

THE ROLE OF SAGHA-KHANE (DRINKING-FOUNTAIN) IN NATIVISM OF IRAN CONTEMPORARY PAINTING

O PAPEL DE SAGHA-KHANE (BEBEDOURO) NO NATIVISMO DA PINTURA CONTEMPORÂNEA DO IRÃ

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Abstract: This article has been done with the aim to study the effect of Sagha-khane school in nativism of Iran contemporary painting. The artists of Sagha-khane who entered the traditional elements with modern form, reached to such a form that communicated neither with traditional culture characteristics of Iranian new society, nor it could be called modernism or modernism alternative due to lack of social and philosophical grounds. So the works of Sagha-khane artists cannot be established in a place higher than nativism. Of course in this way, the role of politicians who were seeking national identity and simplicity and wanted to mix traditional arts with modernism, can't be ignored. With respect to the investigations that have been done in this article, it is obvious that verbal method of that decade has often been for revelation of the ambiguities of the crises in mixing of western culture with native grounds. The painting of Sagha-khane is seeking peaceful mixture of them and is indifferent to other elements of culture and society. In fact we can say that Sagha-khane school, with mixture of tradition and modernism and infusion of traditions, pays attention to modern arts like Iranian contemporary painting and this nativism can be seen in the works of the painters like Zenderoodi and Emami.

Keywords: Sagha-khane school. Nativism. Contemporary painting.

Resumo: Este artigo foi realizado com o objetivo de estudar o efeito da escola Sagha-khane no nativismo da pintura contemporânea do Irã. Os artistas de Sagha-khane, que entraram nos elementos tradicionais com forma moderna, alcançaram uma forma que não se comunicava nem com as características da cultura tradicional da nova sociedade iraniana, nem poderia ser chamada de modernismo ou modernismo alternativo devido à falta de bases sociais e filosóficas. Portanto, as obras dos artistas de Sagha-khane não podem ser estabelecidas em um local superior ao nativismo. É claro que dessa maneira, o papel dos políticos que buscavam identidade e simplicidade nacionais e queriam misturar arte tradicional com modernismo não pode ser ignorado. No que diz respeito às investigações realizadas neste artigo, é óbvio que o método verbal daquela década foi frequentemente revelador das ambiguidades das crises na mistura da cultura ocidental com os fundamentos nativos. A pintura de Sagha-khane busca uma mistura pacífica deles e é indiferente a outros elementos da cultura e da sociedade. De fato, podemos dizer que a escola de Sagha-khane, com mistura de tradição e modernismo e infusão de tradições, presta atenção às artes modernas como a pintura contemporânea iraniana e esse nativismo pode ser visto nas obras de pintores como Zenderoodi e Emami.
Palavras-chave: Escola Sagha-khane. Nativismo. Pintura contemporânea.

Introduction

Tendency to establish a national art which be modern and Iranian , was reflected in cultural policy of government and included: Supporting the artists and encouraging them to take part in international fairs specially biennials like Venice and Paris, giving rewards and scholarships to elected artists, celebration of international fairs and festivals, cooperating with American and European institutes, engaging foreign professors for colleges and universities that were favorable with nationalism ideologies of the government, because they preferred Iranian identity to be far from political criticism.

Emerging of Sagha-khane school in early 1960 decade was accompanied with such formal definition of national art. Sagha-khane was known as an art that was native and talked with global language, without being engaged in political issues. The artists of Sagha-khane that half of them were graduated from decorative arts college, by entering the elements of Iranian – Shiite in modernism form, acquired an art that took the attentions of cultural authorities specially the office of the Queen.

Professional progress of these artists with showing their works in the third Tehran biennial, started in 1963 and continued to the early decade of 1970. In two following biennials in 1965 and 1967, abstract works like sagha-khane form were mostly on the walls of the fairs. In continuance and with starting Shiraz art festival in 1968, the tendency of government and specially Farah Pahlavi were seen more broadly to native and ceremonial arts.

The current of official and national art which was obvious in sagha-khane, wasn't acceptable for all the members of artistic society of that time. In addition to the currents like Alkhas and his students who believe in oblige art, the parallel current called Iran talar that its members were active in those years and parallel with sagha-khane and Shiraz art festival. The aim of establishers of Iran talar was reaching to a kind of art which neither throws inside the nativism and superficial gnostic and nor obeys official cultural policies. The years of 1960 decade can be known as most generators of this era of contemporary history of Iran, regarding cultural and artistic issues.

As it was mentioned at the beginning of this article, part of this cultural production was the result of more free political ground, economical welfare and government reforms on one side, and left ideology idealization of Pahlavi kingdom on the other side that were presented in a living and dynamic and also stressful form .

Conflict among utopian ideologies including a kind of governmental nationalism that reached to the doors of shah civilization and also the communism which promised an unclassified society by passing through capitalism , were motives for creating the works that showed an apparently vain glorious and active culture .

Meanwhile such high polarization was the result of rising destructive ideologues of the government and enlightened society and both of them had essential roles to forming it.

This situation caused many cultural activities that couldn't be able to be formed in the models of logical, coherent and continued based on deep thinking, manufacturer criticism and correct cultural dialog.

The case that was presented as the idea named returning to self in this era and was interesting for government and society of enlightenment, didn't belong to Iran society but was from western countries specially France and then during post second world war II was deepened in many third world countries . In the other words, traditionalism which was made in modern society and was known as Nobel history and traditional culture, was condemned in this era.

Marxism ideology in Iran that was presented by the activists like Ehsan Tabari, stressed on fighting with internal despotism, ruling power and global imperialism and preferred political action to cultural awareness, without paying attention to historical and social situation and ignorance of people, and most important of all, the danger of Russian imperialism.

As mentioned before, the roots of forming such a prejudicial and unfriendly situation in the decade of 1960 must be studied in enlightenment of the decade 1940 that was highly under the pressure of Toudesh party ideology and knew worthless apolitical and uncommitted cultural and artistic activities. This behavior with works that didn't pay attention to hive and

classical clashes, was followed from the model of the rulers Stalin Soviet Union and classified this art as decadent.

Forming representable language independent of literature and narration was the result of such a method in Europe and later in America. Receiving and translating this cosmopolitan ideas by elites and rulers of other regions caused many conflicts in Iran during Pahlavi era.

Obeying the elements of modern aesthetic was unavoidable as modern art tools for politicians and cultural activists. This article has been written with the aim of studying the role of the Sagha-khane in nativism of Iranian contemporary painting.

Background of study

Izadi and Hasanvand (2016) had a study with the aim of investigating and reading out the painting of Sagha-khane from the viewpoint of Gadamer hermeneutics. They said that the movement of Sagha-khane has been one of the most important artistic movements that artists have made their works with a nationalism viewpoint. This study that has been done with the aim of investigating painting of Sagha-khane by using of Gadamer hermeneutics concepts, with an explanatory-analyzing method and gathering information by using library resources , has answered to this question that way of creating the works of artists of this movement, how is connected and explaining with Gadamer hermeneutics concepts.

It is expected that Gadamer hermeneutics concepts, because of proximity with the forming grounds and creating painting Sagha-khane works, have created a suitable base for studying this movement.

Izadi and Hasanvand say: Gadamer believes that when interpreter reaches to an old text, he transfers it to his contemporary time and talks with it. Painters of Sagha-khane also transfer ancient texts, namely elements and traditional paintings that belong to the past and bring them to their contemporary time and use of them in the way of their goals.

Gadamer believes that in this situation, the interpreter introduces his findings in his explanation. The painter of Sagha-khane also uses these paintings with national language and based on situation of his time. These paintings have common language which is rooted in Iranian traditions. So, historical and social situations of Iran during the creating the works of the artists of this movement as the tissue and ground, has also been effective.

Khorshidian and Zahedi (2016) wrote an article named post-colonial Sagha-khane or oriental? The aim of this article was descriptive-analytical discussing about Sagha-khane without paying attention to colonial or oriental ideas and studying special problems of Iran. This study at first investigates about Sagha-khane and then focuses on artistic issues of Iran, Europe and America.

Abed doost and Kazempoor (2010) in their article have studied sociology of Sagha-khane school and say that it is an artistic movement that was formed in 20 decade in Iran. A group of artists who were graduated from ornamental arts university who mixed modern paintings with national- religious motifs, symbols and designs. Our analysis is seeking effective social elements in emerging this school.

The aim of this analysis is investigating effective social elements in forming this school and effects of western paintings on it. Then with a descriptive, analytic and competitive method, studies the effects of these elements on the paintings of 40 decade.

For this reason, at first it introduces this school and its external characteristics and describes various aspects of it. The method for collecting information from libraries is by indexing cards.

The opposition between modernism and tradition in 10 and 20 decades and the reactions of religious intellectuals against imperialism, were effective elements for emerging this school.

It must be noted that artistic happenings in European societies had direct effects on forming this school. The specialty of returning to the past , using Iranian motifs with a new look at mixture and excess and stress on signs , are reminding of post-modern ideas and symbolism of these works that rooted in ancient Iranian elements and was one of the reasons of this group successes .

Findings

Sagha-khane school:

The years of 1960 decade can be known as the most productive phase for cultural and artistic issues in contemporary history of Iran. As was mentioned in the beginning of this article, part of this cultural production was because of free political grounds, economic welfare and governments reforms and also idealism of left ideology against nationalism ideology of Pahlavi kingdom. Opposition of utopian ideologies and governmental nationalism that reached to civilization doors of shah and also the communism that promised unclassified society by passing capitalism system, were the motives for creating works that had cultural appearance.

Meanwhile such a high polarization that was the production of rising destructive ideologies, caused that many cultural activities couldn't form in the models with logical, consistent and continued thoughts.

What was presented as return to self-idea in this era and attracted government and religious intellectuals, wasn't in fact from the societies like Iran but it was mostly from western countries specially France and then after second world war, deepened in many third world countries.

In other words, traditionalism was born in modern society that formed based on elected ideas and elements from the past and presented as pure and traditional culture and history and was concerned in this era.

Marxism ideology in Iran that was presented by ideologues and activists like Ehsan Tabari, stressed on conflict with ruling power, internal dictatorship and global imperialism and preferred political activity to cultural reforms, without paying attention to the historical and social situation of Iran, ignorance of people and the danger of Russian imperialism.

As was noted before, the roots of forming such dangerous atmosphere in 1960 decade should be sought in enlightenment of 1940 decade that was under the effort of Tudeh party and considered valueless apolitical and nonaligned cultural and artistic activities. This behavior with the works that didn't pay attention to classified contrast, followed the model of Soviet Union during Stalin era.

Formatting representational language independent from literature was the result of going this way in Europe and then America. Receiving and translating these ideas caused many conflicts in Iran during Pahlavi era.

Therefore, modernism became an ideological concept which stood against traditionalism that didn't belong to Iranian background and history and of course this situation existed in other regional countries.

Iran as a country that has been viewed from ancient times as a connection bridge between east and west, of course can't be compared with many new formed countries in the region and world.

During the Pahlavi kingdom, entrance and increasing of determinative and historical ideologies prevented the growth of thinking based on cultural background. Regarding Aryasp dadbeh, when intellectuals cancelled their connection with their cultural and historical backgrounds and only paid attention to criticizing political power, they became only the producers of destructive ideologies.

Ruling of Marxist ideologies in 1960 decade, resulted to Cultural Revolution and these intellectuals negated the people and movements that during Mashrooteh and Reza Shah Era, have sought solutions in deep study of Iran cultural history. These intelligentsias became the founders of dictatorship in culture and policy fields that was worse than ruling dictatorship and dadbeh believes that artistic and academic activities in this era were under the influence of these groups.

Sagha-khane artists who entered the traditional elements in modern form, reached to a kind of art that neither connected with Iranian new society, nor it could be called modernism, so the works of Sagha-khane artists can't be put in the return to self-movement.

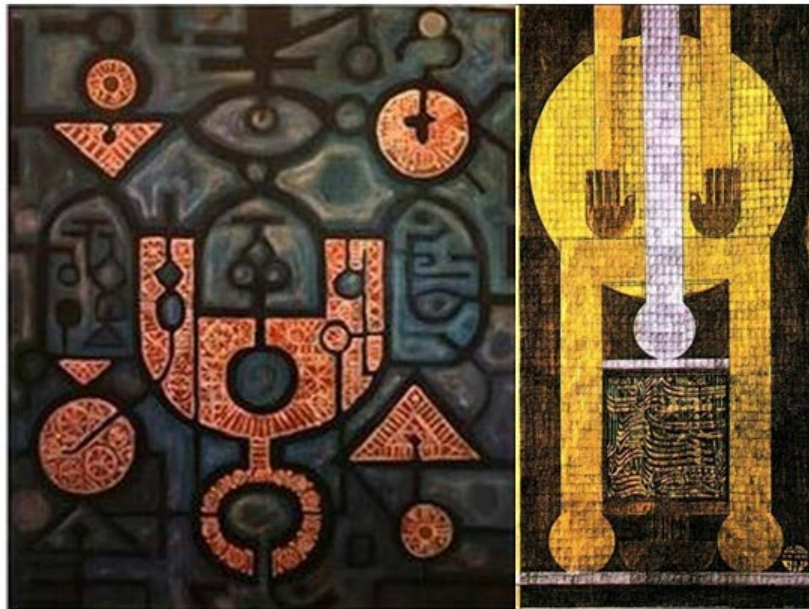
In this situation, the role of government politicians who were seeking national identity and believed to mixing of traditional arts with modernist qualities, shouldn't be ignored.

With a different method but similar result, the efforts of Iran talar members also couldn't

form national art, because activities of artistic methods didn't seem serious by cultural authorities. Of course this doesn't mean that the efforts in this era were worthless and anxiety about straggle from modernism, caused the failure in explaining the Iran modern national art in 1960 decade.

Figure 1: Sagha-khane and nativism.

Figure 2: Sagha-khane and nativism.



Sagha-khane and governmental origin:

The history of sagha-khane begins from some decades ago with first steps of modernism entrance and cultural policies of Pahlavi kingdom. Although reforming ideas for changing of Iran and converting it to a new nation – government backs to very loner time, but obeying public demand by Pahlavi kingdom policies, has been the cause of election this starting point.

The aim of this article isn't focusing on policies of government as only effective element in society, but the stress is on this point that despite political

Tensions, different understanding of national ideology and oriental discuss in many cases, in many times the result has been the same and therefore, the main aim of this article is noticing to Sagha-khane with all its contradictions.

In the era of first Pahlavi and regarding painting, two methods of Kamallomolki and Iranian painting remained till 20 decades and with opening the first college in Tehran University, they hadn't any briskness. Although it was told that Reza Shah has been interested in painting as Iranian national heritage, but it seems that because of weak ideological propaganda, painting wasn't important in comparison with other arts.

The college of aesthetics arts that opened in 1911 by Kamalolmolk, was closed in 1929 but what was important in that time, was establishing a kind of national concern about artistic explanation and attracting people to this art.

Cultural modernism mixed with nationalism and was presented with the form of Sagha-khane painting. In the beginning, new art of Iran sought a kind of distinct nationalism for itself and knew it necessary for changing art for modern world and so considered painting of Kamalolmolk insufficient in this regard.

This situation was obvious from the works of the first graduated painters in the west and contentious remarks of Game –cock society in the late 20 decades. The first generation of Iranian modern painters, especially Jalil Ziapoor stressed on surrealism and cubism in his works, although he knew that what happened in modern art, was a revolution in painting form but he and his colleagues weren't able to deepen this experience in Iran.

Although ruling power for about one decade hadn't good behavior with modern painting, but hegemony of formal speech seems that even modern painters of Iran couldn't be

safe from supremacy of nationalism and orientalism especially because most of the modern painters were employed in governmental offices during early 30 decade.

In 1949, Darioush Homayoun with some people like Sohrab Sepehri and Manouchehr Sheybani established an association called Jamejam. Homayoun believed that because all the revolutions in the world have started with artistic movements, they should also plan a revolution by an artistic movement. In the first article of the magazine of this association, they wrote: We have decided to advertise a fully national and pioneer art and our goal is preparing the tools to forming an art that originates from our nation, our past and our needs and wishes and accompanying of Iran nationalism, goes towards progress. They said they try to fight with anti-national thoughts that want to change Iranian art to a weak and humble art.

From 1959 and after formalization of modern art and opening the first painting biennial by government, seeking for national art becomes more bravely but its nature is in accordance with Iran national position and art orientalism.

In the second generation of modern artists, a kind of more complex of using Iranian culture were seen, especially in the works of Marco Gregorian and Parviz Kalantari. In second Pahlavi era, a form of secular Iranian based on race and nationality that was important for first Pahlavi, has been weakened a lot. Nationalist powers based on the race like Germany, Italy and Japan that were examples for Iranians because of their wars with England and Russia, defeated, so in the late 1950 and 1960 decades, critical glance to colonialism in third world countries emerged with looking to the past nostalgia.

Culture and art high council founded in 1968 by the order of shah for regulating cultural policy and coordinating various cultural and artistic programs which were performed in the country. This council was encouraged by UNESCO because it wanted to promote cultural policy among member countries. The Council designed cultural policies during fourth and fifth programs which were in continuance from Reza Shah Era. The current of Sagha-khane in 1960 decade became the most important representational art of Iran and attracted many artists to itself and introduced a new kind of art to them. Sagha-khane can be the representative of nationality in Iran and also show the cultural modernism and hasn't any contradiction with new look to third world.

Current of Sagha-khane, the resultant of cultural modernism in Iran:

The main objection to Sagha-khane isn't to revivalism but in generalization and lack of history. The important element of Iran new art is that the current of Sagha-khane hasn't any connection with past and present and is just a portrait.

Unlike the carpet and miniature, Sagha-khane could show the face of modernity and because after naturalism of Kamalolmolk and his students, it is the only coherent picture of Iranian representational art which is very important.

Figure 3: Sagha-khane , painting of Sadegh Tabrizi.

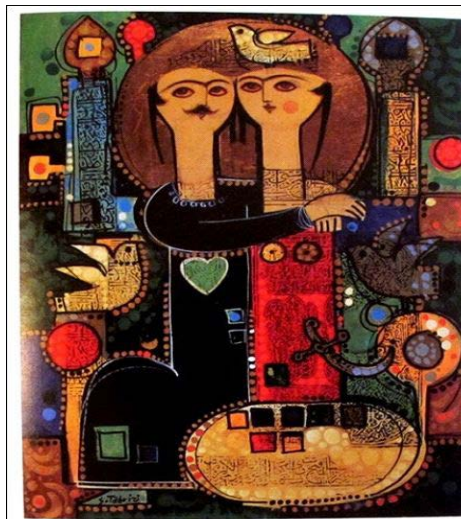


Figure 4: Sagha-khane, painting of Sadegh Tabrizi.



Figure 5: Sagha-khane, painting of Hossein Zenderoodi.



Figure 6: Sagha-khane and nativism.

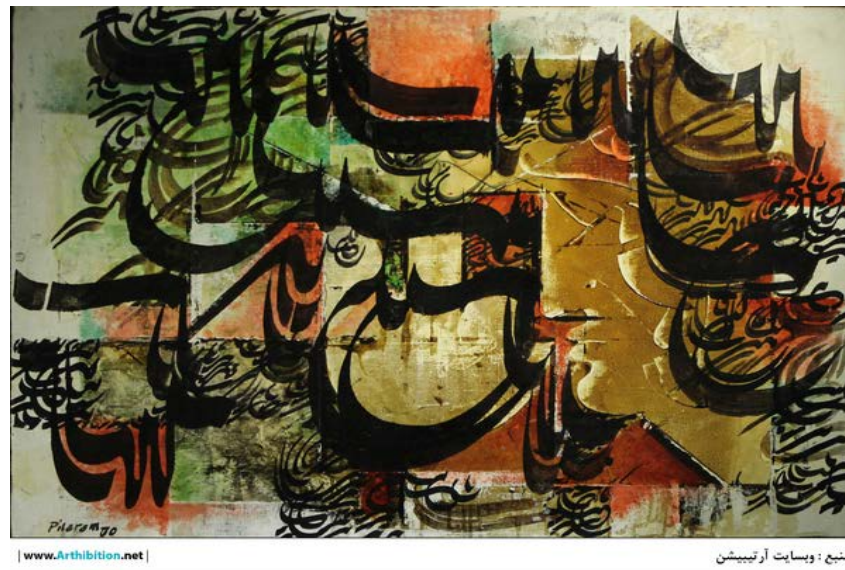


Figure 7: Sagha-khane and nativism.



Conclusion

The painting of Sagha-khane school is the result of conflict between tradition and modernism in Iranian society of that time. War between the new and old thoughts in Iranian society of 1930 and 1940 decades and the policies of the government of the time in imitation from Europe in various aspects for managing the society, were among the effective results of emerging this school, so it was supported by the government, because they wanted a new and pioneer form for Iranian traditional society. But this mixture must hide all the problems and tensions and show a complete, excellent, calm and cultural society. It is enough to look the mixture of elitism of Shiraz art festival with populist and advertisements aspects of 2500 years celebrations and remember the religious ideas of MohammadReza shah and his westernism to understand that how Iranian modernism Sagha-khane showed his dreams.

Conflicts between orderly and controlled modernism with religious and social beliefs reached to peace and calmness.

Shahrouz Mohajer in an article named the importance of Zenderoodi and Iranian school writes: Iranian Sagha-khane is like a new experience in modernism and accepts the humanity culture, the culture that the ruling power tries to destroy its essences and implant ancient Iran values instead of it.

Although it seems that huge parts of the painting current try to get rid of this policies, but based on the investigations, it is obvious that the verbal method of that decade often tries to show Noncooperation's among western cultures with Iranian traditions. Sagha-khane painting wants to peacefully mix them with each other and doesn't pay attention to other issues in this regard. In fact we can say the Sagha-khane school, by mixing tradition and modernism, pays attention to the nativism and modern arts.

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