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Painting as a visual representation of PTSD, Case Hani Najm

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A B S T R A C T

Iranian artists respond to postmodernism by expanding the scope of application of art as scientific fact. One of these effects is using the art as a tool for chronology which contemporary Iranian artists, including "Hani Najm", have emphasized. He designs different levels of society on the subway or bus that we think are suffering from effects of deep tragedy. In the studies related to the nature of this tragedy that realism basis forms the works and the essence of his chronology. Two important points are acceptable, first, according to recent researches in psychology, "posttraumatic mental disorder" after the disaster of Mongol invasion, in a historical sequence, transmitted from generation to generation. Secondly, with these continuing disorders, damages of modernization entering of Iran, still remained in the range of individual and social life of Iranians and these two types of injuries are reflected in the works of this artist.

Keywords: PTSD, Contemporary Iranian Painting, Chronology.

INTRODUCTION

One of the challenges of the last century within the concept of art is to determine borders between it is different types. Charles Bateau in his thesis in 1746 divided the art into three groups. "Useful arts" such as craft works, "Fine Arts", including sculpture, painting, music and poetry (in England architecture is added and fine arts are called "five art"). And the three types are "beautiful and useful arts" such as architecture and eloquence. The fine art isn't serving any special purpose and it is product has a value within it. Useful arts possess a purpose which is beyond of it is product. The distinction between useful art and fine art became important when the politicians and economists, partly because of the benefits that might be coming back from the industrial competition, encouraged governments to support the visual arts. The establishment of museums, art galleries and art schools created as a cause the line of thought of this movement which is indeed the separation between process of machinery production and art.

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METHODOLOGY

The nature of recent study is qualitative, observational and also descriptive. The tools for collecting and gathering information are online databases, books, journals and articles in this field.

RESULTS

Although it's not possible to present a comprehensive definition for the word "artist" because of the differences in the concept and its social position, in general the artist of tribal art can be seen like an artisan specialist, supported by an artisan Guild and its credit was like a priest. In ancient Greece, poetry possessed divine inspiration, but painters and sculpture artists were considered artisans. Medieval artists were considered as guild of artisans. Fundamental change in the social status of artists emerged in the Renaissance. Artists in this time were introduced as scientist and scholar. Theoretical ideas of art that covers nineteenth century, was "Art as a way to express the personality of the artist" and "art as an embodiment of the metaphysics". Artists in the nineteenth century were considered creative geniuses who invaded the conventions of society, while being victims of the banality of bourgeois gusto. Modern art is the product of a series of social, cultural and artistic evolutions in the nineteenth century and was an attempt to escape from art's deadlock of academic that had naturalistic tendencies. Modern artists have tried to achieve a new goal from the way of self-expression. Modernism in process of the struggle with previous values created fundamental changes in the social status of artists and the performance of art. During the third and fourth decades of the twentieth century, a new concept of artist was conceived:

"The artist is the one who nurtures emotional and perceptual capabilities or is someone who provides the possibility of dealing with harmless rules for emotional aspect of human nature and thus a valuable tool to counter the tendency of intellectual and practical- That seemed to deviate educational systems in industrialized society is -is offered¹.

Greenberg, one of the greatest interpreters of modern art, states in the article "Modern Painting" a special function for the arts (in modern times). He doesn't believe the outbursts of modern art is political and states about something called "romantic crisis". Romantic crisis, was a new status for Greenberg, that creature is the way of dealing with middle class society and was producing threat against the aesthetics of art. He defines Modernism in art as a response to threats against aesthetic qualities and all his views about the schools, art history and its philosophy, expand and develop according to this view. Greenberg explicitly knows Modernism and Avant-garde equivalent and says about the function of art (against conventional beliefs) Modernism or the same avant-garde, haven't moved based

on the specific program, particular ideology and predetermined agenda. Modernism in its essence and nature has been a stance to maintain the aesthetic criteria.

In the years after 1960, vast changes in the cultural, social and political modern culture were slowly abandoned and instead postmodern distinguishing culture entered the arena. Michael Archer in the book of "Art after 1960" says on page 51 Donald Judd, has reduced all features of European art to Rationalism and knows this fundamental change in the art connected to Elimination of credit from Rationalism. In this era the art has found many applications including: Philosophical statements, continuing the work on the definition of art, political expression and among these applications, we can see that the art in this period has also emerged as a "scientific fact". Sometimes a person, artist or non-artist, presented scientific results as artwork and many art critics, museums and art institutions have confirmed it as art. Arnason says in art history books, Duchamp carried out great scientific experiments to destroy the aesthetic qualities of a daily means and then continues:

"It has been noticed frequently that the artists have done research on different scenarios, and presented the results and process of researches as a work of art"².

In postmodern era we can see the integration of the three major theoretical, intellectual and county innovations in art. The losses of any boundaries in the art, in light or in their material are witness to the vast reception of functions for the art.

"It means the art, the concept and the artist mentality is the main element in the work's process and other types of material which used in it become marginal element and thus, the "artwork" changes to "scientific fact"³.

Thus, in keeping with the concept, art's end, and sometimes contradictory whispers which were hearing like "everything is art", art borders were opened to any activity. What we want to deal with is not postmodern art, but its impact on the modernist artists. By changing the space of art's definition one can see that whether in content or in form, postmodern art had great impact on prior arts. One of these impacts can be seen in the artist dealing with art, entitled a research on the history of science.

Chronology and Historiography although the works of Hani Najm (**Figure 1**) have evident affiliation to abstract forms in modern times, the works have shown the indigenous and local situation in criticism of the invisible and hidden but extremely painful situation.



Figure 1. Drawing of people inside the train, Near but Far⁴

He isn't a historian, because a historian is a person who puts together historical data, using criticism basis of historical propositions that explained in the science of history. The historian work has two stages. In the first stage, historical data has been examined based on the principles of criticism of historical statements, and are converted to fact. In the second stage, the historian analyzes the obtained documents by the "historical sense". In contrast, a diarist records historical events as an eyewitness. In Chronology, unlike historiography, the events can be written by someone who has no insight into history and the science of history, and even isn't interested in history. What gives credibility to chronology is direct observation and what give credibility to historian is the result based on the principles and basis of history science. Chronology is an act that can come from curiosity, but the current historiography is technical and acting for analysis and based on the idea. Another difference between chronology and historiography is the importance of the order of events, in terms of time, place and topic of historiography. Mainly there is a particular type of historicism in the nature of any kind of historiography. Nietzsche in the book "On the Utility and Liability of History for Life", as a person who stated the most powerful critiques for modern wisdom , puts "history" opposite to "life" and invades at history where it's denying life. Although he believes in the necessity of creating something great, past by learning the "history of greatness" but for "history of Yadvardgy" that belongs to the spirit of reverent ,doesn't put so value. He believes that this memorial respect has moved into objects and obtains its credit from this way and this is the way that history of city converts people to their own history. Nietzsche knows this in favor of life, but believes that this view is the historical sense that does not preserve the life of, but balm it.

Latent Realism, stability of PTSD disorder

In the arena of social damage of Iranians, many have researched the history and lasting impacts of these injuries in today's society (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Painting, people inside the train Near but Far⁴

It seems it can be classified in two different areas: the lasting injuries of Mongol's invasion to the political, social and family areas, and the damages that have arisen from modernism entering Iran.

The Mongol invasion and theory of catastrophe rejection:

Everybody in Iran is familiar with destructive and social damage of disasters and crimes of Mongol's ethnic from beginning to end of the series of their government. But what is discussed in this paper is to prove the stability of this impact. Researching for scientific explanation of this stability has proposed the theory of catastrophe rejection. In the past, due to lack of knowledge, we were not able to deal with this issue scientifically. But psychological studies in recent decades were able to understand the specific effects of abnormalities which were associated with disasters. One of these disorders is "mental disorder after the incident," which is caused in the face of terrible and fatal accidents close to death and destruction. On the other side, a more serious phenomenon which was caused by severe damage due to prolonged and repeated experiences occurs and is called "Complex mental disorder after the incident". Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), a psychological and psychiatric disorder that follows when a person faces a

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disaster or traumatic event causes disability and significant disablement in the person. "Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is a set of symptoms/ syndrome which arises from traumatic life events, with incompleteness, any loved one is inevitable function of oppresses and any people who are able to identify caught by scoundrel and⁵. Anieli believes that people who are victims of violence are possibly the cause of the violence themselves, meaning the transmission of violence from one enervation to the other are established in the political arena and the public arena.

Abbas Edalat is one of the thinkers who done detailed studies on the effects of injuries sustained from the Mughal era in Iran. He verifies two elements in the violence during Mongol's era, "deep" and "long-term (i.e. ten generations)", and believes if Iran society was a living body, the damage of Iranian's main social character would be like "complex mental disorder after the incident". He states, according to the catastrophe rejection theory, that the establishment of a wild Mongol tribe has institutionalized a kind of extreme violence with sadistic tendencies in the vast expanse of our land in various arenas, including social, political and family. He also states that a large portion of Iranian people are suffering from "complex mental post-traumatic disorder" with traces of disorders like "narcissistic personality", "borderline antisocial personality" and "suspicious characters". Which are transmitted from generation to generation via acts of violence in the family and the social and political arenas. He has insisted on lasting effects of historical continuity on Iranian's cultures and habits, and believes: "While the most severe psychological effects of the Mongol disaster have modified for centuries, traces of the disaster still exists. Internal insecurity, mistrust, frustration and poor convergence, hypersensitivity, a bling to see only two sides (seeing only Black and White), narcissism, more arousal, aggression and hatred in mental and social behavior are some of the ruling and preconvulcanite different areas of political, social and family .Continually these were considered a serious and fundamental issue in individual person responds to this experience with fear and helplessness constantly imagining the event in his mind while at the same time wanting to avoid remembering it⁶.

"Common diseases associated with these disorders include depression, substance-related disorders, anxiety disorders and bipolar disorder" (Barlow2000). Several studies associated with other disorders have been reported, including depression, 26 to 65%, posttraumatic stress disorder conduct disorder or behavior and personality disorders, 40% to 60%. Also one of the emotional reactions of people with this disorder is the deep sense of being guilty, which was considered in the research of survivors of the Nazi genocide, and the other one is anger and aggressive behaviors. But what is discussed in this paper is to prove the stability of

the impact so far. Thus, severe effects arise as a result of damage caused by prolonged and repeated cope with such experiences, called "complex mental disorder after the incident" (Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder). The Mughal's era historical citations imply realization of the disaster rejection hypothesis.

IbnAthir has said the Mongol disaster was a unique tragedy since the early human to that time and continues: "Even the Dajjal doesn't kill who are obedient to him and only destroys those who are against him but they do not spare anyone and killed women, children and pregnant women's abdomen was ripped to kill the baby"⁷.

Mongol's brutal life was based on killing every living creature, no matter it was human or animal, mass raping virgin girls, and setting up the celebrations after mass destructions. In Nishapur they separated the head from the bodies of men, women and children with calmness, based on what history tells us. Ira Lapydvs believes Mongol's invasion was a real disaster, similar to the "Holocaust" tragedy.

For a better understanding of the Mughal's abnormal era in all aspect of individual and social life, we can refer to Ata-Malik Juvayni, the Iranian minister who narrated about Holaku. "Today they consider lie and deceit as advice and mention, illegitimacy and gossip as bravery and courage. They consider the Uyghur language and script as art and great science. Today every merchant is in the Amir's sinful clothing, any mercenary is leader, any tricks is minister, any unlucky is secretary, any indolence is exchequer, any lavish is dispenser, any devil is Deputy of Court, every latter student is owner of sanctity and dignity, any janitorial is officer, any parsimonious is boss, every treacherous is powerful, any turban wearing is a great scientist. This is a time of famine of manhood and chivalry. And marks day of mislead and ignorance, righteous are ill and abject, villains are stabilized and working, every free man is captive, any magnanimity is rejected, any relative of elders is deprived, any wise man is sited out of hole and any intelligent faced with tragedy, any announcer caught with events, any sanity is prisoner of shall, any full person is engaged and collective relations and cooperation in social activities and formed the roots of the social, economic, political, scientific and cultural failure"⁸.

Damages of entering modernization

Other damage that afflicts today's society, are damages that came to our country after entering the accessories of modernity and modernization thinking. Many studies have been done on this topic but perhaps two damages are more important. First, apart from all the progress that modernization has provided the world, it possessed problems within it that modern critics have published in many

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articles. Max Weber knew fundamental logic of modernity as rationality or rationality rule and had a negative view on it. He says the course of rationality eventually leads to bureaucracy ruling and technology means iron cage to human destiny. He believes that rationalism only thinks of the relation of target - means and ultimate happiness of man will be forgotten. Following the line of Weber's ideas, the Frankfurt School believes in continuing the discussion of rationality rule, in societies dominated by capitalism, civil freedom and the meaning of life are lost and people are suffering from "self-alienation" and their wisdom of social realities, are unrealistic and false. The relations governing the economics, have changed human relations and declined to relations between objects. The subject of object being that Lukacs argues is the phenomenon and facts in the society that are historical, quick and product of human's mental events and objective , be taken into account as natural, eternal, fixed and beyond of history . He has said that in any era the ruling class introduces social relations that are adapted with his interests (e.g. feudalism's points of aristocratic and relations of labor and capital in capitalist) and considered true eternal. In such a case, the various components of society, including government, economy, family system, property system and culture not a set of social relations and changeable, but seems as a fixed and unchangeable things. This situation is called object being and contemporary capitalist society is suffering in the worst aspect. An important question of Adorno and Horkheimer is why humans, despite of the rhetoric of enlightenment, instead of entering the human condition has entered a new kind of barbarism. In response, the instrumental rationality is blamed and as a result everything is reduced to the level of goods and exchange of values. They scheme the "culture industry" from capitalism for changing people to pet and say culture industry means that oriented production of a culture is standard and criterion that through the influence of the media, such as giving consuming goods to people to guide them in a way consistent with the desires and values of capitalism . Marcuse called the humans produced in this culture, "single dimension human", the diminished man that in the capitalist system is toppled of any action and declined to one dimension (Figure 3).The human who was not correct understanding about his or her identity, Mesmerized with appearance of a product and reduced to the level of production and consumption.



Figure 3: painting, people inside the train Near but Far⁴

The second point is the damages from the impact of modernity entry into the non-Western world. The culture and civilization of the West, for many reasons, became universal and in any way reflected into surrounding geography with complex, diverse and altered shapes and lead to great challenges in the areas of political, social and family. It seems that that basic approach of Eastern cultures with modernization basics, had a selection process and avoided the admission to any mismatches. This selection process is itself the reason of many damages that can be seen in society. Essentially, the reason of these challenges can be seen in differences between cultural, political structures of the eastern countries. One of the differences was the low diversity of cultural and political structures in the eastern lands, which structures were formed based on tradition. In this type of structure there is a weak sense of nationality and tribal, religious challenges were immense. The second difference can be understood as differences in speed of development in West and East. The modernity in the West was a product of centuries of successive transformations and in the East was an extremely rapid experience.

CONCLUSION

According to what was said it seems that the complexity of lines, simplification of form is indicating the indifference to detect and escape from trivial allusions. Combined forms of animal figures with human figure, space simplification, choosing a specific location of the bus shows that people around that artist are, in a way, cluttered human's body. Wobbly form of lines implies that something is hidden and flow, this enters the artist to a domain which is not art. This report which was reported by a true witness, the artist, becomes encoded and written by the principles of the visual arts and creativity that he has obtained in terms of training and experience in this field .This reports which is consistent and

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comprehensive, by an aura of visual codes, is reporting the situation of people, especially the downstream people, which is a historical document from the era that disaster has made disorders in the spirit of society through generations. The artist has left his areas of expertise and entered into areas of chronology. Although it cannot be prove, perhaps due to the effects of post-modern thinking on art. He has passed the usual boundaries of artistic expertise and entered into history science and created a new application for art in order to express a fact in history arena. The product of his work is not in realism method and in his works we are not faced with a naturalistic form. The colors do not help make space and object on the contrary, it indicates the mismatch with the everyday world. With all this, he is depicting, dynamic realism in the underlying what is underway the people who in the bus, hardly sticking to the bars or indifferently seated together. Here the artist appears in form of a chronicler and the art is a means of chronology for him. Although he has entered his expressionistic tendencies to works conscious or unconscious, his works report a tragedy, the flowing spirit has covered the space in all his works, in figures, in the extremities, in the distorted face modes, overcrowded places but in silence and without any communication between people .So that the reality that happens so close to us, has roots in outer space of history of this country. Designed human, relationships and their positions which are portrayed by the artist, recalls Nietzsche's description of modern man who says: those who face icon in hand and in disguise, have changed to animals non-free and to race of eunuchs the keeper of Harem of huge world history, have become metamorphosed they are neither man nor woman nor bisexual, and which are neutrals and always something else, no man, not God, nor animal, but historically, shapes and trained staff, and without content and unfortunately deformed and uniform. It seems that artist, for illustrating the depth of the tragedy, knows it's essential to use exaggerated and distorted expressionist forms for expression. He is a witness that reports the tragic history between the emotions and human relations and the movable iron pieces, the walking dead bodies and therefore his works creates disaster, not at a memorial to history, but from the perspective of history of grandeur, greatness of history. He doesn't want to give an interpretation of reality, but he wants to show the reality in fastest possible time, as it is by means of art as a research on showing the continued mental disorders including post-traumatic stress disorder of the man of his time.

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