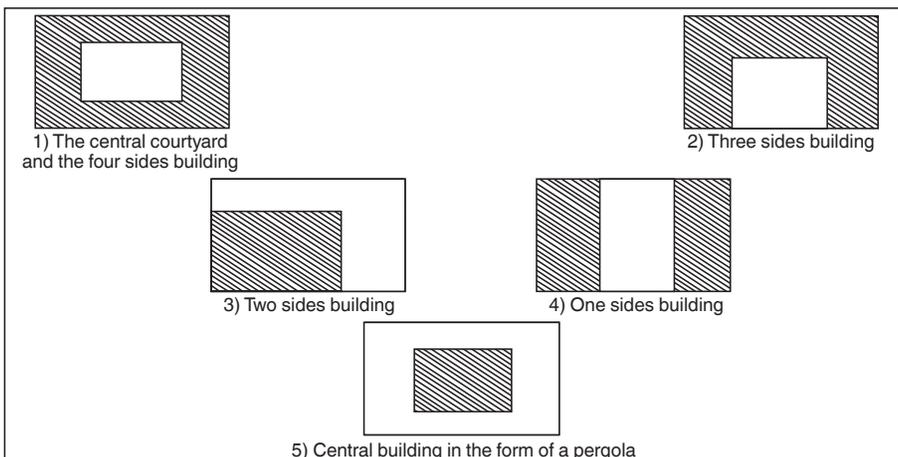
In this study, we used the method of directed content analysis. According to Canter's place facets, the space syntaxes of Iranian traditional homes were studied in terms of three factors, including activities, social relations, and physical characteristics. By comparing these factors, we tried to perceive the culture of Iranian home. According to the conducted review of documents and texts, five different types of traditional Iranian houses can be distinguished according to the location of buildings and open spaces therein (Figure 2). These include:

- (a) the central courtyard and four-side building;
- (b) three-side building;
- (c) two-side building;
- (d) one side building;
- (e) central building in the form of a pergola.

In fact, there are four types of structure in the spaces of Iranian houses:

- (a) three rooms and a porch;
- (b) closed spaces and connection between the ground floor and the first floor from inside the building;
- (c) spaces allowing free passage to one another;
- (d) one room in the middle and two corridors on two sides.

Figure 2
The Location of Open Space and Buildings



Note. Source: The Authors.

Five open interviews were conducted with experts in the field of traditional architecture to reach a theoretical saturation. One of the most important questions in the interviews was “Could you please introduce the types of traditional Iranian houses?” Based on the opinions of 5 experts, a list of seven houses was compiled, including:

- Boroujerdi Home: The Boroujerdi House is a historic house museum in Kashan, Iran. It was built in 1857 by architect Ustad Ali Maryam for the bride of Boroujerdi, a wealthy merchant. The bride came from the affluent Tabātabāei family, for whom the architect had built the nearby Tabātabāei House several years earlier.
- Bekhradi Home: The Bekhradi’s Historical House was built during the Safavid dynasty (17th century) in Isfahan. This historical building is the first and only Safavid historical house that has been restored and used in Iran as a traditional residence since 2005. The house is located in Sonbolestan, one of the oldest neighborhoods in northeast Isfahan.
- Zinat al-Muluk Home: The historical house of Zinat al-Mulk is one of the monuments of Qajar era in Shiraz, which was built by Ali Mohammad Khan Ghavam al-Mulk during 12 years. This house is part of the Narenjestan mansion, connected through a door in the basement. At first, this house was the residence of Ghavam and his family and named after Ghavam child, Zinat Al-Muluk, because she lived there for a time.
- Ansari Home in Oromie: Ansari’s house is one of the oldest houses in Oromieh, which was built between 1330 and 1334, according to the form and inscriptions in the decorative tiles of the house during Qqajar era.
- Samadian Labaf Hom: The Labaf House is a historic house dating back to the Qajar era, located in Isfahan.
- Tadayon home in Semnan: Tadayon House is a historic building belonging to Qajar era located in Abbasieh district, one of five districts of Semnan County. This house is positioned next to the north-south Rasteh (a group of shops) of Semnan Bazaar built almost at the same time.
- Beheshti Home in Qazvin: Seyyed Mahmoud Beheshti’s house is a three-store house of the Qajar era. The house has a large interior and exterior, a formal vestibule, a beautiful corridor leading to the same vestibule and two courtyards. This house is located in one of Qazvin’s old neighborhoods called Dimaj.

These houses were selected among different types in order to reach the representativeness of the sample. Subsequently, the space syntax factors i.e., activities, social relations, and physical features, in these houses were examined.

For qualitative field research, we used qualitative sampling, also known as purposeful sampling or theoretical sampling. The sample size was determined by a theoretical saturation of the contents, culture, and context of the case study. Saturation implies that research themes are well developed in terms of features and dimensions (Hennink & Kaiser, 2020; Kyngäs & Kaakinen, 2020; Lambert, 2019; Low, 2019).

Finally, in these houses, daily activity patterns, gender norms, social relation norms, and other cultural aspects were examined. Then the gendering and segregation issues of Iranian houses were discussed in comparison with contemporary houses.

Results

First, the physical features of Iranian homes were examined by reviewing plans, observations, and interviews. Then, different spaces and activities for identifying gendering and segregation issues were classified. Finally, by comparing activities, social relations, and physical features, the socio-spatial meaning of the concept of Iranian home was derived.

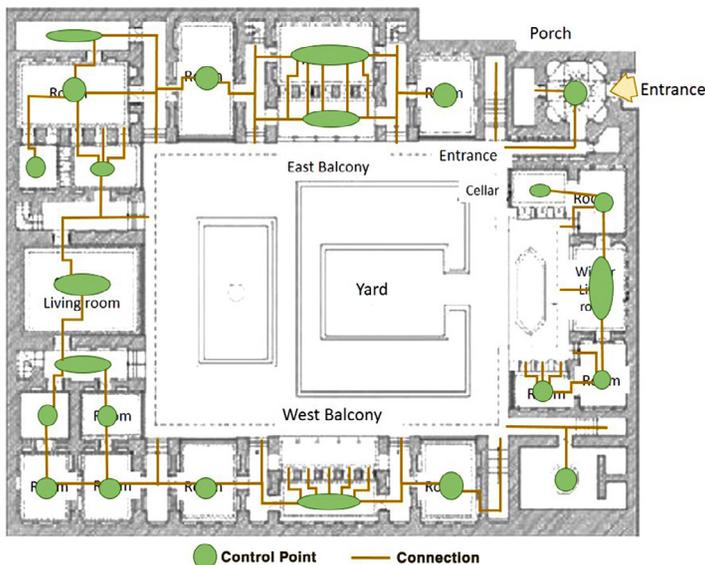
Analysis of Physical and Spatial Features

Gender segregation clearly forms the culture of Iranian home. This aspect seems to be one of the main factors that promotes introversion in Iranian homes. The desire to protect the inviolable privacy of the family away from the eyes of strangers has justified such introversion in home cultures.

Introversion in Iranian homes was found to be manifested in the avoidance of ostentation, tendency to suppress emotions and their expression. For instance, the culture of Iranian home appears in the form of tortuous passages, mud and soil walls. Houses frequently look simple from outside, although featuring beautiful and detailed interior design.

Figure 3 shows that Zinatolmlouk house represents a complete example of an introvert Iranian home culture with its tendency to separate from the outside space. The central courtyard plays the role of isolating inside and outside spaces. There are five syntaxes in Zinatolmlouk house, including family, individual, welcome, service, and courtyard.

Figure 3
The Principles of Introversion in Zinatolmlouk House



Note. Source: The Authors.

Home Culture from Outside to Inside

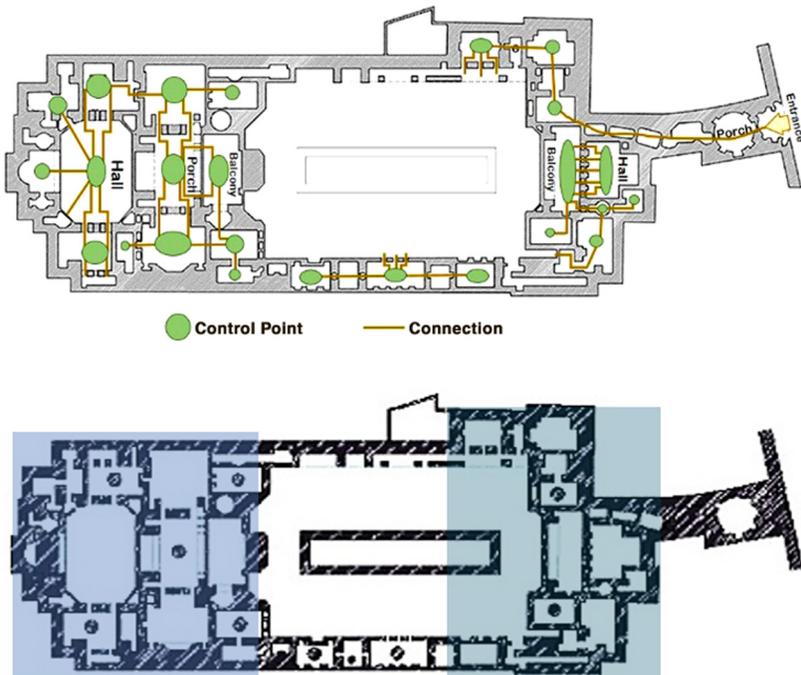
In traditional cultures, houses are separated into the inside and outside parts. The central courtyard can be considered as the peak of introversion in Iranian home culture. Such houses have a history of eight thousand years (Soflaei et al., 2017; Soleymanpour et al., 2015). As Pirnia (2005) notes, in Iran, a garden and a pool were built in the middle of the house, with the rooms and halls wrapping around them like a closed embrace. There was no window or hole in the house, or outside the wall. Therefore, nothing could be seen from the outside. The exterior was designed with arches, gates, and congresses. For example, in Figure 4 (Boroujerdi's House), the opening only leads to the courtyard, and a complete wall without any window or view from the outside proves the importance of this aspect. In Boroujerdi's house, the space of the family members (blue section) where mostly assigned to women. This house section was completely separated from the guest's room (black section); the central courtyard was located in the center.

Some features of the culture of Iranian home include the following:

- a lack of direct visual connection between the interior (private and semi-private) and exterior (public) spaces;
- the presence of such spaces, as a courtyard and porches such that the entrance could lead into these spaces.

Figure 4

The Issues of Segregations in Boroujerdi's House in Kashan

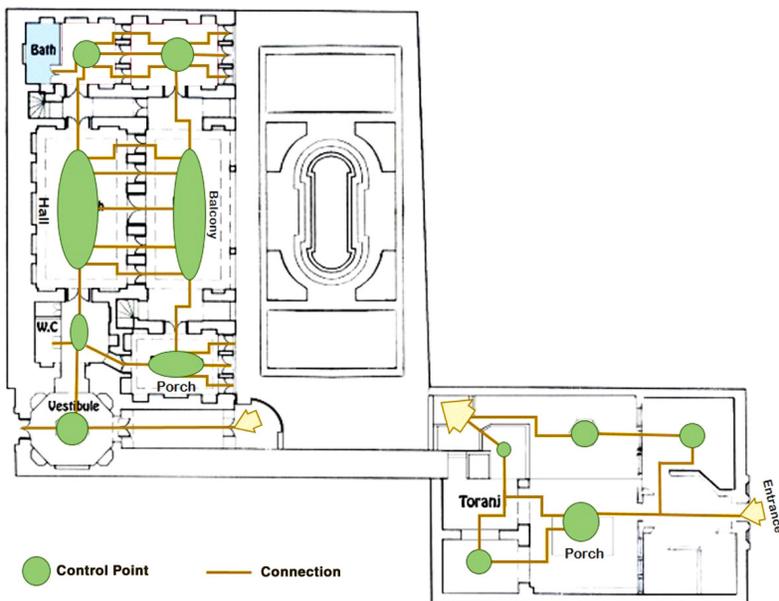


Note. Source: The Authors.

For a long time, Iranian home culture has placed a special emphasis on courtyards, gardens, porches, pergolas, and other introverted structures that surround the naves and create attractive and familiar environments. The key features of the traditional cultural concept of Iranian home are privacy for a family as the smallest social entity. A house is a private place for such a social entity, but not a place for having personal privacy. Moreover, architects have used special strategies to reach those purposes. Spatial order (step-by-step movement from alley or street to the entrance space of the house and then private spaces), as well as the internal and external system operation, is a way to provide decent privacy. Figure 5 demonstrates that the entrance is separated from the main building by a corridor. In order to maintain complete privacy, this entrance first leads to the porch and then to the courtyard.

In Iranian homes, such private spaces as rooms have a more restricted connectivity. The reason was for a non-Mahram to have no control over these spaces, allowing the women of the family to feel more comfortable at home in these spaces. Figure 6 “Tadayon’s house” shows a house with two parts—exterior and interior. The inner part was the living space of the family members (southern part), which included summer and winter halls; the outer part (northern part) was a space for men, where the housefather usually met the guests. Family members occupied the southern and eastern parts. In this section, women performed their daily routines. This part of the house was separated from the northern entrance, such that strangers could not access easily. The T1 rooms in the northern part were related to guests, while the T1 rooms in the eastern part were related to women and household activities.

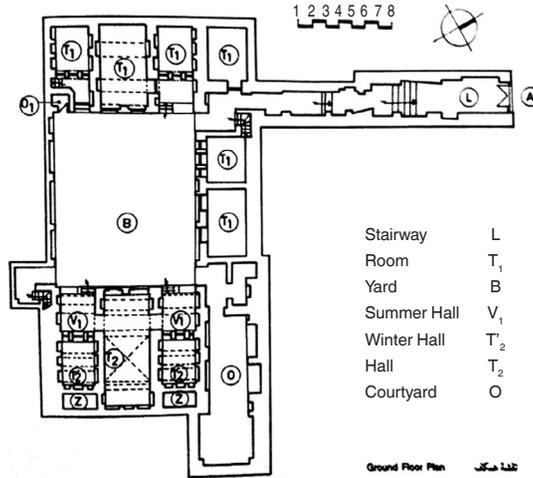
Figure 5
Bekhradi House in Isfahan



Note. Source: The Authors.

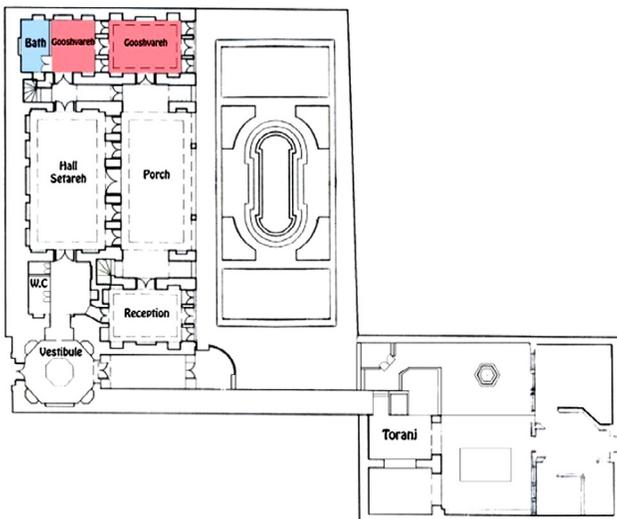
In general, all Iranian homes feature three main space types, including public, semi-public (semi-private), and private (confidential territories). Depending on their functions, some forms of gender segregation are obvious. Figure 7 demonstrates these divisions clearly in the plan of Bekheradi's house. The public space (black section) covers the entrance and porch of the house, the semi-private space (blue section) is related to the yard and porch, and the private space (yellow section) are the rooms of the house.

Figure 6
The Gender Segregation in Tadayon's House in Semnan



Note. Source: The Authors.

Figure 7
Territories in the Iranian Home Culture in Bekhradi House



Note. Source: The Authors.

Public Spaces

- *Entrance:* The entrances themselves manifest interconnected spaces in a house. For entering, the door and front of the house are both a barrier to entry and a place to greet semi-familiar guests. It is used as a waiting space for guests, where the residents of the house pay some usual compliments.
- *Porch and corridor:* Porch or *karbas* is a space that has many types of entrances. It is often located right after the entrance space; one of its functions is to divide the entrance path into two or more directions. In some public buildings or houses, two or more paths led into the porch, each of which led to a specific space, including the interior of the building, which is the courtyard.
- *Corridor:* The corridor is the simplest part of the entrance space, the most important function of which is to provide communication and access between two places. In some types of buildings, such as houses, baths, and in some cases mosques and schools, the extension and direction of the path is changing the corridor. The corridors that led indirectly to the courtyard are aimed at solving the issue of confidential territories.

Semi-public spaces

- *Balcony:* It can be considered as a space filter and a common part between open and closed spaces. This space can be either open or semi-public. In Iranian architecture, the balcony is used as a joined space.
- *Yard:* Housing is important in Islamic architecture due to its direct connection with family life. A Muslim's house should be the safe keeper of the family and should be built in accordance with Islam. In this regard, the main effect of Islam in the structure of a traditional house is introversion. Burckhardt (2009) points out that the courtyard is an element of Muslim house, which receives light and air not from the street, but from inner courtyards.

Private spaces

- *Types of rooms:* The interiors of the house are the most varied part, so that the residents of the house would not feel tired. The rooms in a traditional house were arranged around the yard according to their importance and purpose. Summer rooms were usually located in the southern side in order to be less exposed to the sun during summer days; winter rooms were located in front of the summer rooms exactly on the side that gets most of the sun during the day. Other spaces, such as storage, kitchen, and stables were located in the second row and behind the rooms (Mamani et al., 2017)

Service space:

- A backyard was a yard type that usually had a secondary function as an open space for service. It was designed and built in that part of the house to provide light and ventilation; its location and types are highly diverse. Service areas, including the kitchen or bathroom were typically built away from the private spaces of the house.

Gender Norms and Activities in Iranian Home Culture

Different home syntaxes shown in Table 1 identify the issues of gendering and segregation in Iranian home culture according to gender norms and activities.

Table 1

Investigation of the Gender Norms and Activities in Iranian Home Culture

Syntaxes	Male/Female	Daily/Nightly
Entrance	To enter the house, two different clones were installed on the door; the women used the clone with the lower voice (sound) and the men used the clone with the bass voice (sound).	Depending on the type of life and hours of activity, the amount of entry and exit during the day was much more than at night.
Room	Girls had rooms separate from boys, and at the ceremonies and parties, women gathered in rooms separate from men.	In the rooms, activities such as eating, playing, reading, talking for the day and activities such as sleeping, getting together and talking and reminiscing were provided.
Living room	The living room was mostly a place for parents to rest, especially the father of the family.	Due to the life style of the period, this space was mostly used in the evenings and nights for activities such as talking and reminiscing.
Winter Living	All the family members gathered in the winter, and the girls and boys shared their memories of the grandmothers.	At night, it was a gathering place and the main living space, so activities such as eating, sleeping, talking, reminiscing, etc. took place in it.
Summer Living	They gathered in a shady and airy space during summer nights and days.	Due to its location on the north side without direct sunlight, it was a suitable space to use in days and nights.
Warehouse	The warehouse used by women was mostly related to the kitchen. Sometimes women used livestock storage.	This space was much more used during the day in the waking time and work and activities of men. At night it was limited to essential uses.
Pasto	Pasto was mostly used for women-specific activities and for their greater comfort in the presence of their in-laws (changing clothes, etc.).	Due to the fact that the closet was on a steeper level than the yard, the light reaches it with less intensity, so there was more silence, calm and comfort in them. At all times of the day, it was suitable for activities such as rest and more private activities.
Restroom	Most of the time, toilets used by men and women was different.	There was no difference in day and night use.
Balcony	The activities that took place in the living room took place in this space when the weather conditions allow outdoor use.	This space was very active during the day as a semi-open and sunny space, and in summer nights, due to the possibility of enjoying the pleasant breeze and watching the sky, it was a suitable place to sleep.
Yard	The yard was a place to spend time with neighbors and friends, as well as doing daily household activities such as washing, sweeping, cleaning vegetables, and so on.	This space was used more during the day due to the time of awakening and activity. At night, it was a space for division and in summer, due to the possibility of enjoying the pleasant breeze and watching the sky, it was a suitable place to sleep.

Different territories in a house are described in Table 2.

Table 2

Confidential and Formal Territories, Semi-Public and Private Territories in Iranian Home Culture

Syntaxes	Formal/Intimate	Public Private
Entrance	It is a formal space. Strangers stopped there to get permission from the owners to let them in.	As the most public house space, it connects the house with the outside.
Room	Strangers usually have no way into the room.	It is considered as the most private space for the family of the house.
Living room	For the reception of guests, it was male space; in other cases, it is used by the father of the family.	It is mostly a public space.
Winter Living	Opportunity to gather around the chair and people recounting the memories of the chair in the winter, usually strangers at parties can enter this space.	It is a place to receive guests and a place to talk to others.
Summer Living	This living room has been very popular in summer as a place to rest and eat family meal.	It is a place to receive guests and for others a place to talk.
Kitchen	Serving the living room and access to the warehouse, a space that strangers have no access to.	This space is especially for women used for food preparation and cooking and located in the corner of the house.
Warehouse	Located near the front door for ease of transportation of equipment and fodder for livestock, used by family members, especially father.	Due to their functional nature, warehouses are mostly used individually and have minimal spatial qualities.
Pasto	Enclosed space for storing things and food behind the warehouse with access for members of the house; strangers have no access to it.	A very private space is in the third category of space relative to the courtyard, after the porch (semi-open), room (closed), pasto, (completely closed).
Restroom	Formal space is used by members of the house and guests due to its location in a corner of the yard.	The toilet is an individual and private space. According to the behavioral patterns of Iranian society, the toilet is a space that tries to be kept out of sight.
Balcony	Semi-open space is a filter for entering space for strangers, space for eating, sitting together for family members and acquaintances.	The porch is a semi-open space that is used collectively and individually in summers.
Yard	The yard is a space for children to play and the general daily activities of family members and to hold ceremonies and occasions.	The yard, in addition to group activities such as children playing, was used for ceremonies, meeting with neighbors, etc.

Discussion and Conclusion

This research was aimed at analyzing the issues of segregation and gender discrimination in the traditional culture of Iranian home. The study was based on three factors: (a) activities, values and goals, (b) physical characteristics, and (c) communication. According to the factor of activities, values, and goals, Iranian home is a collective entity and an economic unit managed by the father. In the past, the inhabitants produced most of their necessities at home. The kitchen, on the other hand, was a place for providing and preparing food. Today, food is prepared outside the house but is consumed inside. Most of the activities that families used to do at home in the past are now mostly done in different places outside the house. Today's houses mostly play a residential role; therefore, a reduction in the size and area of houses is observed.

Concerning physical characteristics, our study shows the importance of axial space. In other words, the definition of various spaces in traditional houses is based on permanent elements, such as walls and entrances. A kind of axial space is described through the division of spaces, separations, sizes and positions, and decorations. Compared to traditional houses, today's houses contain more semi-permanent elements—furniture, which is frequently used to separate and define spaces. Traditional houses used to be decorated with permanent elements. At present, a greater tendency for non-fixed, movable elements is observed.

Work and family relationships are directly linked. The division of labor was done by the father of the family. Most of the time, he and his children worked together, and the children continued the father's business. Moving some activities outside the house has resulted in a decreased family control and power. In addition, previously enjoyed opportunities for family members to interact have been lost.

The traditional culture of Iranian home is masculine, and values such as Hijab (veil), cooperation, purity, contentment, God-centeredness and obedience, and humility in home design are considered to be critically important. Therefore, the most private spaces are interactive spaces and confidential territories. Confidential territories are not places where one can be alone; rather, they are interactive places for two or more people who feel semantically and physically comfortable with each other. At the same time, they create security for a family. Thus, in the traditional culture of Iranian home, privacy was defined for a family, but not for a person.

Concerning communication factors, open and semi-open spaces in the traditional Iranian houses, such as courtyards, balconies, and porches, played a critical role in organizing, dividing, and separating spaces. This is no longer the case in contemporary houses. In the past, the house played a multifunctional role. The house was a place for large families, sometimes spanning three generations. It was both a place to live and sometimes a place to work. It was a kind of an economic unit inside a house where housework was done by women and girls; usually it was continued by men outside. Home also performed a protective function for women, a role that clothing and veils also played in a different way. The gender function of the traditional home was to create privacy for women and protect them by making a distance (a veil) between women and the outsider.

The concept of privacy has changed from a collective state to an individual state. In the past, privacy was defined for a group of people and the space did not belong to a specific person. The room where they used to sleep was the same space as for other family members. Therefore, the space did not belong to a specific person. For comparison, spaces today are defined according to the location of furniture, such as tables, chairs, beds, in other words, more private realms.

The Iranian perception of home presupposes introvert architecture. As an economic and livelihood unit, the Iranian house focuses on the father as the manager and authority.

Traditional houses had gender functions. Home, like other social categories, was treated as a masculine concept, implying the comfort and well-being of men and protection of women. According to the traditional division of labor, women played the role of housewives; however, everybody loved and respected them much more than any other member of the family.

The concepts of privacy and individuality are cultural concepts that differ from one culture to another. In societies where individualism is more developed and individualistic values prevail, one of the key concepts of social life is personal territory in both spatial and social sense. In these home cultures, each member of the house can have their own “privacy” inside the house. Therefore, it is the division of space in a house that matters, rather than its area or form. Conversely, in Iranian home cultures, the main cultural function of the home is to preserve family collective values. In other words, home is a place to express traditional religious values and preserve the family. The reason why there is no syntax between family members may be rooted in Persian language. Hence, children never have their own private rooms. In contemporary houses, a change from social to personal values can be observed. The human becomes freer from some family and social limitations, which has caused a challenge to the family subjectivity and agency. In redefining traditional and modern concepts, it seems that the traditional culture of Iranian home can be seen as the source of creative design patterns. In such a redefinition, traditional collective values of moral and rational concepts could be combined with feminist and individualistic values, at the same time as maintaining privacy, peace, and security of the inhabitants. In this regard, Iranian home culture can cause personal growth and create a sociable place for households.

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