

# UC San Diego

## UC San Diego Previously Published Works

### Title

Patriarchal Accommodations

### Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/8c6304tn>

### Journal

Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, 43(2)

### ISSN

0891-2416

### Authors

Andrews, Abigail  
Shahrokni, Nazanin

### Publication Date

2014-04-01

### DOI

10.1177/0891241613516628

Peer reviewed

# Journal of Contemporary Ethnography

<http://jce.sagepub.com/>

---

## **Patriarchal Accommodations: Women's Mobility and Policies of Gender Difference from Urban Iran to Migrant Mexico**

Abigail Andrews and Nazanin Shahrokni

*Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* published online 6 January 2014

DOI: 10.1177/0891241613516628

The online version of this article can be found at:

<http://jce.sagepub.com/content/early/2014/01/05/0891241613516628>

---

Published by:



<http://www.sagepublications.com>

**Additional services and information for *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* can be  
found at:**

**Email Alerts:** <http://jce.sagepub.com/cgi/alerts>

**Subscriptions:** <http://jce.sagepub.com/subscriptions>

**Reprints:** <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsReprints.nav>

**Permissions:** <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav>

>> [OnlineFirst Version of Record](#) - Jan 6, 2014

[What is This?](#)

# Patriarchal Accommodations: Women's Mobility and Policies of Gender Difference from Urban Iran to Migrant Mexico

Journal of Contemporary Ethnography

1–28

© The Author(s) 2014

Reprints and permissions:

sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav

DOI: 10.1177/0891241613516628

jce.sagepub.com



Abigail Andrews<sup>1</sup> and Nazanin Shahrokni<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

This paper begins from a paradox. In the 1980s and 1990s, women became increasingly mobile, especially in the developing world. Scholars generally attribute this shift to global economic pressure or to the spread of (Western) gender egalitarianism. Yet, in some places, women gained mobility just as local institutions *extended* policies excluding them or segregating them from men. Here, we look at two such cases: first, how women of Tehran, Iran, became the majority of bus riders just as the city segregated public transportation, and second, how women in the rural, Mexican village of San Pedro came to predominate among emigrants to the United States, even as they were excluded from participating in village politics. We use what we call “linked ethnographies” to put these two cases into dialogue. While attending to the particularities of each site, we find that in both, women gained mobility through the very policies that appeared to confine or exclude them. We call these policies “patriarchal accommodations.” They were patriarchal, because they enshrined formal gender difference associated with male dominance. They were accommodations, because they adapted existing

---

<sup>1</sup>University of California, Berkeley, CA, USA

<sup>2</sup>Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, USA

## Corresponding Author:

Abigail Andrews, University of California, Berkeley, 410 Barrows Hall, Berkeley, CA 94720, USA.

Email: [abigailandrews@berkeley.edu](mailto:abigailandrews@berkeley.edu)

standards of “appropriate” masculinity and femininity to global economic pressure, enabling women to work, study, and consume. We argue that patriarchal accommodations may facilitate women’s entry into the public sphere, particularly in non-Western regimes.

### Keywords

gender, globalization, mobility

## Introduction

In the final decades of the twentieth century, women in the developing world increasingly went “on the move.” In areas where mobility at various scales had long been marked as masculine, and where femininity had been associated with fixity, passivity, and the private sphere (Uteng and Cresswell 2008), women started working, studying, and consuming outside the home. As they entered the public arena, local definitions of what was considered “appropriately” feminine also changed.

In some places, perhaps unexpectedly, the expansion of women’s mobility coincided with the local government’s *reinforcement* of patriarchal public policies—policies, that is, which overtly marked men and women as different, often with reference to “traditional” gender roles.<sup>1</sup> Most scholarship on gender and globalization attributes the growth in women’s movement to global economic pressure and—in conjunction—to the spread of egalitarian (Western) gender norms. Therefore, one might expect patriarchal local policies to limit women’s autonomy and, in turn, their mobility. Nevertheless, the cases we examine here complicate that story: in the city of Tehran, Iran, women became the majority of public bus riders, just as the city government instituted gender segregation in public transportation. Half a world away, women of the small Mexican village of San Pedro came to predominate among emigrants to the United States, even as the community government codified their exclusion from political participation. Based on these two cases, we examine how patriarchal policies may facilitate the expansion of female mobility in unexpected ways.

Our analysis builds on recent scholarship highlighting the interrupted and ambiguous processes by which gender relations shift in the context of economic globalization. Early studies suggested that female mobility emerges because the global economy undermines patriarchy, drawing women into public movement as workers, students, and consumers (Ong 1987; Sassen 1988). Other suggested that women gain autonomy to the extent that global paradigms of “women’s rights” trump local forms of male domination. More

recently, scholars have added nuance to this analysis. Studies like Kandiyoti (1988) and MacLeod (1992), for instance, show that global economic restructuring can also provoke an expansion of patriarchal practices, including gender segregation and political exclusion, as local institutions used gender to shore up their identities in the face of rapid social changes (Kandiyoti 1988; MacLeod 1992). In such reactive, patriarchal contexts, scholars show, gender relations often change not through the destruction of local culture in favor of Western or global “rights” and “freedom” but rather through the hybridization of the two (Levitt and Merry 2009; Thayer 2010). Still, more work is needed to specify *how* global economic pressures intersect with local patriarchal policies to carve out new and differentiated mobilities, at particular places and moments.

We approach this question using what we refer to as linked ethnographies. In an effort to understand the complex, interconnected, local instantiations of global processes, this method puts two in-depth ethnographic studies into dialogue with each other. On one hand, each ethnographer examined the geographically and historically situated process by which women’s mobility grew, in a distinct arena (transportation or migration) and in a particular place (Tehran, Iran, or San Pedro, Mexico). In each case, the ethnographer conducted interviews, archival research, and participant observation. Then, to illuminate the unique features of each site as well as their analytical parallels, we put them into conversation across regions.

Through the interconnections between these cases, we trace a similar process: starting in the 1980s, economic liberalization pressured women of Tehran and San Pedro—like many across the world—to work, study, and consume. These practices threatened the boundaries of public and private that had once demarcated male and female, respectively. In response, while purportedly recurring to “tradition,” both Tehran and San Pedro re-drew the boundaries of masculinity and femininity. Rather than doing away with unequal gender regimes centered on female modesty or on a male–female division of labor, they extended these “traditional” gender divisions to new forms of mobility. Tehran did so by gender-segregating public space; San Pedro by excluding women from local political responsibilities and thus, de facto, turning them into migrant breadwinners. So doing, both these institutions and their constituents adapted local, gender-differentiated frameworks to accommodate new practices of movement.

We call these policies “patriarchal accommodations.” They were patriarchal, because they formally enshrined gender differences associated with male dominance. And, they were accommodations, because, pursuant to the demands of a global economy, they provided space for new forms of female mobility *within* existing standards of “appropriate” masculinity and femininity.

We argue that patriarchal accommodations facilitated women's increased presence as riders on Tehran buses and as emigrants from San Pedro to the United States. They did so because they made it possible for men and women to adapt to the shifting global political economy without violating a gender order that differentiated between them. Women favored these policies, because they could work, study, and consume—but also remain “proper” women. It is beyond the scope of this paper to evaluate whether, on balance, such policies harmed or benefited women. Rather, recognizing the ambivalent effects of gender differences, we focus on extending scholarly understanding of *how*—that is, by what mechanisms—the relationships between femininity, masculinity, and mobility get remade.

## Theories of Gender, Mobility, and State Institutions

This paper adds to a growing sociological literature on the forces that alter how women move, both in their day-to-day lives and across national borders. In the past two decades, as people have become increasingly mobile around the globe, scholars—particularly those in the “new mobilities” paradigm (Urry 2007; Uteng and Cresswell 2008)—have argued that mobility is a key arena of study. New forms of movement, they suggest, offer opportunities but also create new constraints; in both ways, they constitute modernity. Following new mobilities theorists Kevin Hannam, Mimi Sheller, and John Urry (2006), we define mobilities as “both the large scale movements of people, objects, capital, and information across the world, as well as the more local processes of daily transportation, movement through public space, and the travel of material things within everyday life” (1). Whereas studies of mobility have often focused on particular practices, leaders of the new mobilities school argue that it is crucial to make connections across different instances of human movement, in order to theorize the broader processes by which mobilities change (Sheller and Urry 2006). In response to such calls for more cross-practice analysis, we bring day-to-day urban movement and transnational migration into conversation, as two distinct—yet paradigmatic—instances of new ways women are in motion.

The intersection between mobility and gender is of particular interest, because greater levels of movement can represent a radical change in women's practices. As Uteng and Cresswell (2008) note, gender has historically been coded spatially, with masculinity being tied to public space and active movement while femininity has been marked as stationary or passive (Cresswell 2006; Ortner 1978). In many places and periods, public space has been depicted as dangerous to women and women's status tied to staying in

or close to the household (McDowell 1999; Walkowitz 1992; Wilson 1991). While acknowledging that the supposed public–private gender divide is ambiguous and that women have never been fully confined to the home (Berkovitch 1999; Pateman 1988, 1989), a long history of scholarship notes differences in the levels and forms of male and female mobility (see Hjorthol 2008 for references). Changes in practices of movement may redefine these gendered paradigms.

Still, scholars highlight that the implications of these changes are ambiguous and complex. A simplistic perspective links women's mobility to progress, freedom, or modernity. For instance, certain scholars suggest that mobility can be seen as an indicator of the "state of equality between men and women in society" (Hjorthol 2008, p. 206). Others, similarly, define mobility as a "capability" that enables women to participate in various aspects of social life (Kronlid 2009). Yet, feminist geographers (among others) have insisted on more nuance, showing that mobility is not necessarily empowering; rather, the expanded capacity to move in urban and transnational space may both empower women and constrain them (Pratt and Yeoh 2003; Silvey 2004). The effects of mobility may be similar to those of other social upheavals, such as war, global economic pressures, and political crises. Such processes often lead women to assume new roles. These new roles can give women new forms of power, but they can also make women more vulnerable. For example, we might look at the case of Mexico's Zapatista Movement, where women became members of a militant social movement in which they both gained new standing in their communities and became subject to outside attacks (Speed 2007). Given such ambiguities, this paper does not evaluate the *impact* of increasing public transportation (in Tehran) and migration (from San Pedro to Los Angeles). Instead, we focus on the *processes* by which changes in gendered mobilities come about, in the particular context of patriarchal local policies.

Early studies of how globalization changed gender relations focused on global economic restructuring, suggesting that women began to move about more as they faced new pressure to enter the low-wage workforce (Salzinger 2004), higher education (Carnoy and Rhoten 2000; Leathwood and Read 2009), migration (Donato et al. 2011), and the public sphere (Rinaldo 2008). As Kandiyoti (1988), Sassen (1988), Doumato and Posusney (2003), and others have shown, changes in the political economy reposition women vis-à-vis men by revaluing women's labor and providing them with new educational opportunities. Several scholars argue that these pressures give women more freedom and undermine patriarchy (Ehrenreich and Hochschild 2003; Ong 1987; Pyle and Ward 2003). One might assume that in sites such as Tehran and San Pedro, this global political economic pressure was paired with a

cultural dimension, as notions of “women’s rights” trumped local forms of patriarchy rooted in gender difference.

Here, we build on recent scholarship that has added nuance to these analyses, underscoring that both economic and cultural mechanisms of gender change are interrupted and ambiguous. For instance, recent studies of the spread of “women’s rights” have shown that global-level discourses do not replace local-level “culture” or traditions (Levitt and Merry 2009; Thayer 2010). Rather, while global economic pressure may draw women into the workforce and human rights institutions may press for gender egalitarianism, scholars like Sally Merry (2006) note, “There is also an active resistance to these human rights claims by elites who fear loss of power, states unwilling to have their activities exposed, and men who want to retain their authority over women” (38). The process by which gender relations shift relies on power-laden negotiations between local institutions and global economic and cultural pressures—ultimately resulting in the “vernacularization,” that is, translation and hybridization, of global norms (Levitt and Merry 2009; Osanloo 2009). We expand on such insights by examining how global economic pressures and patriarchal “traditions” interact in specific sites to produce new practices of movement.

In considering this process, we bring scholarship on mobility into dialogue with other work that has called attention to *women’s* investment in gender-differentiated practices and regimes. While we might presume that women favor gender egalitarianism, studies show that in fact, when faced with global economic pressure, not only men but also women sometimes embrace gender difference (Abu-Lughod 1990). In particular, women may intensify practices associated with tradition and modesty, such as wearing headscarves. They may do so for a variety of reasons. For one, as Saba Mahmood (2005) points out, women may be personally invested in practices that appear to subordinate them, such as piety and modesty. In other cases, they may defend gender differences in order to sustain the “patriarchal bargain”—that is, their worthiness of protection—or to gain new rights as they adopt new economic roles (Kandiyoti 1988; MacLeod 1992). While this paper does not examine *why* women defend such arrangements, it considers how their investment in gender-differentiated regimes may interact with global economic forces and state-level policies.

Specifically, we call attention to the role of apparently patriarchal state institutions in mediating between global economic pressures and gender-differentiated cultural practices, including those embraced by women themselves. As feminist geographers have noted (see Silvey 2004 for literature review), global economic changes are mediated by state institutions at the local, regional, and national levels. Such theorists have shown that “the” state is not inherently patriarchal but is, instead, constituted by a complex array of



differentiated institutions with conflicting messages about gender (Brown 1995; Haney 1996). Not only is the state theoretically and empirically complex, but its institutions are also dynamic, changing over time (Connell 1990). Thus, “the” state as a whole cannot be defined as patriarchal (or not). Nevertheless, for the purposes of this analysis, we consider particular policies and institutions as such, specifically Tehran’s Bus Organization and village-level assemblies in rural Mexico (cf. Brown 1995, p. 166).

We define “patriarchal” following Sylvia Walby (1989), Iris Young (2003), Raewyn Connell (1990), and Wendy Brown (1995), who argue that policies may be considered patriarchal when they mark men and women as different. They do this in three ways. First, they position the state as the protector of women (Brown 1995; Young 2003). Second, they exclude women from power (Connell 1990). Third, they reiterate, rather than reworking, the different (and subordinate) position of women (Brown 1995). We have chosen to study gender segregation in Tehran and the exclusion of women from politics in San Pedro, because the policies in these places were paradigmatically patriarchal, according to these definitions (see also Abu-Lughod 1987; Danielson and Eisenstadt 2009). We extend existing feminist theory by noting that the link between gender and mobility may change through patriarchal policies that extend gender difference to new arenas—“accommodating” economic pressures rather than strictly conserving “tradition.”

## Methodology

This paper uses a methodology we call “linked ethnographies.” This is distinct from “multi-sited ethnography,” in which scholars follow flows of things, people, and discourses across space (Marcus 1995) or “global ethnography,” in which scholars extend single cases “up” from local to global (Burawoy et al. 2000). Rather, linked ethnographies examine global processes horizontally, by considering how they take effect in different settings. We use grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967) to inductively understand the analytical parallels between cases. This is *not* a controlled comparison but a dialogue, in which each case is used to mark the other’s particularity in relation to a general process.

Linked ethnographies have several advantages. Collaboration makes it possible to “dig deep” into the historical and geographical nuances of each case, while also considering global interrelationships. That is, it lets both scholars “zoom in” and “zoom out.” Through linking, we begin to overcome the division of research into geographic regions (such as Middle East vs. Latin America) and analytical categories (such as transportation vs. migration) (Stacey 1999). Specifically, in keeping with the new mobilities paradigm, we conceptualized city transportation and migration as two instances and scales

whose parallels enable us to shed light on mobility more broadly (Cresswell 2006; Sheller and Urry 2006).

Linking ethnographies presents a set of challenges as well. Tension can emerge from each researcher's attempt to sustain the nuances and significance of her site while also seeking to move beyond its particularities. Though this tension is inevitable in any ethnographic research that attempts to extend out across time and space, it is more difficult with two ethnographers, who are each sensitive to the subtleties of their individual cases.

## Cases

While the examples of Tehran and San Pedro may seem radically different, ranging from urban to rural, Middle East to Latin America, by putting them into conversation we began to theorize the surprising similarities in the ways women gained mobility in the face of global economic pressures. On one hand, Tehran, the capital city of the Islamic Republic of Iran, is a metropolis of more than twelve million people (Bayat 2010). San Pedro, meanwhile, is a corn-farming village of two thousand people in Southern Mexico. Nevertheless, both were hard-hit in the 1980s and 1990s by neoliberal globalization: Tehran because of the Iran–Iraq War in the 1980s and subsequent market-oriented reforms, and San Pedro because of structural adjustment and North American economic integration.

Furthermore, the institutions we examine—that is, Tehran's bus system and San Pedro's local government—both instituted prime examples of patriarchal policies. Gender segregation is common in the Islamic Republic of Iran, where it covers a wide range of spaces, such as universities, parks, and beaches; we focus on busing in particular, because it was one of the first areas in which Tehran implemented gender segregation and because it affects women across different social classes.<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile, in San Pedro the community government is unusually patriarchal compared to other parts of Mexico—along with those of other, similar villages. As an indigenous community, San Pedro has the right to autonomous self-government. This gives the village the legal right to consider men the political representatives of their female relatives and exclude women from politics. We look at each of these institutions as unique illustrations of the convergence of patriarchal policy and economic globalization, rather than as representative of Iran or Mexico as a whole.

## Data Collection

In each site, our data include more than a year of participant observation, in-depth interviews, and archival research. Throughout our fieldwork, we

maintained regular contact via Skype and e-mail to discuss our findings. These virtual meetings helped us set aside our assumptions that women's mobility was tied to the *escape* from patriarchy and, instead, build theory from our observations. As we traced similar processes in distinct settings, each author gave the other an "outsider's" view.

In Tehran, Shahrokni conducted sixteen months of ethnographic research between 2009 and 2011. She rode three bus lines as a participant observer, one connecting the city North–South, one East–West, and one women-only route downtown. She rode each full bus route continuously during four different time slots over the course of a week: the 6:00 to 8:00 A.M. and 4:00 to 6:00 P.M. rush hours; the period from 11:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M., when most women do their grocery shopping; and the period from 10:00 P.M. to midnight. This allowed her to sample a diverse array of women riders across the city. While riding, Shahrokni initiated informal individual and group conversations with women to understand how and why they came to ride the buses and what role gender-segregated busing played in this decision. She also observed how women and men interacted in the segregated spaces and how they related to markers such as bars separating men's and women's sections of the bus. After each ride, she wrote field notes.

Second, Shahrokni conducted fifty-three informal and seventeen formal interviews with female passengers ranging from age eighteen to seventy-one, whom she recruited using convenience samples during her bus rides. Although the only women sampled were those who *did* ride the bus, their perspectives are the most important for illuminating the unexpected reasoning that drove women to take this action. The variety of bus times and routes helped Shahrokni select a cross-section of Tehranian women. Although it would have been interesting to interview men as well, because Shahrokni is female and bus space is segregated by gender, it would have been difficult for her to approach men and engage them in informal conversations. The final set of interviewees included four university students, eight housewives, one high school teacher, one retired nurse, one accountant, one domestic worker, and one graphic designer. Shahrokni met with these women in a location of the respondents' choice. The interviews lasted an average of one hour and were recorded. The questions asked about respondents' bus ride experiences, their reasons for riding the bus, factors facilitating or complicating their rides, and their memories of past bus ridership. For the respondents' protection, transcripts contain only pseudonyms and are kept in a secured place.

Finally, Shahrokni reviewed 453 newspaper clippings and government documents on gender segregation from 1979 to 2010 and interviewed twelve city and government officials (two in the bus organization, three city councilors,

two deputy mayors, four members of parliament, and one former governor of Tehran). These data allowed her to trace the shift from predominantly male to female bus ridership and the development of the state's gender-segregated busing policy. The archival study and interviews with bureaucrats showed the reorganization of public transportation in Tehran, illustrating how city officials had tried to regulate women's movements but also to accommodate their access to work, education, and consumption.

The biggest challenges of fieldwork for Shahrokni stemmed from "being native" (Kanuha 2000). Having grown up, studied, and worked in Iran, Shahrokni had intimate knowledge of her case study and access to sites and informants, yet her familiarity also made it harder for her to define "noteworthy data." She had to train herself to consciously "see" and record every incident during bus rides. Likewise, during interviews, Shahrokni had to be careful not to rely on her taken-for-granted understandings of respondents' statements and gestures. To address this problem, she transcribed interviews immediately, enabling her to highlight vagaries and improve her subsequent interviews. Finally, since interviewees' accounts were retrospective memories, Shahrokni checked for bias by triangulating among interviews and with archival data about the Islamic Republic's prior decades.

Meanwhile, in San Pedro, Andrews conducted ten months of participant observation, fifty-two interviews with key informants, a household survey, and archival research. Between 2009 and 2011, Andrews lived as a participant observer for five months in the sending community and five among migrants in Los Angeles. While living with villagers (and then migrants), she observed and took detailed field notes on the ways men and women talked about masculine and feminine roles in relation to political participation and migration, seeking to understand how the village's exclusion of women from local governance restructured gender roles.

Then, Andrews conducted fifty-two in-depth interviews. First, she interviewed ten male community leaders about the gender dimensions of political participation and how decisions were made to exclude or include women. Second, she interviewed forty-two male and female migrants and nonmigrants about how they understood women's and men's roles in politics and migration. Respondents ranged in age from twenty-two to sixty-five, with an average age around forty. Approximately sixty percent of respondents were women and forty percent were men. Half of the respondents had migrated to the United States, and half remained in the sending village. Each interview lasted one to two hours, in Spanish, in a location of the respondent's choice. On top of the formal interviews, Andrews spent several additional hours talking with respondents informally about their lives, work, and histories. Questions focused on how the policy of excluding women from

participating in the village government emerged and how it affected women as compared to men, as they considered whether to migrate to the United States. In particular, Andrews asked women in Los Angeles about why they came to emigrate.

In conjunction, Andrews conducted a random-sample household survey in San Pedro to illustrate how the gender composition of migration shifted over time. The survey sampled every third household in the village ( $n = 121$ ) and randomly selected a member age fifteen to sixty-five. It gathered data on the histories of 562 migrant family members, examining who migrated and when by gender. It also asked about each family's history of political participation. Finally, this survey provided contact information for family members in the United States, allowing Andrews to conduct a snowball survey of migrants from San Pedro in Los Angeles ( $n = 51$ ). While the latter was not random, it provided some indication of the experiences and perceptions of those who had left the village. To protect respondents' identities, all surveys and interviews were conducted confidentially, and pseudonyms were assigned during the recording of data. In addition, transcripts and demographic information were recorded in encrypted files.

There were several challenges in this part of the study. First, Andrews relied on retrospective accounts, and informants' historical memory could be one-sided or lapse, particularly after so many years. Using the whole community as a case—rather than individual informants—helped Andrews to triangulate male leaders' and female migrants' accounts across interviews, as well as to check self-reports against village-level documents. Second, because Andrews was examining migration, she had to trace both sides of a binational process, reestablishing herself in new field sites and seeking ties across borders. It was particularly difficult to forge relationships in the United States, where respondents' undocumented status made them particularly vulnerable. Andrews built trust in this case by getting to know family members in the hometown first, who helped connect her to relatives in the United States.

## Findings

We find that in Tehran and San Pedro, where women and men had a stake in gender difference, policies of gender-segregated transportation (Tehran), and women's exclusion from village government (San Pedro) opened space for women to practice new forms of mobility without directly defying gender norms. This section traces the historically situated processes by which global economic pressures combined with patriarchal accommodations to foster women's mobility.

## Tehran and Women's Growing Presence on Public Transportation

Since it began, the Islamic Republic of Iran has emphasized gender difference. Upon its establishment in 1979, the Islamic Republic sought to reconfigure, or in its words, "Islamize" what it considered the "Westoxicated" social order of the previous regime. Women were central to this project. The newly established state revoked laws in favor of women's (liberal) rights, such as the Family Protection Laws of 1967 and 1975 and instead emphasized the complementarity of the sexes and urged women's domesticity and family attachments, instead of work. Consequently, public space was framed as the domain of male breadwinners (Moghadam 1988), and women's presence in public was conditioned upon their donning the veil (Moallem 2005).

In the early 1980s, because of the crowding of public transportation, women's bus ridership was among the practices that the newly established state claimed undermined the "Islamic" public order. Although the Pahlavi regime (1925–1979), which preceded the Islamic Republic, was known for modernization, the beneficiaries were primarily middle and upper class (Moghadam 2003). As a result, the Pahlavis' modernization project produced an urbanism that lacked proper infrastructure for the expansion of public transportation (Ladier-Fouladi 2003). While women have been driving in Iran since the 1940s, car ownership was mostly limited to upper-class men. Thus, women, especially of the popular classes, had to rely on public transportation for their commutes. Once established, the Islamic Republic of Iran promised to improve and expand public services, including public transportation. Yet, because of the lack of infrastructure, population growth, and the influx of refugees from the Iran–Iraq war of 1980–1988—all worsened by U.S.-imposed economic sanctions on Iran—public buses were gravely overcrowded. People had to wait in long lines before they could get on a bus, and once on, they were, in the words of several interviewees, "sandwiched by other passengers." The buses looked like "sardine cans," recalled Jaleh, a sixty-eight-year-old retired nurse, and women felt like "sheep being herded into a small space" (*Zan-e Rooz*, November 17, 1984). The crowding allegedly made bus ridership an un-Islamic practice, since in Islam physical contact between unrelated men and women is *haram* (religiously forbidden).

To reinforce the "Islamic" public order, the Islamic Republic of Iran instituted gender segregation policies across the country. In Tehran, busing was one of the first targets, with segregation implemented by the United Bus Company of Tehran (UBCT). The UBCT announced that they had "resolved to implement the gender segregation plan inside the buses to respect the holy boundaries [between the two genders] and to promote appropriate Islamic

ethics" (*Zan-e Rooz*, December 23, 1991). To regulate women's movements in public, observe Islamic gender norms, and reduce women's contact with male bus-riders, the UBCT divided bus space into a smaller "women's section" at the back (one-third of the bus) and a more spacious "men's section" in front. The women's section started where the men's section ended. The border was made visible by a metal divider bar.

Meanwhile, in the 1980s and 1990s, downward economic pressure on Iranian families drove increasing numbers of women into the spaces of work, education, and consumption. First, Iran's war with Iraq from 1980 to 1988 compelled women to work. As tens of thousands of men were killed or disabled at war, the number of female-headed households rose. Women household heads were forced to do public tasks or earn income on their own, outside the home. Then, when the Iran–Iraq war ended in 1988, the government of then-President Rafsanjani (1989–1997) began to embrace free-market economic principles. Inspired by World Bank structural adjustment policies, Rafsanjani sought to integrate Iran into the global economy. His government drafted the First Development Plan (1989–1993), which, among other things, aimed at activating the industrial sector and partially privatizing some of the state organizations (Shaditalab 2005). The marriage between "Islamic fundamentalism and market fundamentalism" drove down male wages, leading to an increased demand for women's employment (Bahramitash 2003).

These policy shifts brought more women out into jobs and schools. As Kurzman (2008) indicates, from the 1980s to 1990s, women's labor force participation in Iran rose by a third, and, similar to patterns throughout the Middle East, women's share of public and service sector employment increased rapidly (though women continued to work at a lower rate than men). In 1976—three years prior to the establishment of the Islamic Republic—70 percent of Iranian women were "housewives." By 1996, this number had declined to 59 percent, suggesting that more women were now working (Shaditalab 2005). Also, economic development, state expansion, and oil wealth gave women greater access to education. By 2006, Iranian women outnumbered men both in secondary and tertiary education ("The Report on Women's Situation" 2006).

In this context, bus segregation operated as a patriarchal accommodation. On one hand, it extended gender difference; on the other, it provided the conditions for women, who were hesitant to ride "mixed" public transportation for religious or safety reasons, to adapt to these broader political and economic shifts. Most Iranian women—including both those who were religiously observant and those who were secular—welcomed the gender separation on buses. Often, religiously observant women worried about their



purity, and gender-segregated buses enabled them to observe religious norms that forbid male–female contact. Meanwhile, many secular women were concerned about a comfortable, harassment-free ride. For instance, in a 1981 letter to the editor of *Zan-e Rooz*, an Iranian women’s magazine, a secular woman named Parivash wrote, “As a woman I cannot bear the idea of standing in close physical contact with these men, brothers, or comrades.” She explained that men, whether “brothers” (Islamists) or “comrades” (secular leftists), continued to harass women on the buses, emphasizing that for her, discomfort had nothing to do with religious ethics (*Zan-e Rooz*, June 20, 1981).

Ironically, by providing a religiously appropriate and safe space for women in the public sphere, segregation facilitated their mobility across the city (see also Amir-Ebrahimi 2006). The separate bus space also removed the hassle of competition with men over space. While waiting for buses, riders had previously jostled for position rather than waiting in line. In a 2009 interview with Shahrokni, Zahra Nouri, one of the (female) deputy mayors of Tehran, reflected:

Under these circumstances, the gender segregation plan came as a blessing. Women have to make sure that their chador [full-body cloak] or headscarf is not falling off. Sometimes they carry a bag, a bunch of books, or their grocery shopping, or a child or even two. It is difficult to compete with men. So, even though the initial planners of gender segregation did not have this in mind, what I find significant is that with segregation women had to compete [only] with women, and *that* was a blessing!

The women’s section provided women with an area that they saw as not only religiously respectable but also safer and more comfortable. For instance, Masoomeh, a forty-three-year-old housewife, recounted, “Of course! It [gender segregation] not only made our commute possible but actually made it much easier. Who likes to be rubbed by men on a twenty-minute bus ride? Look what happens in [collective] taxis! When you sit in between two men in the back seat you constantly have to remind them not to lean over you, not to touch you!” Without men in their section, women could avoid being touched, both for personal safety and for religious purity.

Segregation not only made women feel more comfortable but also, as political economic pressures grew, enabled them to adapt to new demands. For example, Neda, a forty-year-old respondent who worked as a bank clerk, explained that her capacity to work relied on her mother’s ability to use public transit. Before bus segregation, Neda told Shahrokni, her mother, who rarely talked to men except, in Neda’s words, “the bakers and the grocers,



who are not strangers,” was confined within the house and only went out with her husband or in a relative’s car. Neda added, “My father is very strict. He had made it clear that he did not want to see my mother going out of the house alone. He used to tell us that the streets of Tehran are full of wolves. Men like himself, I suppose!” Nevertheless, Neda needed a job, and in order to work she needed her mother’s help in caring for her two small children. She said, “I’m married and have two children. I can’t afford childcare, so if my mother did not assist me in raising my kids, I probably would have had to quit my job and stay home.” The patriarchal accommodation of gender-segregation made it possible for women like Neda and her mother to feel comfortable and proper riding buses and for men like Neda’s father to permit this movement. Because Neda’s mother and father trust the gender-segregated buses, today, Neda rides one bus to her job at a downtown bank while her mother takes another bus to Neda’s home to help with childcare.

In other cases, as skyrocketing consumer prices put further pressure on families, the segregated buses made it possible for women to get to work. Ms. Bagheri, a widowed domestic worker, provides an example. She sat next to Shahrokni on the bus to downtown Tehran, holding on to her chador, and explained that she did not own a car and lived in a one-bedroom apartment in a poor neighborhood in Southeast Tehran with her daughter, who was in college studying literature, and her son, a mechanic. With prices rising due to U.S. and European sanctions, and tuition and fee increases as well, Ms. Bagheri needed to work more frequently to be able to keep her daughter in school. She explained, “I don’t want her to end up like me.” The expansion of the bus network and gender segregation gave Ms. Bagheri the ability to work more frequently and for longer hours. She got on different buses every day to reach the houses she had to clean. She told Shahrokni that before the bus network reached her neighborhood, she had to rely on her son to give her a ride to and from the houses where she worked. “But that was not convenient!” Ms. Bagheri insisted, “It was hard to arrange my plans with him. Now I am on my own. In the beginning neither of us, me and Ali [her son] liked the idea that I should travel alone. But I got used to it. Besides, the buses are populated most of the time. So there is nothing to worry about. I am here with other women, like you.” This gradual inclusion of women into the public spaces—albeit segregated—resulted not just from the shifts in political economy, but also—counterintuitively—from the state’s apparently exclusionary practices.

The consequences of the UBCT’s patriarchal accommodation were that by the mid-1990s far more women rode buses; furthermore, they developed a sense of entitlement to the women’s section, demanding even more segregated bus space. Bus segregation and women’s increasing presence in public

space fueled each other. Thanks to segregation, more women began riding buses. As they did, they demanded additional segregated bus space, and the UBCT expanded its gender segregation plan, extending women's sections to half of the bus, launching women-only buses, and hiring women bus drivers for the first time. In the 1990s, *Zan-e Rooz* magazines—where women had once complained about the unwarranted and illegitimate physical contact with men—were now filled with complaints about the quantity and quality of gender-segregated spaces allocated to them. For instance, in 1996, a female government employee wrote to the magazine: “When we [women] manage to get on the bus, we see men sitting in *our* sections. So, women, in a section that’s *theirs*, have to stand on their feet” (*Zan-e Rooz*, May 11, 1996). In this framing, men’s presence now represented a threat not to women’s purity or safety but rather to their sense of entitlement to the space. By the late 1990s, women were formulating men’s intrusion into the women’s section as a violation of “women’s rights.”

Discursively, segregation also enabled mobility to become viewed as “appropriately” feminine. Even official language shifted. Whereas in the early 1980s, the UBCT had framed gender-segregated busing as part of the state’s Islamization project, it later came to highlight the importance of women’s “rights” to separate, comfortable, safe, religiously pure space. For instance, in 2006, Ahmadi Bafandeh, then director of the UBCT, stated, “Unfortunately, a number of men do not respect women’s rights and, indifferent about the existing rules, create problems for women and other passengers by taking seats from the women’s section” (*Etemad*, December 17, 2006). Yet, these “rights” were not associated with reducing gender differences, as in the West, but instead with maintaining the separation between genders. By the 2000s, women’s presence in public spaces was no longer considered an interruption of the Islamic public order.

Perhaps inadvertently, gender segregation had contributed to the transformation of the gendered terms on which the initial plans were carried out. In a 2010 interview, one of the senior experts at the UBCT commented to Shahrokni that he felt the expansion of women’s urban mobility in recent decades was “remarkable.” While in previous decades women used buses mainly to move within their own neighborhoods, nowadays, he said, there was a “female flow” across the city. Nevertheless, though larger than before, this “female flow” still occurred within the contours of patriarchal policy.

### *San Pedro and the Feminization of Migration*

Meanwhile, in San Pedro, a patriarchal accommodation also facilitated the feminization of mobility, in this case, women’s emigration to Los Angeles.

Until the 1980s, women of San Pedro lacked mobility within and outside the village. While women did farmwork with their husbands at home, in order to leave the house alone, a woman was expected to seek her husband's or father's permission. In contrast to many other areas of Mexico where women played central roles in markets (Stephen 2005), in this case, men were the salesman who traveled from town to town to sell produce. For example, Grecia, who grew up in San Pedro in the 1960s, recalled, "In the past, the girls who got married—their mothers in law wouldn't let them leave the house, even to go to the store. They'd be locked in! . . . Only the men had freedom." If women did leave home without permission, they often faced abuse. For instance, Adelita remembered, "[My husband] went to bring the belt, and he said, 'Who gave you permission to step outside?' Because I had taken the onions and the chilies outside to wash them in the sun. . . . He just wanted me behind the door, in the corner, as if I were a crook, shut in." As a result, women rarely left the village at all, let alone on their own. Thus, early migration out of San Pedro was almost all male. The first period of U.S. migration from San Pedro was between 1942 and 1964, when the U.S. government's "Bracero" Program contracted male migrants to work in U.S. agriculture for forty-five-day stints. This recruitment marked San Pedro's early migration as masculine.

Meanwhile, women's relative confinement in the home was historically tied to political exclusion. As an indigenous community, San Pedro has the right to self-government under a law practiced since the colonial era and formally recognized in 1995 called *Usos y Costumbres* ("Ways and Customs"). The community is run by male citizens, who serve in public posts on a rotating basis, attend democratic decision-making assemblies, and provide labor for local public works. Despite universal suffrage in Mexico, this autonomy enables San Pedro, like 75 percent of indigenous communities in its home state of Oaxaca, to exclude women from voting, attending village assemblies, and/or serving in public offices (Danielson and Eisenstadt 2009; Velásquez 2004). Rather, such villages consider families as units, and male heads of household represent their wives and daughters in public affairs. In turn, indigenous communities face markedly high sex disparities in education and health, and the state of Oaxaca—primarily rural and indigenous—has Mexico's highest rate of domestic violence (Barrera-Bassols 2006).

San Pedro codified this patriarchal exclusion during the 1980s and 1990s. At that time, indigenous communities' rights to legal autonomy and the associated exclusion of women were contested in Mexico's Federal Congress, among different levels of state government, and by other indigenous communities such as the Zapatistas in the state of Chiapas (Speed 2007). Yet, leaders of San Pedro insisted on keeping the political sphere exclusively

male. Drawing on a logic some have characterized as “masculinist protection” (Young 2003), men explained that they represented their wives and daughters in the village government in order to protect their female relatives from the burden of political participation. For instance, Ricardo, a past president of San Pedro, said, “We cannot name women [to public posts] because they are our mothers. I would go to the village assembly on behalf of my daughters, but because it is a burden—not to deprive them of their rights.” Marking male and female domains as distinct, Tomás, San Pedro’s 2011 Secretary of Education, added, “Here, women have their own world. They are in the house; they’re with the animals, caring for the children. For example, if my wife came to the assembly, she would not know what to say. And she’s not interested. That’s not her area. . . . We respect women because they are busier.” Although the state government repeatedly sent mandates insisting that San Pedro include women, the village leaders demurred.

Meanwhile, many female respondents *also* endorsed this all-male political structure, preferring to remain outside of politics (cf. Worthen 2012). In Andrews’s 2011 surveys, more than 55 percent of female respondents in San Pedro said they preferred not to participate in village government. When Genaro, an NGO employee working in the village, proposed that the community include women in political meetings, women themselves rejected the idea. Genaro described, “The *women* said, ‘We don’t want to come to the assembly—obligation or right. Come here all day? No, better to let it be optional. . . . We’d rather not, because it’s too much time and too much work to come to the assemblies.’” Thus, several women *also* affirmed the complementary structure in which women cared for the home and men for civic affairs.

Nevertheless, political economic changes undermined men’s and women’s traditional positions. In 1982, Mexico defaulted on its debt, cutting real wages in half. In response, the International Monetary Fund began structural adjustment, pushing the Mexican government to roll back agricultural subsidies and privatize land. Then, in 1994, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) terminated corn subsidies and flooded the market with cheap U.S. corn. This debilitated San Pedro and other subsistence corn-farming communities, fostering a rapid decline in farm incomes (Barkin 2003). Families needed new wages in order to subsist, so both men and women began leaving to seek work in the United States.

Around this time, the U.S. service and garment sectors also provided growing opportunities for women. In Los Angeles, the primary destination for U.S. migrants from San Pedro, factory and service jobs increasingly sought out female migrants. Respondents in Los Angeles—sixty percent of whom worked in housekeeping and thirty-five percent in garment factories—recalled seeing ads that specifically recruited women (“*se busca muchachas*”). These factors

helped draw women out of the village. Raquel, a San Pedro woman who came to the United States in 1982 at the age of fifteen, remembered, “My mother told me, ‘You know what? If these girls [other migrants from San Pedro] went to the United States and they’re telling you they work sewing jeans and there are people sewing on buttons.’ . . . Well, having no idea of the reality, she [my mother] said, ‘Sewing buttons is nothing you can’t do.’” Changes in the political economy of low-wage labor in the United States were necessary to shift the gender dimensions of migration, but they were not sufficient. Given San Pedro’s tradition of male migration and its history of confining women to the home, we must explain how women came to dominate its migration stream.

The case of San Pedro is particularly confounding given the gender patterns of migration in other parts of Mexico. In the majority of Mexican migrant communities, which faced comparable economic “push” and “pull” factors in this period, migration remained predominantly male (Massey et al. 1987; Goldring 2001). Women who did migrate typically came after—or as dependents of—husbands or fathers (Cerrutti and Massey 2001). Furthermore, while prevailing theories suggest that women tend to migrate from the *least* patriarchal hometowns (Massey, Fischer, and Capoferro 2006), San Pedro’s highly feminized stream came from one of the *most* gender-unequal areas of Mexico.

We argue that what distinguished San Pedro and pushed the feminization of its migration stream was its patriarchal accommodation. In the 1980s and 1990s, as growing numbers of people from San Pedro left for the United States, ever fewer men remained to staff the village government. Other communities adapted by integrating women into civic affairs, where the women substituted for absent male migrants (Kearney and Besserer 2004). In those cases, men maintained their breadwinner roles, but they forsook their dominion in village governance. There, while masculinity remained associated with mobility, it became delinked from political status. In contrast, San Pedro insisted that the political sphere remain men’s domain. Rather than integrating women into civic affairs as substitutes for men, village leaders demanded men’s participation. If male migrants did not return home when they were called to staff the village government—or pay a male substitute—the community fined them or cut off the water and electricity in the houses they left behind. In extreme cases, migrant men faced expulsion from the community and lost their rights to land or belonging there. Yet, because women had neither rights nor obligations in village politics, female migrants were exempt from such sanctions.

This local patriarchal policy made the cost of migrating higher for men than for women and set the stage for women to leave. Though men had previously been sent to the U.S. as breadwinners, many male respondents told

Andrews that the new community sanctions affected them especially heavily. For instance, twenty-eight-year-old José explained that although he had gone to the United States short-term, he quickly returned. He had been named village policeman and, given the low wages he earned in Los Angeles, he had no way to pay the US\$4,000 required to hire a substitute. Like most male respondents, he insisted, “It [migrating] is a big burden, a big burden.”

Women, however, had no political responsibilities; therefore, they faced no sanctions and could migrate without violating their duties to the community. Graciela, a fifty-eight-year-old respondent living in Los Angeles who had been one of San Pedro’s first female migrants to establish herself in the United States, later finding jobs for other women and encouraging them to follow, explained, “Men have more obligations [in the village government] than us women . . . in *Usos y Costumbres*, it’s the man who has to do community service and all the hard labor . . . so we [migrants] were more women than men.” When she was thirteen, Graciela recalled, her parents stayed in the village and sent her to work in the United States, hoping that she would make fast money in housekeeping. Because men had to do community service, women like Graciela were more “free” to migrate than their fathers and brothers, enabling them to pursue jobs in Los Angeles and help support their families back home.

Maintaining politics as a male domain allowed men to adapt to the feminization of work and migration, by framing migrant labor as a complement to male participation in the village government—a gendered division of tasks. For example, Ronaldo explained that when the village named him as community land secretary, the responsibility of breadwinning fell to his wife, “When I started to have to serve in public posts, I said to my wife, learn to sew blouses. That’s how she started to sell, sell, sell—to support us. Because who is going to pay when we [men] do civil service, and I had to serve in a lot of full-time public posts.” Despite the fact that their daughters remained excluded from politics, parents also came to rely on their daughters for economic support sent back in the form of remittances. The effect was that young women, most of them unmarried, began to move to Los Angeles in increasing numbers, establishing the community’s first hometown association there and bringing their sisters, female cousins, and friends. By the early 1990s, women represented more than fifty percent of San Pedro’s migrants to the United States.

In conjunction, the terms on which community members talked about migration also shifted discursively, from masculine to feminine. Until the 1980s, migration had been associated with male heads of household, and it had been considered natural and appropriate for women to stay home. Yet, because of San Pedro’s insistence on all-male politics, the village began to

accommodate female mobility and breadwinning into the definition of femininity. For instance, in Andrews's ethnographic observations, community leaders disparaged the masculinity of migrant men, calling them lazy and effeminate because they had failed to fulfill the political duties that defined manhood in San Pedro. Many said things like, "In Los Angeles, men are no longer men." Others added, "The United States is good for women."

Women of San Pedro who did migrate to Los Angeles began to find jobs in garment factories and housekeeping, where they worked long hours, were paid minimum wage or less, and often faced wage theft and other labor abuses. On the other hand, as ever more relatives arrived in the U.S., women built up a community in Los Angeles, and fewer than ten percent of female migrants returned to live in San Pedro after migrating to the United States. Many, like thirty-two-year-old Estrella, reflected, "In the United States, I feel like a bird with wings; I spread my wings and I'm free—to go out!" Meanwhile, back home, women in the village remained excluded from politics, rates of domestic abuse were higher than elsewhere in Mexico, and as of 2011 the majority of women continued to have to ask permission to leave the house. Nevertheless, parents and relatives recognized the need for remittances from their female relatives, shifting the links between femininity, income, and movement to the United States.

## Conclusion

This paper set out to explain what seemed to be a paradoxical outcome: the rapid feminization of mobility in conjunction with the reinforcement of patriarchal policies. Specifically, we examined two cases, both facing strong global economic pressure for women to work, study, and consume: urban Tehran, Iran, where transportation was gender-segregated, and rural San Pedro, Mexico, where women were excluded from village politics. We conducted our analysis using collaborative, linked ethnographies, seeking to bridge the gaps between regional studies and shorten the theoretical distance between considerations of different forms of mobility. This allowed us to see shared analytical strains in relation to global economic shifts and pressures, as well as to note the particularities of each case.

We began from the observation that despite their disparate political geographies and the different nature of daily transportation and migration, both Tehran and San Pedro saw marked shifts in women's mobility in the 1980s and 1990s. In both cases, a higher percentage of those moving across urban and transnational space were women, and women moved more frequently than they had before. Also, the association between femininity and domesticity was interrupted, as was the link between masculinity and mobility. There



was a shift from gender orders characterized by women's confinement inside the home to new ones characterized by women's public movement.

Whereas some literature might attribute these changes to women's new economic positions, we argue that in these cases, in the face of global economic pressure, seemingly "reactive" patriarchal policies played an important role in facilitating women's access to employment, education, and consumption. We call these policies patriarchal accommodations. They were "accommodations," first, because they responded to men's and women's ongoing investment in gender differences. Tehran helped decouple femininity and domesticity by actively creating and providing new gender-segregated transportation that allowed for more mobile femininity. This enabled women to ride buses without threatening either their feminine status or the masculinity of men. San Pedro, meanwhile, enabled female mobility in a somewhat different way: by default. Community members on the Mexican side refused to incorporate women into village assemblies and political participation. Yet, the village continued to be squeezed economically. Thus, with men absorbed in politics, women had to migrate for work. As a result, migrants became predominantly female, and the social status of migrants got degraded—disparagingly labeled feminine. To understand the surprising effects of such policies, we must consider that both men and women may be committed to sustaining gender differences, albeit in new and different forms.

Second, these policies can also be considered accommodations on the part of the state. In each case, a local institution used patriarchal policies to adapt to global economic pressure without losing the gendered basis of its particular identity (Kandiyoti 2004; Moallem 2005). In Iran, in the context of the eight-year war with Iraq (1980–1988) and crippling U.S.-led economic sanctions, the state needed women to become educated and work to sustain the economy. Yet, the Iranian state also relied on the public separation of men and women to exhibit its Islamic character—as in Tehran's bus system. Likewise, as San Pedro faced economic restructuring, North American economic integration, and the plunge in Mexican corn prices, the village needed migrant remittances in order to survive. Nevertheless, its identity as an autonomous, indigenous community relied on the political participation of all adult men. Relinking masculine status to village politics helped sustain San Pedro's participatory system of governance and its gender complementarity while also shifting women into new roles as migrants and breadwinners. As we have shown, not all gender-differentiated institutions—or even parts of a given state, for that matter—employ the same accommodations. Nevertheless, across locales, multiple state institutions adapt to global economic changes by *reconstructing* gender distinctions.



Patriarchal accommodations set the conditions for women to move more outside the home because they incorporated mobility into ongoing gender distinctions. The global political economy undermined previous male breadwinner incomes and opened up new jobs, educational opportunities, and consumption prospects to women. Yet, because people in each site continued to be invested in gender difference, patriarchal policies facilitated women's entry into such roles. In turn, women's new practices of mobility also altered the meaning of gender itself, altering local discourses about what was "natural" for women and the spatial dynamics of women's presence in the public sphere. New labels began to link femininity to mobility—in both positive and derogatory ways. If the initial phase of bus segregation in Tehran reflected a male-dominated public space, its secondary phase gradually began to mark the same space as feminine, giving women the feeling that they had a "right" to separate spaces on the bus. In San Pedro, women became a majority of migrants, but migration itself also got dismissed as "female."

The effects of patriarchal accommodations are not straightforwardly "positive" or "negative" for women. Just as the processes that lead to a feminization of mobility reflected the local context of Iranian and Mexican patriarchal policies, the implications of these shifts should also be understood in context. In some ways, these policies offered a means for local states to extend and deepen their control, regulating women's movements in Tehran and perpetuating their exclusion from political voice in San Pedro. Given that mobility emerged through this *extension* of male–female differences, it seems unlikely to increase gender equality. However, in other ways women's mobility gave them new capabilities, ranges of movement, and access to public spaces. Over time, women's new income and remittances may have also offered them greater leverage within families. Such speculative effects, while beyond the scope of this paper, would be interesting for further study. Still, we would caution that even if women do gain autonomy from their husbands and other male counterparts through this process, global political and economic changes can also shift the locus and scale of male domination. Further study might fruitfully trace how.

For now, we simply call on scholars to think more carefully about the mechanisms through which global forces interact with local states and institutions to reshape gender relationships. We highlight that in assessing how such changes come about, scholars should consider how patriarchal policies may unexpectedly open doors, especially when both state institutions and their members are invested in gender difference. Finally, we underscore that even when mobility offers women new capabilities, these capabilities themselves may be enabled by—and may even further extend—gender differences.

## Authors' Notes

1. The two authors of this article are equal coauthors.
2. All translations were done by the authors: from Spanish by Abigail Andrews and from Farsi by Nazanin Shahrokni.

## Acknowledgments

We would like to acknowledge the respondents in San Pedro and Tehran for their generous collaboration. Thanks, also, to Michael Burawoy, Jennifer Carlson, Kimberly Hoang, Norma Moruzzi, Leslie Salzinger, the Sociology of Gender at Berkeley workshop, and the Perverse Politics group at the Social Science History Association for insightful feedback on this paper. During the review process, Xavier Escandell, Maria Tapias, Takeyuki Tsuda and three anonymous reviewers also provided helpful suggestions. Finally, a special thank you to Raka Ray for inspiring such dynamic collaboration.

## Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

## Funding

The author(s) disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article: Funding for this research was provided by the Al-Falah Program in Islamic Studies; the American Association of University Women; the American Council of Learned Societies; the National Science Foundation; Phi Beta Kappa; the UC Berkeley Centers for Latin American Studies, Middle Eastern Studies, Race and Gender, and Right-Wing Studies; the UC Berkeley Sociology Department; the University of California Institute for Mexico and the United States; and the Woodrow Wilson Dissertation Fellowship in Women's Studies.

## Notes

1. We use quotation marks around the word *tradition* to denote our skepticism about "traditional" gender order and highlight that the concept of tradition may be used to legitimate gender-differentiated regimes.
2. In Tehran, because of lack of parking and the fact that buses travel in separate, faster lanes, many elites even prefer public transportation to personal cars.

## References

- Abu-Lughod, Janet. 1987. "The Islamic City- Historic Myth, Islamic Essence, and Contemporary Relevance." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 19:155-76.
- Abu-Lughod, Lila. 1990. "The Romance of Resistance: Tracing Transformations of Power through Bedouin Women." *American Ethnologist* 17.1 (Feb): 41-55.

- Amir-Ebrahimi, Masserat. 2006. "Conquering Enclosed Public Spaces." *Cities* 23:455–61.
- Bahramitash, Roksana. 2003. "Islamic Fundamentalism and Women's Economic Role: The Case of Iran." *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 16:551–68.
- Barkin, David. 2003. "The Reconstruction of a Modern Mexican Peasantry." *Journal of Peasant Studies* 30:73–90.
- Barrera Bassols, Dalia. 2006. "Indigenous Women in the Representation System for Elective Posts: The Case of Oaxaca." *Agricultura, Sociedad y Desarrollo*, January:19–37.
- Bayat, Asef. 2010. "Tehran: Paradox City." *New Left Review* 66:99–122.
- Berkovitch, Nitzza. 1999. *From Motherhood to Citizenship: Women's Rights and International Organizations*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Brown, Wendy. 1995. "Finding the Man in the State." In *States of Injury: Power and Freedom in Late Modernity*, 166–96. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Burawoy Michael, Joseph A. Blum, Sheba George, Millie Thayer, Zsuzsa Gille, Teresa Gowan, Lynne Haney, Maren Klawiter, Steve H. Lopez, and Sean Riain. 2000. *Global Ethnography: Forces, Connections, and Imaginations in a Postmodern World*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Carnoy, Martin, and Diana Rhoten. 2000. "What Does Globalization Mean for Educational Change? A Comparative Approach." *Comparative Education Review* 46.1:1–9.
- Cerrutti, Marcela, and Douglas Massey. 2001. "Migration and Its Consequences: On the Auspices of Female Migration from Mexico to the United States." *Demography* 38:187–200.
- Connell, Raewyn. 1990. "The State, Gender and Sexual Politics: Theory and Appraisal." *Theory and Society* 19 (5): 507–44.
- Cresswell, Tim. 2006. *On the Move: Mobility in the Modern Western World*. New York: Routledge.
- Danielson, Michael S., and Todd A. Eisenstadt. 2009. "Walking Together, But in Which Direction? Gender Discrimination and Multicultural Practices in Oaxaca, Mexico." *Politics and Gender* 5:153–84.
- Donato, Katherine, Joseph T. Alexander, Donna R. Gabaccia, and Johanna Leinonen. 2011. "Variations in the Gender Composition of Immigrant Populations: How They Matter." *International Migration Review* 45:495–526.
- Doumato, Eleanor Abdella, and Marsha Pripstein Posusney, eds. 2003. *Women and Globalization in the Arab Middle East: Gender, Economy, and Society*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.
- Ehrenreich, Barbara, and Arlie Hochschild, eds. 2003. *Global Woman: Nannies, Maids, and Sex Workers in the New Economy*. New York: Henry Holt.
- Glaser, Barney G., and Anselm L. Strauss. 1967. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. Chicago: Aldine.
- Goldring, Luin. 2001. "The Gender and Geography of Citizenship in Mexico-U.S. Transnational Spaces." *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* 7 (4): 501–37.

- Haney, Lynne. 1996. "Homeboys, Babies, Men in Suits: The State and the Reproduction of Male Dominance." *American Sociological Review* 61 (5): 759–78.
- Hannam, Kevin, Mimi Sheller, and John Urry. 2006. "Editorial: Mobilities, Immobilities and Moorings." *Mobilities* 1 (1): 1–22.
- Hjorthol, Randi. 2008. "Daily Mobility of Men and Women: A Barometer of Gender Equality?" In *Gendered Mobilities*, edited by Tanu Priya Uteng and Tim Cresswell. Burlington, VT: Ashgate.
- Kandiyoti, Deniz. 1988. "Bargaining with Patriarchy." *Gender & Society* 2:274–90.
- Kandiyoti, Deniz. 2004. "Identity and Its Discontents: Women and the Nation." *Women Living Under Muslim Laws Dossier* 26:45–58.
- Kanuha, Valli. 2000. "'Being' Native versus 'Going' Native: Conducting Social Work Research as an Insider." *Social Work* 45 (5):439–47.
- Kearney, Michael, and Federico Besserer. 2004. "Oaxacan Municipal Governance in Transnational Context." In *Indigenous Mexican Migrants in the United States*, edited by Jonathan Fox and Gaspar Rivera-Salgado, 483–94. La Jolla: Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, University of California San Diego.
- Kronlid, David. 2009. "Mobility as Capability." In *Gendered Mobilities*, edited by Tanu Priya Uteng and Tim Cresswell, 15–34. Burlington, VT: Ashgate.
- Kurzman, Charles. 2008. "A Feminist Generation in Iran?" *Iranian Studies* 41:297–321.
- Ladier-Fouladi, Marie. 2003. *Population et Politique en Iran, de la Monarchie à la République Islamique*. Paris: Institut National d'Etudes Demographiques.
- Leathwood, and Read. 2009. *Gender and the Changing Face of Higher Education: A Feminized Future?* New York: Open University Press.
- Levitt, Peggy, and Sally Merry. 2009. "Vernacularization on the Ground: Local Uses of Global Women's Rights in Peru, China, India and the United States." *Global Networks* 9 (4): 441–61.
- MacLeod, Arlene E. 1992. "Hegemonic Relations and Gender Resistance: The New Veiling as Accommodating Protest in Cairo." *Signs* 17:533–57.
- Mahmood, Saba. 2005. *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Marcus, George E. 1995. "Ethnography in/of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-Sited Ethnography." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24:95–117.
- Massey, Douglas, Rafael Alarcon, Jorge Durand, and Roberto González. 1987. *Return to Aztlan: The Social Process of International Migration from Western Mexico*. University Of California Press.
- Massey, Douglas, Mary Fischer, and Chiara Capoferro. 2006. "International Migration and Gender in Latin America: A Comparative Analysis." *International Migration Review* 44 (5): 63–91.
- McDowell, Linda. 1999. *Gender, Identity and Place: Understanding Feminist Geographies*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Merry, Sally Engle. 2006. "Transnational Human Rights and Local Activism: Mapping the Middle." *American Anthropologist* 108:38–50.
- Moallem, Minoo. 2005. *Between Warrior Brother and Veiled Sister: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Politics of Patriarchy in Iran*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

- Moghadam, Valentine. 1988. "Women, Work, and Ideology in the Islamic Republic." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 20 (2): 221–43.
- Moghadam, Valentine. 2003. *Modernizing Women: Gender and Social Change in the Middle East*. New York: Lynne Rienner.
- Ong, Aihwa. 1987. *Spirits of Resistance and Capitalist Discipline: Factory Women in Malaysia*. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Ortner, Sherry. 1978. "The Virgin and the State." *Feminist Studies* 4:19–36.
- Osanloo, Arzoo. 2009. *The Politics of Women's Rights in Iran*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Pateman, Carole. 1988. *The Sexual Contract*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Pateman, Carole. 1989. "Feminist Critiques of the Public/Private Dichotomy." In *The Disorder of Women*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Pratt, Geraldine, and Brenda Yeoh. 2003. "Transnational (Counter) Topographies." *Gender, Place and Culture* 10 (2): 159–66.
- Pyle, Jean L., and Kathryn B. Ward. 2003. "Recasting Our Understanding of Gender and Work during Global Restructuring." *International Sociology* 18:461–89.
- Rinaldo, Rachel. 2008. "Envisioning the Nation: Women Activists, Religion, and the Public Sphere in Indonesia." *Social Forces* 86:1781–804.
- Salzinger, Leslie. 2004. "From Gender as Object to Gender as Verb: Rethinking How Global Restructuring Happens." *Critical Sociology* 30:143–62.
- Sassen, Saskia. 1988. *The Mobility of Labor and Capital: A Study in International Investment and Labor Flow*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Shaditalab, Jaleh. 2005. "Iranian Women: Rising Expectations." *Critique* 14.1:35–55.
- Sheller, Mimi, and John Urry. 2006. "The New Mobilities Paradigm." *Environment and Planning* 38.2:207–26.
- Silvey, Rachel. 2004. "Power, Difference, and Mobility: Feminist Advances in Migration Studies." *Progress in Human Geography* 28:490–506.
- Speed, Shannon. 2007. *Rights in Rebellion: Indigenous Struggle and Human Rights in Chiapas*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Stacey, Judith. 1999. "Ethnography Confronts the Global Village: A New Home for a New Century?" *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 28.6:687–97.
- Stephen, Lynn. 2005. *Zapotec Women: Gender, Class and Ethnicity in Globalized Oaxaca*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Thayer, Millie. 2010. *Making Transnational Feminism: Rural Women, NGO Activists, and Northern Donors in Brazil*. New York: Routledge.
- The Report on Women's Situation between 1976 and 1996*. 2006. Tehran, Iran: Presidential Center for Women's and Family Affairs.
- Urry, John. 2007. *Mobilities*. Cambridge, MA: Polity Press.
- Uteng, Tanu Priya, and Tim Cresswell. 2008. *Gendered Mobilities*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate.
- Velásquez, Maria Cristina. 2004. "Migrant Communities, Gender, and Political Power in Oaxaca." In *Indigenous Mexican Migrants in the United States*, edited by J. Fox and G. Rivera-Salgado, 483–94. La Jolla: Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies UC San Diego.

- Walby, Sylvia. 1989. "Theorizing Patriarchy." *Sociology* 23.2:213–34.
- Walkowitz, Judith. 1992. *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Wilson, Elizabeth. 1991. *The Sphinx in the City: Urban Life, the Control of Disorder, and Women*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Worthen, Holly. 2012. Mexico's "New" Rural Women: Gendered Labor and Formulations of Rural Citizenship. PhD Dissertation, Geography, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
- Young, Iron M. 2003. "The Logic of Masculinist Protection: Reflections on Current Security State." *Signs* 29.1:1–25.

### Author Biographies

**Abigail Andrews** is PhD candidate in Sociology at the University of California, Berkeley and will be an Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of California, San Diego starting in 2014. Her work focuses on the relationship between development, migration, and gender in the U.S. and Latin America, with a particular focus on power, politics, and state practices. She can be reached at [abigailandrews@berkeley.edu](mailto:abigailandrews@berkeley.edu).

**Nazanin Shahrokni** is an academy scholar in the Harvard Academy for International and Area Studies, having earned her PhD in Sociology at the University of California, Berkeley in 2013. She studies Post-revolutionary Iran, state formation processes, spatial politics, gender segregation, gender and mobility, and the global surge in women-only public transportation. She can be reached at [nshahrokni@wcfia.harvard.edu](mailto:nshahrokni@wcfia.harvard.edu).