

Persian translation of this paper entitled:

سهراب شهید ثالث و ناسینما در ایران  
مطالعه موردی: فیلم‌های "یک اتفاق ساده" و "طبیعت بی جان"  
is also published in this issue of journal.

## Sohrab Shahid Saless and Acinema in Iran (Case study: A simple event and Still Life)

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Received 2017/11/04

revised 2018/01/23

accepted 2018/02/07

available online 2018/05/22

**Abstract:** Statement: Sohrab Shahid Saless is one of the most important directors of Iranian cinema during the pre-Islamic era. He was able to establish a new stream of Iranian cinema with his works of cinema, including films (A simple event) and (Still life). Slowly The elements of Shahid Saless's cinema are based on unusual cinema that can be considered close to the interpretation of French contemporary philosopher Jean-François Lyotard. Lyotard believes that if we interpret the cinema as writing with motion, then two categories of movements (excessive movement) and (excessive stagnation) are considered to be nasty, because in fact the rejection of all that is We know the contractual rules of the film in the cinema. These two types of moves can even be recognized and emphasized in certain scenes of the films. The cinema of Sohrab Shahid Saless is a cinema that according to the historical, cultural, social, political and economic foundations of the 50s, 60s and 70s, has a different course with the cinema of the body or the mainstream of Iran, and has succeeded in following the principles of Lyotard's nobility and The rule (excessive stagnation) and (non-returning or libidical) in the design of elements of narrative and lightweight is a new expression in the cinema.

- Purpose: To introduce Shahid Saless's cinema as a manifestation of the presence of stream (Acinema) in Iran

- Research method: The research methodology of this paper is based on descriptive-analytical approach and the library method has been used in collecting information.

- Conclusion: Sohrab Shahid Saless, with an emphasis on the realist world-wide process of national-cultural-nationalist struggles against imported thinking from the vulnerable economy, as well as the movement based on the persistence of Iranian-Islamic mysticism, created a new intolerance in Iran. The films (a simple event) and (still life), produced in the years 1974 and 1976 by Sohrab Shahid Saless are successful examples of the current (Acinema) flow in Iran.

**Keywords:** *Sohrab Shahid Saless, Acinema, Jean François Lyotard, A Simple event, Still Life.*



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## Introduction and statement of the problem

Sohrab Shahid Saless - script writer, director, editor and translator - is one of the most prominent Iranian cinema figures who by recreating elements of narrative and style based on Iranian culture, society, economics and mysticism, and in extensive engagement with the whole of world culture, was able to. The evolution of cinema expression in Iran has helped create a special tone for it. The saless's cinema was influenced by the cultural, social, economic, and political events of the 50s, 60s and 70s, as well as the attention to modernism in various artistic arenas, including literature, to features and components that before the It was not seen in the works of any other cinematographers. By focusing on the ontological themes based on human relationships, saless's cinema gave his international cinema an opportunity to find his audience anywhere in the world. In contrast to the value or rotational economy of a mainstream that seeks to return capital and profit from sales at any cost, the economy of Shahid Saless cinema is a libidinal economy that based on the principle of pleasure, has a spiritual value and immaterial, more based on the presentation of the creator's subconscious ideas than the predetermined contracts of the mainstream cinema.

From the perspective of the aesthetic principle of motion in the cinema, in view of the relationship between the concepts of Iranian mysticism and the mysticism of the Far East, promoting peace and stability in dealing with phenomena and reflecting on the corners of the universe, we are faced with the elements of the periphery. Since Lyotard's definition of motion in Acinema, two types of motion have been described as "Sustained Stagnation" and "Extreme Movement", and given the economic situation of Iran in the 50s, 60s and 70s, as well as the background The general culture of the country from ancient Iran and the desire for rest, the kind of moving impulsive works of Iran, is a type of stagnation, and this is one of the most important differences in the Acinema films in Iran with the Western world because the public of Acinema films in the West Due to the overcoming of

industrial currents, the type of movement is intense.

## Research hypothesis

Sohrab Shahid Saless has been able to create as a leading cinema pioneer in the pre-Islamic era, using some of the intangible elements such as persistent stagnation and a non-return economy and its clever integration with cultural, social, economic and mystical elements of Iran. This important thing is verifiable by studying the aesthetic elements in the narrative and processing of his works including (a simple event) and (Still life).

The rationale of the study Considering the importance of introducing less well-known and modern cinematic trends and, on the other hand, highlighting the existing capacities in the field of Iranian culture and art, studying the leading cinematographic trends in the world and finding indigenous and national equivalents for it, is an inevitable study necessity To strengthen the foundations of interaction between Iranian art and world art. This article seeks to identify another area of modern Iranian art by introducing the Acinema in Iran and examining its implications.

## Research Methodology

The research methodology of this paper is based on a descriptive- analytical approach and library information has been used in collecting information. The present article, while explaining the generalities of research and referring to Sohrab Shahid Saless's cinematic innovations in his works, especially films (a simple event) and (still life), will analyze his thinking about how to redefine Acinema in Iran.

## Theoretical fundamentals and Research background

In reviews and searches conducted among the vast volumes of published books, articles, theses and authoritative databases related to the field of cinema, and especially in the leading and modern cinema of the world and Iran, an independent research that focuses on Acinema in Iran, focusing on works Sohrab Shahid Saless has not been found.

However, some of the existing Persian and English books, theses and articles that have been transiently introduced to Shahid-Saless's cinema and some of the aesthetic aspects of his works include:

- 1- Lambert M Surhone, Mariam Tennoe, Susan Henssonow, Sohrab Shahid Saless, Betascript Publishing, 2010
- 2- Olaf Möller, Sohrab Shahid Saless, Film Comment, Issue 40: 4
- 3- Shahin Parham, Iranian cinema: Before the revolution, Off screen journal, volume 3: issue 6, November 1999
- 4- Dissertation of (recognition of author's theory and authoritative position in two dominant and progressive cinemas) - Student: Idrisa Samani - Supervisor: Mehdi Pourrezaiean - Master's degree - Islamic Art University of Tabriz-Faculty of Applied Arts-1391
- 5- Dissertation of (The Effect of Narrative of New Cinema Films on Iranian Cinema) - Student: Hossein Bayat - Supervisor: Ali Sheikh Mehdi - Master's Degree - Tarbiat Modarres University - 1395
- 6- Dissertation of (Investigating the Effects of the New Wave Movement on Elemental and Narrative Elements in Iranian Cinema) - Student: Amin Ali Kurdish - Supervisor: Akbar Alami - Master's Degree - Tarbiat Modares University - 2010
- 7- Gholamali, Asadollah and Sheikh Mehdi, Ali (2012), The Effect of Modern Narratives on the New Cinema of Iran Cinema, Fine Arts, Performing Arts and Music, 17 (2): 25-34

### Research scope

The scope of this research is limited to the period of the 50s, 60s and 70s, simultaneously with the production of modern and leading cinematic works, as well as extensive developments in the field of fiction literature and arts adjacent to cinema in Iran, such as sculpture, music, painting, etc.

### Sohrab Shahid Saless and the expression of Acinema in Iran

Jean Francois Lyotard, a literary theorist and a French

pioneer of postmodern philosophy, is the founder of the word Acinema. In a separate article, he explains what his term is about. Lyotard first tries to define his opinion about the cinema, so that he can understand what the reader is referring to Acinema.

Lyotard believes that although cinema is essentially a show of motion, the secret of cinema directing is that what moves should be removed and not displayed in a cue. The main rule in this regard is that the moves that are included in the film must be arranged in the same order. Lyotard uses a conceptual value in a general definition of politics politically that relies on the exchange of an object and a certain amount of a given unit (for example: money), and concludes that the mere movement or transformation of the object is not a criterion, and this movement must reach efficiency rather than a sterility. (Yazdanjoo, 204: 2016)

He relied on psychoanalytic knowledge in another part of his opinion and uses Freud's views. He refers to the theory of natural reproduction, and believes that as consumed in normal sexual activity is reproduced in the form - that is, it is efficacious and not sterilized - the cinema must show those movements that have the same function in The whole work of art is only because the film, with the propagation of a balanced movement propagates its contents and prevents loss, which is the same rule of efficiency.

As a result of his central idea, Lyotard believes that if we consider the cinema to be written in motion and show a balanced motion, then two categories of movements, namely excessive motion and excessive stagnation, which are unbalanced movements, can be called Acinema. Why Which is in fact the negation of the base of the image or the principle of image identification. (Lyotard, 1986: 352)

Lyotard believes that this type of motion can sometimes occur only in some scenes, so that Acinema can be defined in the cinema as distinct from his independent character. With this definition and according to the content and performance characteristics of Sohrab Shahid Saless's cinema, it is possible to adopt his approach to designing a

new language for independent cinema outside the mainstream much closer to the theoretical idea of Lyotard.

In his first cinematic experiences, Shahid Saless achieved some kind of productive approach, which combines documentary insight and narrative realism. This method is one of the characteristics that later turned into a feature of Kiarostami's cinema and some of Iran's leading film makers. In works such as "Simple" and "Inanimate", the cinematic approach of the martyrs to the working class of Iranian society and the combination of documentary and fiction in performance, has exceeded the standards of the familiar and familiar audience of Iranian cinema, and a strange and, of course, influential tone. It takes itself as an introduction to the expression of his nonsense. This notion of expression is a direct connection to Iranian culture, economics, politics, society, and mysticism in that period. Though before Shahid saless, Filmmakers such as Farokh Ghaffari, Ebrahim Golestan and Fereydoun Rahnama had a completely experimental character, none of them, as Shahid Saless, could establish a deep connection between....and with cinemas, critics and theorists of the field.

Shahid saless's films are full of mystical silence, and in intelligent processing, the psychological and emotional trauma of human beings passes through the conversation, but not through the silence that flows between them. This silence is the very beginning of a strangeness that destroys the balance of conventional images and creates a rhythmic tune of Acinema. (Möller, 2004: 12)

On the other hand, due to the emergence of thoughtful and modern forms in the 50s, 60s and 70s, the structure of Iran's independent cinema has changed, and many filmmakers such as Sohrab Shahid Saless have rooted their narrative roots in line with the adolescent experiences in the regulation literature. In those decades, filmmakers who were associated with the intellectual, cultural, literary, and artistic circles of Iranian society and the world, produced films unlike the dominant cinema that had a lot

of aesthetic values, and this led to a change in the narrative methods and expressions of their cinematic effects Became.

Sohrab Shahid saless from the point of view of literary content and realistic view as an indicator of culture, is very impressed by the works of Antoine Chekhov, the Russian writer, and from the perspective of the performance, influenced by some of the pioneers of modern Iranian fiction including Sadegh Hedayat, Sadegh Chubak, Gholam Hossein Sa'edi, Ibrahim Golestan, and so on. The use of narratives regulated by cosmic time, individualist characterization, the invention of the angle of view in the entire narrative and the selection of places for the creation and advancement of the adventure are among the most important components of which Iran's leading cinema, and in particular the Shahid Saless cinema Literature borrowed. This is the very close connection between shahid saless and literary criticism, bringing his cinema to the borderline. (Sheikh Mehdi and Gholamali, 2013: 30)

According to the above, movies (a simple event) and (still life), both produced at the beginning of the 70's, are very successful examples of how to reproduce the intolerance of expression in Iranian cinema.

### **Acinema and (a simple event)**

The film (a simple event) directed by Sohrab Shahid Saless and writer Omid Rouhani, was produced in 1974. This narrative film is the life of a student named Mohammad Zamani who lives with a mother and father-in-law, and is forced to help his parents through his everyday work, which is why he is lagging behind.

Shahid saless was able to recognize the kind of Iranian cinema with a film (a simple event) that, with the commonly used criteria for the production of cinema and cassette decades of 50, 60 and 70s influenced by the aesthetics of the narrative and executable films of the category. How many were Hindus and Americans? There was a great deal of distance between them, and based on the defining and analytical characteristics of Jean-Francois Lyotard's

perspective, it can be considered as an unparalleled example of glamorous films in Iran. In Lyotard's view, Acinema is defined economically in the category of cinema based on a libido-based economy or an unrecovered economy. This type of economy is located in front of the capitalist, value, commercial and market economy and its origin is the principle of mental and existential pleasure of the creator of the work. Lyotard in his glorious essay, motion, and its types, is also an integral part of knowing. From the perspective of the cinematic, Acinema has two types of (permanent stagnation) and (intense motion). Due to historical backwardness of the important industrial revolutions, the Iranian society has always been far from the extreme movement that was the constructor of a kind of poetic abstraction in Western culture, and follows a steady, radical-philosophical root in our rich culture. Our scholars and mystics generally have encouraged their followers to somehow have an Eastern reflection along with a rest so that one, by meditating in a phenomenon, avoids the apparent motion, transforms his soul and acquires new knowledge of the phenomenon.

The film "A Simple event" is precisely a film that can recognize the two basic features of Acinema, namely, libidinal economics and sustainable longevity in terms of its narrative and style. The story narratives are a hard-working and very deprived family whose income simply meets their very basic daily needs and suffers from a lack of recreation and surplus purchases. This important thing from the very beginning of the film, which the father trapped his fish every day from the sea and sold with the help of his child, is evident in the daily economic status of workers who are threatened at any moment in their economic life, and their tables are empty. Also at the end of the film and after the mother's death, when the father plans to buy a suit for his only child - and as evidence suggests after years - because of the doubling of the cost of goods with his little capital, this Work is discontinued and continues to live in a steady stream of repetitions. Naturally, one of the most important features of the film, which gives

it a nuance of the wave, is the difference between illustrating the life of the middle class or the worker of happiness that we see in the movie theater in those days. With a clear-cut approach, it avoids adherence to the rules of the star system, in which actors are used to guarantee the sale of films, and all actors in the film are among those who are not acting and who play the main roles of life. Are themselves, have been chosen. The narrative story of the film has also marginally dwindled from the apparent ups and downs of the Iranian cinematic film in those decades, and the story is merely a reflection of the situation of the family living in constant daily activities, and the only thing happening is the death of the mother, which is so much Simple and free from stented and irritating features.

The film resides in its decoupling system, in its size, angles and type of camera movements, and rarely follows the characters. The camera, like a watchdog person, records the simple story of the film and the relationship between human being and the family. Obviously, such a decoupage is for the audience to simultaneously see the phenomenon as well as an insight about what it sees. The length of the plans from the perspective of the long time and the director did not use accelerated cadres, and preferred to transfer images, feeds or blacken the image to associate more time with the viewer. This decoupage system has more and more helped the audience to understand the cold relationships between characters, especially in the family.

Constant action design for people in the film is one of the most important features of the emphasis on repetition, so that we become more familiar with the loneliness and static nature of family life. For example, a boat home delivery, a family meal at the promise of dinner, a daily fishing trip by the father, a daily retention of the boy from the homework, etc., which, without the slightest variation, is repeated every day. These frequent and predictable actions define the critical approach to capitalist economic circulation, which is one of the most tragic features of martyrs' treasures of cinema.

### Acinema and (Still life)

The film "The still life" is a movie that was produced in 1976 by the writer and director of Sohrab Shahid Saless after a successful "A simple event" experience. This movie is known by most critics and cinema researchers as the most important movie of sohrab shahid saless. The film "The still life" is the story of an elderly couple living in a remote area. One day the old man, who is busy with the profession, receives his retirement order and must be left to a young person.

The title of the film reminds audience of the art of painting as "Still life". The immortal nature is referred to as a painting in which immortal and non-moving objects are depicted. These objects often include ordinary and natural objects that are used in everyday life; things like flowers, food, fruit, stone, jug, pot, glass, coin, etc.

The "Still life" movie is totally loyal to this style of content and visual processing. The story of the movie, like the Saless's previous film "A Simple event", is a story without the usual complexity of narrative, which aims to highlight the stagnant acts of humans, such as the immortal objects and the living situation of the elderly and poor couple who earn. Generally, they are the only livelihoods they spend on their daily activities and can't go beyond their physiological and biological needs. The film was produced with very little budget and with the production of Parviz Sayad, which at that time caused the creation of a surprise among the cinema. By adopting a mini-financial and miniaturist approach in its various pillars, the film was able to become a successful successor in the field of Acinema in Iran. The main location of the movie is summarized in a shabby cottage and the film is completely realistic and far from the finest of cinema production. The director has tried to link his audience to the difficult living conditions of the elderly couple, using simple signs and scenes out of tune-up. The stagnation of the camera helps in the life of the non-painter's contractual movements and challenges the audience with a mental challenge in determining whether or not the film is cinematic.

The film has tried to culminate in its dialogue system by adopting an approach that is one of the most important features of Acinema in narrative elements. The approach to the elements of the film is in the sense of eliminating abnormalities and additions that generally exist purely to justify the field of entertainment, the production of films that occupied most of the cinema screenings of the 50's, 60's and 70's in Iran's cinema halls. The film dialogues are arranged in such a way that they do not speak in the film unless they are needed for the sake of solving. Even when the triangular cycle of movie characters completes with the presence of a child soldier in the family, we do not see a change in the dialogue system. The process is an approach that we can recognize in other film style elements, such as music. The soundtrack, which was one of the most important features of the films of those decades and was generally in the form of a fun and entertaining, has no place in the film of immortal nature, and is a kind of stable silence on the film, which maybe no musical can't play the role that silence plays in the translation of the theme of the work for the audience. One of the most important sequences of the film, which was used even later in the movie "Naseredin Shah actor of Cinema" directed by Mohsen Makhmalbaf in a tune, was the needle threading by the old woman, which is one of the longest plans in history in terms of material time Iranian cinema. During this sequence, the old woman tries to scratch her needle several times and eventually succeeds in doing so. Shahid Saless's insistence on recording this plan, with the same coordinates in the world, establishes a special link between cosmic-acinema time and material-linear times that had already been very limited before it in Iran's cinema. The plan has a slow rhythm in the face but has a temperate or intense internal rhythm in the minds of the audience, and at any moment it marks the viewer with the character of the old woman.

"Still life" is a movie played several reactions during the play, which was sometimes fierce and sometimes subtle and admirable, but the thing that everyone

admits is that the film represents a different style and personal tone is. The film unveils a cinematic phenomenon that does not fit any of the so-called aesthetic criteria of the current movie cinema in those days, which is why many movie cinema activists of that era have avoided filming this movie and this is the point. An important thing in Acinema is the naming of the movie (Still life).

### Discussion

According to the background section of the research, which was mentioned at the beginning of the article, and the lack of examination of Sohrab Shahid Saless's cinema from the perspective of Acinema's narrative and light elements, as well as the lack of systematic introduction of Acinema's components from the perspective of Jean-Francois Lyotard, we can claim that the achievement of this article, The introduction of the effects of Shahid Saless's cinematic elements is a stable state of affairs and a non-returning or libido-based economy that is fully consistent with its universal definition, especially in two films (a simple event) and (Still life) Has taken.

### Conclusion

Sohrab Shahid Saless has always been one of the preeminent cinema makers of the pre-Islamic revolution in Iran, for familiarizing himself with modern and contemporary art forms of the world, as well as the constructive relationship with the dissenting artistic and literary movements of the 50s, 60s and 70s in Iran.

Using self-conscious and unconsciously, using the teachings of modern and non-traditional art, he was able to apply creativity distortions in his narrative and executive patterns of the cinema, which is theoretically closely associated with Lyotard's noble theory. Lyotard, in his definition, believes that if we are to describe the cinema by moving and displaying a balanced motion, then two categories of movements, excessive movement and excessive stagnation, which are unbalanced in the form of movements, can be called (Acinema) because in

fact the negation the base of the image is the image recognition. In fact, these gestures, in the familiar sense of motion, disrupt and direct the audience towards a new world of meaning in the cinema. On the other hand, the type of economy is defined in Acinema, libido or irreversible, which is in contrast with the capitalist economy and the rotation of identity. An economy that seeks to satisfy the original pleasures of the cinematic existential self and favors the criteria of the cinematic theater.

During his filmmaking in Iran, Sohrab Shahid Saless's cinema, due to the economic and political characteristics of that decade, took a leading position and managed to strike a prominent distance against the mainstream cinema and become somewhat nasty. The films (a simple event) and (Still life) of Sohrab Shahid Saless are brilliant points in the history of Iranian cinema, which can be considered as exemplary examples of the thinking and execution of nudity in the country. Both films are based on state-centered narratives, static decoupage, and the end of the reflections on the overall patterns of film production in the Iranian body during the last decades before the Islamic Revolution, and the audience is faced with an intransigent expression in the cinema.

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#### HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE

Sarsangi, M. & Soleimanzadeh, H. (2018). Sohrab Shahid Saless and Acinema in Iran (Case study: A simple event and Still Life). *Bagh- e Nazar*, 15 (60):33-40.

DOI: 10.22034/bagh.2018.62763

URL: [http://www.bagh-sj.com/article\\_62763\\_en.html](http://www.bagh-sj.com/article_62763_en.html)

