

IDEOLOGICAL MIS-DIRECTION: IRANIAN LOW INCOME HOUSING POLICY OR SURFING PLEBIAN EMOTIONS

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Abstract

This paper will explore social housing policy in Iran and attempt to illuminate the ideology underlying and facilitating these policies and the consequences that they induce. Ideology is as an essential and universal essence, it constitutes a society's social reality (Žižek 2008). Any dominant ideology produces a series of fantasies that partially shapes the way its members contextualize knowledge, the economy, society, and obviously planning (Gunder, 2010). For instance, the egalitarian creeds underlying social housing are imbedded in a fantasy promise of addressing a deficiency, such as “better life for low income groups” or “the right of people to possess housing commensurate with their needs”, which also appears in constitutional laws, rules and policies of the state. Yet, this paper contends, following Gunder and Hillier (2009), that these policies and laws tend not only to, fail to achieve success, but also to often ignore and obscure other humanistic needs and democratic demands. In this vein, the attractiveness of housing and its related land policies make housing one of the most effective tool of popular domination (Laclau, 2005). Accordingly, governmental housing policy is often one of the most important tools for the manipulation of mass movements. This paper attempts to demonstrate, in an Iranian context, three main issues: first, the fact that housing policies based on the promise of egalitarian achievement can act as a hindrance to citizen rights and democratic demands. Second, housing policy can act as a political tool, which reproduces the dominant ideology, and third, as technocrats, planners facilitate the use of these populist and ideologically inducing policies.

In more democratic and modern societies, the function of planning is a complementary to the market; however, in a non-democratic, reactionary and dictatorial populist system, the role of planning changes to become the actual distributor of public goods and services; this is sometimes at odds with democratic demand. In the shadow of this egalitarian rhetoric, populist policies are used to create the mass movements of government support and to legitimize decisions that have been made. The paper will demonstrate that the consequences of these policies are that over the thirty year period of the current Iranian regime, a consolidation of capital has occurred drawing accumulation from the wealthy and middle classes to the central government. This has hindered private investment in housing and the pertinent related industries, further increasing dependency on, and support for the current regime by the masses. In this regard, the policy inherently impedes the

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formation of social and economic market mechanisms to meet the needs of the populace and further reinforces dependence on, and support for the regime.

1-Introduction

This paper argues that a dominant ideology frames all of our ideals and ideas. Ideology identifies our action as planners. It discusses how ideological creeds structure society's norms, ideals, expectations, and finally, policies and planning. Based on Althusserian's understanding of ideology, ideology encompasses all aspects of our social life. It includes 'more or less all unconscious medium of habitual behaviors' (Payne & Barbera, 2010, p. 340). It can be considered in planning as well, Gunder (2010) contends that planning always has an ideological component which largely reflects the dominant ideology of the time. He emphasizes that, in the current world, this ideology is causing the evolution of capitalist market. In fact, it is not only capitalism but also every hegemonic ideology that can drive the mechanism of society and planning.

However, Yates (cited in Allmendinger & Gunder, 2005) mentioned that 'environment of policy making and the character of urban problems determine the shape of urban policy'. Based on Foucault's works (1979b, 1992, 2002, 2008), this paper argues that power and power relations determine both the environment of policy and the character of urban problems. Dominant power and hegemonic ideology are the different names for the same mechanism (Carpentier, 2011). Hegemonic ideology may be seen as having core concepts and peripheral concepts; the importance of concepts has changed over time. At times, some concepts are borrowed from other ideologies to provide the aims of power (Freedon, 2003). Therefore, power, through a hegemonic ideology in a specific space and time, identifies and codifies everything. Where are the planner and the planning in this hegemonic ideology? As Gunder (1999, 2010) stated, planners work for the desire of the Other (power). The desire of the big Other (power) appears in the form of laws, policies and planning. Actually, planning and policies provide the best tools for power according to the modern interpretation of power that is the state or bureaucratic government. Specifically, planning in less democratic mechanisms has provided better apparatuses to legitimize power or dominant ideology.

One of the oldest questions in politics is how those in power are able to maintain their rule over those they oppress. According to many political theories, there are four ways for power to reproduce itself (Hume & Hendel, 1953; Machiavelli, 1961). The first is through charismatic power, which uses rhetorical speech, promises and discourses to attract people and masses. The second is providing for people's needs; dependent people accept oppression more easily than those who are independent. The third way is through populist policies that include emotive slogans such as, "we give people whatever they want". Finally, the traditional and easiest way for power to be reproduced is through the military, the police force, and by the use of threats to the populace. As Foucault (1979a) stated, in the modern world, the punishment of the body has changed to more modern methods and mechanisms such as: policies, fines

and the use of media. Indeed, the forces of power may be using more than one of these tools at the same time.

This paper deploys a Lacanian approach to explain how housing policy, as one of power's (Other) apparatus – repressive government – is used to reproduce and sustain the dominant ideology and to oppress demands for civilization rights. This paper analyses public housing, or low-income housing policy based on Islamic egalitarian ideology and populist interpretations of it in Iran. The main concern is a particular type of public housing 'Maskan Mehr'. These recent policies have reverted to the first years of the revolution. The policies have a radical, Islamic approach, egalitarian and anti-elitism ideologies determine all policies and decisions. The paper will try to explain how these ideologies, as fantasy, encompass all reality and how planners as agents of power work to shape this fantasy for all society.

In this regard, I try to answer four questions:

- How does a dominant ideology shape and encircle policies in planning?
- What is the role of the actors, including planners, and who affected by these policies?
- What are the populist policies?
- What are the functions and consequences of these policies?

2- Dominant ideology and planning

Ideology... is indispensable in any society if men are to be formed, transformed and equipped to respond to the demands of their conditions of existence.
(Althusser cited in Eagleton, 2007, p. 150)

According to McLellan (1986) ideology is the most elusive and very essential contested concept in social science. As Žižek (2008) implied that the very elementary definition of ideology goes back to Marx. Orthodox Marxism believed that ruling class-interests determine and justify ideology; consequently, ideology, as a dominant ideology, integrates superstructures (law, political systems, religion). Orthodox Marxism denotes negative meanings in ideology such as misrecognition, distorted representation, false consciousness, commodity fetishism. Marx's (1946) famous quotation describes his concept of ideology: "They don't know it, but they are doing it." Therefore, ideology is merely presented as an epiphenomenal illusion to be dispelled by positive science. Later, Marxism is criticized because it conceives that the human mind spontaneously misrepresents the external objects presented to sense experience. Althusser elaborated the notion of ideology, which Marx had initiated and Gramsci had developed. However, he was greatly influenced by Lacan (Gunder, 2010). In fact, an articulation between Marxism and psychoanalysis provided a materialist account of how subjects were constituted in, and by, Ideology. In relation to this, Lacan with Althusser and Foucault made a triple alliance, the common denominator being their theoretical anti-humanism (Payne & Barbera, 2010). Namely, anti-humanism rejects autonomous subjects. Humans should not be

considered as individuals. The human as a subject is a part of a chain, the chain of society. Althusser believed that there would no 'end of ideology'. 'Ideology would persist, both because of the ineliminable opacity of the deep structures of any conceivable Social formation and because human beings were not the rational animals of pre-Freudian liberal humanism. (Payne & Barbera, 2010, p. 343)'.

As mentioned, oppressors cannot rule those they oppress merely by force, body punishment and the power of the police. Power cannot use police or army members to easily control a large population that unequivocally desires a change of regime. 'Oppression can only be sustained if a substantial number of the oppressed come to hold beliefs that their oppressors' rule are legitimate (Hume & Hendel, 1953, p. 18)'. Where does such this legitimation come from? How and from where power gains its legitimation. Althusser introduced a distinction between the repressive state apparatus (RSA) and ideological state apparatuses (ISAs). These two categories developed Gramsci's differentiation between coercion and consent. 'Whereas the RSA operates by force, the ISAs- the family, schools, the mass media, etc. - function to reproduce existing relations of production by subjecting social classes to the dominant ideology (Payne & Barbera, 2010, p. 345)'. The fact is that, ideological state apparatuses configure our unconscious to accept the legitimation of power and the unconscious is Lacan's most important concept in relation to ideology. We believe in dominant ideology, deeply. As Pascal stated (cited in Butler, et all, 2000, p. 118; Gunder & Hillier, 2004, p. 228), 'if you do not believe, kneel down, act as if you believe, and belief will come by itself', Not only do we have to, but also we spontaneously welcome the values, norms and rules of dominant ideology.

Freeden (cited in Gunder, 2010) believes that Lacanian approaches provide a new way of critic toward ideology. The core of Lacanian approach of ideology is the impossibility of escaping from ideology and of not being subjected to it. There is 'no utopia, no solution just awareness'. We move from one ideology to another 'perhaps we can make an ideology that does not dehumanize those who hold it' (Gunder, 2010, p. 308). 'Lacan described the unconscious as a discourse: the unconscious is the discourse of Other' (Evans, 1996, p. 219). According to Lacan, the Other must first of all be considered as a locus, a locus in which discourse is constituted. Therefore, Other as a government, market interest, ruler, law-making institution or decision-making institution, takes this locus. Accordingly, planning as an apparatus of government/state (Other), plays the role of assistant for it. Pursuant to Gunder (2010, p. 305) planning is a facilitator for the state to 'normalize and internalize the dominant logic of state in the minds and bodies of citizens, so that planning is integral to governmentality and is an important ideological state apparatus'.

On the other hand, based on Lacanian psychoanalytical theory (Allmendinger & Gunder, 2005; Gunder, 2011), ideology defines and works based on 'lack' or 'deficiency'. It works as a fantasy to fill this lack. As Laclau (2005) illustrated, the identification of a lack such as inequality, insecurity, etc. needs a solution. The solution frames a necessary specific ideology. 'The ideological articulation of the solution provides an emotive and powerful political tool for the implementation and desirous materialization of public planning policy' (Stavrakakis cited in Gunder,

2010, p. 306). Therefore, planning and policies work to provide the desire of Other to fill its lack. In fact, planners work based on desire of Other (power or hegemonic ideology). As Gunder (2003, 2011) stated, policies have been made to fill the lack of Other. The fantasy of better life that housing policies provide specifically for poor people can support an egalitarian or justice-oriented ideology for a government. According to the Žižekian interpretation of ideology 'it is a fantasy-construction' or 'illusion which structures our effective, real social relations and thereby masks some insupportable, real, impossible kernel (Žižek 2008, p. 45)'.

The main purpose behind a policy is adherence to one, or to a set of, existence ideologies through normative or prescriptive processes. These processes make central to politics the concept of ideologies. Implicitly every political or economic tendency entails an ideology. It is how society sees things. Therefore, ubiquitous ideology encompasses and identifies everything including planning policy, planners' responsibilities, their concerns and even people's expectations of planning.

Poverty is an economic problem in every society. Poor people live with the desire for a better life. They demand better houses, equality and wealth. In a society with a majority of poor, unemployed people who live in inappropriate houses, egalitarian creeds can be the best ideology to make movement amongst them. An ideological state based on egalitarian rhetoric, can easily free ride over this movement. Planning is the best apparatus to provide the fantasy of "better life for low income groups" or "the right of people to possess housing commensurate with their needs". However, planning as the ideological state apparatus takes a paradoxical position. It has to maintain deficiencies to maintain the hegemonic ideology. This mechanism will be developed in following section of this paper.

3- Political or apolitical planner: Nefarious planner

This section of the paper endeavours to define the profession of planner based on the two following concepts: firstly, the planner is a subject that works in the context of a hegemonic ideology whose profession is identified by the prevailing informal norms, values and laws. These characteristics are located in the field of Other, as Lacan said, in symbolic order. Secondly, the planner is a subject presumed to know. The planner (subject), unconsciously knows the consequences of his/her work (Žižek 2008). Specifically, he/she knows he have to accept his/her apolitical responsibility therefore, he/she masks this compulsion by being a professional. Planners know they cannot make a better life without political and radical intervention. In practice, they devise a fantasy to justify their inability. In other words, power defines an apolitical role for the professional planner- a semi engineer -to justify will to power. They know their plans cannot obliterate poverty in an ideology, which is supported by the poor. They have to mask their inability by scientific methods or diminish it to merely scientific failures; the mechanism will be explained in the next paragraphs.

Referring to the Lacanian attitude, the planner, in a hegemonic ideology, acts based on identification (Gunder & Hillier, 2004). How is this identification configured?

Based on the Lacanian notion, identity emerges through three stages: first, the mirror stage 'this is where a child sees its image in reflection and commences to identify itself as the image in the mirror...it is a transformation that takes place in the subject when he assumes an image'. In fact, identification with images is the most important aspect of this stage. The mirror stage is followed by the imaginary stage. In this stage the identification with image continues. This image can be 'the imaginary 'other''. In this stage, the subject realizes a permanent split between the self and the image. In fact, identification is never completed. On the other hand, the subject is always driven by a tragic desire for completeness and attempts to reunite with others. The third stage is the symbolic, in which the subject 'socializes in to language, culture, informal norms and values and formal laws' (Gunder & Hillier, 2004, p. 222). In this stage, the subject identifies with signifiers and Other.

In addition, according to Lacan, the subject is not simply equivalent to the conscious sense of agency. Consciousness is a mere illusion produced during the mirror stage. However, the subject is equivalent to the unconscious. Lacan stated that, 'the subject is a subject only by virtue of his subjection to the field of the Other (Evans, 1996, p. 198)'. Therefore, the planner works in the field of Other or in hegemonic ideology and power. He/she must act in Other's field and be responsible toward his/her actions. Therefore, the planner, as a subject, identifies her/himself in accordance with the law, the employer and the norms and values which the dominant ideology defines for everyone, including planners.

One of the most useful of Lacanian topic discussions is 'Science and Truth' (Fink, 2004, p. 855). He 'criticized modern science (positivism) for ignoring the symbolic dimension-including; language, culture, the external identity of a signifier, informal norms, values and laws - of human existence and thus encouraging modern man to forget his subjectivity' (Evans, 1996, p. 176). He also compared modern science to a 'fully realized paranoia', in the sense that its totalizing constructions resemble the architecture of a delusion' (Evans, 1996, p. 176). Specifically, his critique points to positivism because he believed that it is a 'deviation from true science' (Evans, 1996, p. 176). Lacan argues that science is characterized by a particular relationship to truth. On the one hand, it illegitimately attempts to monopolize truth as its exclusive property. The modern human subject is a 'subject of science'; a subject that has a mono rational a scientific route to knowledge; this is now a common presupposition (Fink, 2004).

Nevertheless, it is necessary to ask: What is the relationship between these Lacanian concepts and planning? Based on genealogy of planning, it emerged in the modern era with the objective of pacifying the side effects of modernism (specifically its industrial effects) and of interfering and intervening in modern urban space relations (including those of society, the economy, state and power relations, amongst others.) (Allmendinger, 2009; Foucault, 1979b; Friedmann, 1987; Lefebvre, 1991). In fact, planning was created to facilitate market relations. Planning, as a product of the modern era, has the problem of modernism including; sing instrumental rationality to overcome social problems. Based on the Lacanian discussion in regard to science, which was mentioned in previous paragraph, a scientific approach illegitimately

monopolizes truth as its exclusive property. The rational scientific management of space dominates the field of planning. On the other hand, as Foucault (2002; Foucault & Rabinow, 1984) stated, power codifies and identifies knowledge. The dominant ideology needs apolitical professionals who provide, without question, the right apparatus for the political implementation of laws, plans and decisions. Professionals should accept and enjoy their role. As Žižek (2008, p. 49) stated an ideology can hold us only 'when we do not feel any opposition between it and reality- that is, when the ideology succeeds in determining the mode of our everyday experience of reality itself'.

The everyday life experience of planning is revealed in its visual representation in structures, in cities, highways, buildings and shapes. The everyday life of planning provides a fantasy of beautiful buildings, high-rise structures, affordable houses and beautiful roads accompanied happy and satisfied people who can gain whatever they want or they need. Both the planners and citizens enjoy that fantasy. Such fantasies take the place of real demands and relations and change the motivation of planner's function. Therefore, they find themselves in a prevailing environment and in a specific frame in which they can act and work easily, enjoyably and indisputably. Planners in theory and practice generally misinterpret the symptoms. Planning deploys scientific and technocratic approaches instead of finding the underlying causes of socio-cultural problems.

4- Populism as an ideology or a policy

Populism can be defined as an ideology of political philosophy. The Cambridge dictionary (2008, p. 1100) defines populism as: 'political ideas and activities that are intended to represent ordinary people's needs and wishes'. Ernesto Laclau (2005) made a profound study of the concept of populism and its characteristics. He gave a broad explanation of populism through a genealogy of the way in which it works and how it shapes the space of policies and politics. He stated that the vagueness and indeterminacy of populism is not its weakness but it is the sign of inscribed vagueness and indeterminacy in social reality. According to Laclau's opinion, populism is the 'royal road' to understanding something about the ontological constitution of political issues and devices. Therefore, populism is 'one way of constituting the very unity of the group (Laclau, 2005, p. 73)'. However, it is not the only way of accomplishing it.

I endeavor to develop Laclau's notion populist configuration in order to apply it to the Iran case. According to Laclau, an unsatisfied demand is a precondition of populist configuration. The demand or a series of demands have been shaped based on a difference. The social logic of difference makes an internal antagonistic frontier separating the people from the power. In the next step, 'an equivalential articulation of demands makes the emergence of the people possible (Laclau, 2005, p. 74)'. Finally, the third step is a unification of these various demands. The third step can come in the form of a hero, a charismatic leader or even a popular president. The

logic of populism is interesting. 'Equivalence does not attempt to eliminate differences. If the particularity of demands disappears, there is no ground for equivalence (Laclau, 2005, p. 79)'. In fact, the functions of difference and equivalence are related to each other. In a spiral movement, they reproduce each other and the existence of difference relies on the existence of equivalence. Therefore, populism needs that particular demand or difference to continue working. If populism has been configured based on the demand for equality and justice, it needs continuous poverty and inequality to survive.

For instance, in a society with a large mass of agrarian migrants who live in informal settlements in marginal areas of big industrial cities, living in poverty in unqualified housing; obviously, these people will demand better housing. This demand can be the starting point of a populist movement. The demand for better houses and public services establishes an equivalential relationship between masses. Every claim based on the provision of better life and housing and services can be an emotive factor in absorbing them in a new charismatic power.

Laclau implied that there are three important aspects in the construction of social and political identity. 'The relationship between words and images, the predominance of the emotive over rational the sense of omnipotence, the suggestibility and the identification with the leaders are all too real features of collective behavior (Laclau, 2005, 39)'. Thus, words and rhetoric can help to construct a fantasy and a kind of image for the crowd. Thereupon, rhetoric has been ancillary to the classical ontology of populism. This fantasy acts as a 'means to simplify the anxiety inducing complexity and apparent inconsistency of reality so that social reality appears as a coherent materialized, yet simplified (Gunder, 2012)'.

In fact, distinguishing the populist policies and the results of them is not difficult. Populist policies emphasize some of most important needs of people and appear to give people whatever they want. People think, that their demands will come true through the provision of images through populist devices. People find their demands in the words of their leaders. Notwithstanding populist policies succeed in providing satisfaction because they respond to some parts of the desires of the supporting group. These policies render as the movement of masses who have not experienced political movements. As a result, the people think they have proper rights to determine their taste, needs and rights. The very best example of this is the current situation in the United States of America. Many thinkers have criticized American culture because they believe it has become more populist although, superficially, it appear to be more democratic (Strinati, 2004).

In fact, differing demands, as the basic principles of a populist movement, exist in every society and thus populism can be configured in a wide political spectrum from left wing to right wing. Populism sometimes appears in the form of elitism, or, at other times, as anti-elitism or National Socialism, such as in Nazism. It tries to provide the desires and demands of the masses. As mentioned in previous sections of the paper, planning is one of the hegemonic ideology/power's forms of apparatus. Hegemonic ideology defines and codifies planning's responsibilities to reproduce

that ideology. Planning - including housing policy and the distribution of public services and goods – provides policies to respond to the demands of the people. Populist ideology, as a hegemonic ideology, easily codifies planning to provide the fantasy of satisfaction of demands. Undoubtedly, planning is the best apparatus to promise a better life for the masses and to respond to their demands. Therefore, Planning can be the best apparatus to assist power in maintaining itself.

5- Low-income Housing policies: fantasy or reality

Iran is a developing country; a producer of raw oil that is led by a regime whose ideology stems from the Islamic Revolution. In Iran, planning application is predicated on two processes. Firstly, there is a politico-rational process, where by the preliminary and final decisions made by government authorities and institutions even the supreme leader. This level frames all policies, rules and laws. The second process is a techno-rational one in which plans and projects are made based on supreme plans. These techno-rational processes use GIS, maps, modeling, technics and statistics to collect and analyse data. In some local action plans or projects, professionals in governmental sectors and consulting companies use the partnership of private sector to provide financial aid. They legitimate and justify the first decisions and follow the first line in their plans and projects. Obviously, power or hegemonic ideology defines and dictates all the lines and policies in the planning and, the planner, as an agent operates consistently within the supreme frame.

After oil, Iran's construction industry is one of the most important industries in the country. Housing policy has been one of the most important tools of planning. During the three most recent decades, three different policies, including those of; urban land supply; financial policies and social housing, have been applied in Iran. This paper will survey only the last one, 'public housing'. Islamic egalitarian ideology and populist interpretation of the notion of private in Islam such as 'brotherhood', 'unity', 'equality', postulated the ideology of post-revolutionary planning in Iran (Valibeigi, 1993). As has occurred in other developing countries, Iran has faced huge migrations to big cities and informal settlements. In fact, planning faces expanded urban poverty. The population of informal settlements is estimated to be about 10-12 million people living on the outskirts of cities. On the other hand, there was a baby boom in the first years of the revolution. After 30 years the 'baby boomers' have become young people who demand jobs, housing and facilities. Official statistics reveals that Iranian cities have experienced a serious growth in the population of young couples who have a high demand for affordable housing. However, many people cannot afford appropriate housing due to expanding unemployment, the high price of housing and the increasing demands for accommodation. In addition, a house is a kind of investment for an Iranian family. People have the tendency to buy and own their own homes.

Based on what it mentioned in the definition of populism, a crucial demand has been configured: the demand for housing. It was timed to coincide with the third policy

period between the years 2005 and 2009 started with the presidency of President Ahmadinejad. The main concern of this period is a certain type of public housing 'Maskan Mehr'. The policies in this period turned back to those of the first years of the revolution. Radical Islamic approaches, egalitarian and anti-elitism ideologies determined all policies and decisions. Thus, the main rhetorical ideology of the revolutionary Iranian government re-postulated most of its policies and plans, including intended equality and wealth for the poor. However, after more than thirty years, many surveys have concluded that none of those pro-poor policies have achieved their claims (Saeidi, 2001; Salehi-Isfahani, 2009). Even the many governmental surveys have revealed many failures as a result of the plans and policies. In fact, most of policies have merely transformed rural poverty to urban poverty, squeezed the middle class and reproduced the prevailing power relations; and finally, have led to the suppression of other demands in the political domain (Milani & McFaul, 2008-2009). Nonetheless, the current president of Iran started his presidency with some rhetoric promises such as arresting the corrupt previous authorities and managers, providing justice and equality. In this case, the populist leader would seek to mobilize the masses against the corrupt elite, regenerating the values and norms of first year of revolution by redistribution of wealth (Dodson & Dorraj, 2008). Many planners have unofficially criticized policy because they believe the current policy has diminished the whole of the planning system to being solely that of a housing policy, or even just a project.

Indeed, a supreme housing policy was imposed upon all of the province's organizations and companies. People, both the poor and the wealthy one rushed to specified centers of registration. Housing institutions registered 4,234,766 people. However, after about 7 years, official statistics announced that only 946,890 people have the appropriate criteria for getting public housing. Many cases of infraction and infringement have been reported to the Ministry of Housing from different cities and provinces. Therefore, a special office has been established to deal with infractions and to supervise the projects in the various cities. The enacted law in relation to public housing specified a deadline for the officials; the establishment of the office was supposed to solve housing problems for Iran up until 2013. Many of the parliamentary representatives criticized the policy because they found it expensive and to be consuming their budget; in addition it still did not solve the problems of housing. As the first step of this policy, the government considered a 53 billion USD budget for public housing. But now, because of such things as, sanctions, stagnation and inflation, the government faces a budget deficiency. Therefore, it cannot provide the necessary credit for the plan. Many professionals have stated that the government needs 140 billion USD more than its primary estimate.

Moreover, because of hasty decision-making about the policy, many projects have been started on unsuitable land and planners have faced problems in providing infrastructure. For example, for the provision of water pipes for just three projects in Tehran requires 6 billion USD. In addition, people who have registered for public housing now need more personal finance to be able to their own homes, far more than first predicted. Nonetheless, the government had to cut in its budget in the 2012 New Year because of the deficiency and consequently, the public housing policy will

receive less credit than last year. To the contrary, when a journalist asked authorities about the future of policy, officials answered: 'Maskan Mehr is not a governmental phenomenon, it is a popular plan of which the credit and budget is provided by the people; therefore, it is not necessary any governmental credit or budget for it'.

6- Conclusion

One of the most important effects of the above-mentioned policy in Iran was the agglomeration of all the considerations and implementations in the central government. In addition, all the processes of financial transformation and transaction for housing have to pass through government institutions. Indeed, these sorts of central policies make the government sector larger and diminish the private sector. Many private, individual, and micro-companies have been bankrupted in the favour of monopolic governmental sector. Finally, the mentioned policy has diminished the urban bourgeoisie - the social class that can provide the appropriate context of democratic demands. Inversely, the policy plumps up the mass who are dependent on central power at the same time as supporting power. However, the policy never eliminates poverty and lack of the housing; the policy is merely used as an apparatus of populism to get the support of the poor.

Unfortunately, when plans fail and are relinquished, planners search for fault in agencies or computation failure, they think that it is the fault of the professionals because they have made mistakes in calculations and in the technical aspects of plans. They try keeping on with the fantasy for themselves and continue to criticize plans by finding mistakes. However, the reality is that the policy worked in the best way, because it was not supposed to solve housing problems from the start. It was supposed to reproduce the power and impede democratic demands.

7. References

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