

## Power and Resistance in the Representation of Woman in the Paintings of Association of Iranian Painter's (AIP) members\*

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### Abstract

Two major different approaches have been considered for “power”. One of them is an oriented approach with a direction from the top towards down, in which the subject of power is applying factor on the object of power; in contrast the other one is the Foucault’s approach of “power” which lacks direction and the matter can be either subject or object at one time. In this approach, it is possible to resist against power and this kind of power is forming human life. Several tools can be used in the exercise of power, especially in gender power. One of the most important tools is “the look”. The Gaze theories which investigate the ways of male’s power exercising especially on the female figure by peruse of the gaze, particularly the voyeuristic male gaze, develop a way to the expression of power in the visual arts. In present study, the main aim is to answer the manner in which the power is exerted in representation of women in paintings, and to seek how a woman is represented as a power agent and the relation of the look of the figure to the audience. The hypothesis, is that the artist resists against the dominance of the governmental supervising institution, but on the other hand due to the cultural and religious reasons, by using visual techniques the woman is abstained of being the subject of the gender power stereotypes. The relationship between the use of visual elements, the look, power and resistance has been investigated by studying the gaze types. Hence, by using library-mining and choosing samples from the paintings of the members of Association of Iranian Painters and considering the gaze theory the works which has depicted woman’s figure have been analyzed. The statistics were analyzed by IBM SPSS software, and results have discussed according to the Foucault’s approach of power. The results show that the represented woman is not considered as passive and dominated being by the artist. It means, the woman is not the subject of the action of looking. This is aligned with proposed resistance by Foucault. The returned look, particularly the gaze to the viewer, makes woman as the agent of power. The artist uses all the factors and basics of visual arts, strictly the woman is placed in level eye angle which means the equal power position with the artist and the viewer; but the relation between artist and audience is a common kind of power. The audience has no opportunity to exercise power over artist and the artist guides him/her how to look by technical skills. Cultural exclusions that are affected by social and religious culture of artist have more effects on hedonistic intuitive feelings and led the artist to be in accordance with the cultural, social and political power which monitors the activities of AIP. Showing naked women to be the subject of voyeuristic gaze is refused but his propensity of representing woman without hijab is not ignored.

### Keywords

Power, The gaze, Contemporary painting, The Iranian painter’s association.

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## Introduction

The theory of “the gaze” which has formed based on - psychological methods of Lacan, sociological procedures of Michel Foucault and cinematic theories of Laura Mulvey- analyzes and reviews the ways of female figure arrangement in the context of artworks to investigate their being dominated by men’s power and uses philosophical, psychological and feminist interpretations to criticize them. Although the most usage of these theories is in cinematic studies, television and media arts studies, they have been used by feminist critics to analyze the nudity of female figures in visual arts. Two different approaches can be considered to the concept of “power”. In the most common approach, the “power” is reduced to an instrument of domination, control, surveillance, and repression and it is allocated to the exclusive or special people in a limited form and exercised on the weak, powerless people. This approach divides the social actors into two categories governors / takers, dominance / submissiveness, oppressors / oppressed with a simple vision of human society; one of them is the subject of power and another one is the object of power. In contrast, the Foucault’s approach has completely different viewpoint about power and considers the topic as both of subject and object of power, simultaneously. In this approach there is no certain trend to the exercise of power. This type of power is like a continuous and permanent process in social relations and it is impossible to consider social relations without it, because this type of power is like a generating component which produces relations and characteristics of the social world. The Foucault’s definition of power doesn’t neglect the asymmetrical social relations, rather than it tries to change the deterministic reduced power relations between oppressive and oppressed and provides broader and more comprehensive definition of power and by emphasizing on empowerment and human activity, provides opportunities to resistance to power and reveals the true nature of intertwined power into social relations, that in its most repressive form is the generator of human operant and subjectivity . It tries

to show that the deterrent and repressive considered power, forms the human life and keeps its dynamism, (Ghahramani, 2014: 60-61). According to the activity of Association of Iranian Painters (AIP)<sup>1</sup> as a formal institution in which professional to painters are the official members<sup>2</sup>, the authors have analyzed 178 paintings, that the female figures have represented to study the matter of “power” by using the theory of “the gaze”. It has been tried to investigate the using of visual factors at the issue of “to be looked” and its relationship with power. The results are discussed by considering the Foucault’s approach of power.

## • Literary Review

It has been common to use the theories of “gaze” and “male gaze” in the cinema and feminist criticism and also visual arts studies when Laura Mulvey (1975) has used them in her study “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema” to argue that the cinematic apparatus of classical Hollywood cinema inevitably put the spectator in a masculine subject position, with the figure of the woman on screen as the object of desire and “the male gaze”. As Roberts(1998) and Korsmeyer (2004) said The most famous visual work which has been criticized based on this approach by critics such as Linda Nochlin and others is the “Susanna and the elders”, in particular, version of Artemisia Gentileschi. Lutz and Collins (1994) in the study of the photos of National Geographic magazine, have argued that in the western culture, those who have weaker personality - women, children, Colored, the poor and indigenous people and also the group which are unfamiliar to technology- have more gaze to the camera compare to modern people; while people with power, looking to the other point. On the other hand, based on Argyle (1975) the level of the gaze is in relation with the position or the state of dominance of a person or his proficiency: People with higher position, gaze more when they speak compare to when they listen. Meyrowitz (1985) said a person with superior status has a right to look at his subordinate for more time or even to stare, but the subordinate person is expected to cover his/her look and eyes. Ravadrad, Moridi and Taghizadegan

(2010) in their article “Analyzing Women’s Representation in Contemporary Iranian Painting” have investigated distinction between men and women paintings and stated that while men’s paintings portray women in an imaginary space, for women, a woman’s painting is a field of resistance against the masculine subjectivity and, in Foucault’s words, is a war against making the woman a subject. The Woman artists attempt to deconstruct the visual form which men have constructed about women. They resist subjectivization, and using new visual strategies, create gaps in the reproduction of masculine dominant culture. Sojodi and Tabatabaie Yazdi (2014/2015) in their study “Visual gender ideology in the works of male and female painters in the last six decades in Iran” have investigated the represented portraits of women in contemporary paintings of Iran from the beginning of modernization period until now with the approach of visual social semiotics and stated that the gender discriminatory approach in the representation of women in men’s paintings has been moderated progressively from the first days of modern painting in Iran. But it has been conducted no study on using the theory of “gaze” and “Foucault’s approach to the power” in the area of visual arts of Iran. The main aim of this study is to answer the question of how power is exercising in representation of female figure in paintings.

The gaze on the figure specially the voyeuristic gaze of audiences makes the woman the subject of the artworks which obliges her to be dominated by male power. The second question is the relationship of the represented figure of woman in the power position and her look to the audiences. Therefore the relevance of the gaze to the power relations in representation of female figure is investigated. The research hypothesis is that due to the cultural and religious reasons despite resisting the supervising power institution, the artist refuses the female figure to be the subject of the gender power stereotypes, by utilizing the visual techniques.

#### • Research Methodology

In this study, 178 statistical samples were selected

from the paintings AIP members, in which the main element is the representation of female figure for the investigation of the issue of “power”. The content analysis methodology is based on quantitative and qualitative methods. Documentary information from library and digital resources are used to prepare data of the research. The statistical population included available paintings of the members in the AIP’s website. The samples were selected in two stages based on the proportion rate of male (28.4%) and female (71.6%) of membered artists: A) The conscious selection of the works which have represented female figure and B) Random selection of samples based on Cochran’s statistical formula by using Microsoft Excel 2013 with 95% of accuracy. An analytical questionnaire with 63 analytical questions was provided to evaluate the kinds of the look, visual and semantic elements affecting it. The results were quantitatively analyzed by IBM SPSS statistical software and then were analyzed qualitatively.

#### The Gaze

The term “gaze” has been firstly proposed by Lacan. It is the state in which a mature person looks at himself in the mirror and becomes aware of one can be viewed which may cause losing his autonomy. As Mulvey says according to the Lacan this stage is similar to the mirror stage of childhood which leads child to understand self – ego, (Mast & Cohen, 2010: 803-816).

After him, the term has been used in the film theory in the 1970s but which is now more broadly used by media theorists to refer both to the ways in which viewers look at images of people in any visual medium and to the gaze of those depicted in visual texts, (Chandler, 1998). Some theorists believe that there is a difference between “the look” and “the gaze”. “The look” is a perceptual mode, while “the gaze” is a form of looking in which is a reflection of gender hedonistic desires (Evans & Gamman, 2005: 16). According to Jonathan Schroeder, “to gaze implies more than to look at - it signifies a psychological relationship of power, in which the gazer is superior to the object of

the gaze” (Schroeder, 1998: 208) The term “the male gaze” has become something of a feminist cliché for referring to the voyeuristic way in which men look at women, (Evans & Gamman, 2005: 13) and has been used by Laura Mulvey in the essay of “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema”. As Mulvey noted “in a world ordered by sexual imbalances, pleasure in looking split between active / male and passive / female”, (McQuillan, 2000: 179).

“Feminist scholars widely concur that gender is typically configured both in written texts and now in film in terms of subject-object relations, in which masculinity is associated with subjectivity and femininity with objectivity”, (Glancy, 1995: 290). “As Laura Mulvey puts it, women are assigned the passive status of being-looked-at, whereas men are the active subjects who look. Analysis of vision and of what has become known as “the male gaze” presume that the ability to look at others is an indication of sexual and social power” (Korsmeyer, 2004: 53). Theories of the gaze stress the activity of vision, its mastery and control of the aesthetic object, (Ibid). According to Kate Millett, the patriarchal ideology magnifies the biological differences between men and women to ensure that men have always dominated or “masculine” role and women have always subordinated or “feminine” role (Tong, 2009: 52). The initial default on the visual images is that the effects of culture on the visual impressions are more than hedonistic feelings. Along with the mechanical reproduction and recording visual images, Western culture has overcome the viewing and recording. This assumption about visual images has hit women by a special way. Being exposure to looking is not a normal activity. In this culture, the way of looking is controlled by men. Indeed, looking leads to empowering and the inability of women in responding this aggressive and critical looking is a sign of obedience, (Coward, 2001: 33-34). The gaze theories not only effect on the status of men and women in the text, but also contain a fantastic view to guide the viewer about how to see. One of the characteristics in creation of artistic texts which is in accordance with

“the gaze” and “the male gaze” and directs the spectator to the ways of seeing the work, is the depicting of woman body and showing her naked. In this regard, Berger has used two terms: “naked” and “nude”: Being naked is necessarily the case without clothes which leads to being gazed. “A naked body has to be seen as an object in order to become a nude. Nakedness reveals itself. Nudity is placed on display” (Berger, 1972: 54).

### Forms of Gaze

As Chandler cited, several key forms of gaze can be identified in photographic, filmic or televisual texts, or in figurative art. The most obvious typology is based on who is doing the looking, of which the following are the most commonly cited: 1. The spectator’s gaze: the gaze of the viewer at an image of a person (or animal, or object) in the text; 2. The intra-diegetic gaze: a gaze of one depicted person at another (or at an animal or an object) within the world of the text (typically depicted in filmic and televisual media by a subjective ‘point-of-view shot’); 3. The direct or extra-diegetic address to the viewer: the gaze of a person (or quasi-human being) depicted in the text looking ‘out of the frame’ as if at the viewer, with associated gestures and postures; 4. the look of the camera - the way that the camera itself appears to look at the people (or animals or objects) depicted; less metaphorically, the gaze of the filmmaker or photographer which we name it here the gaze of artist (Chandler, 1998).

### Power

It was said that in contrast to common approach of power which considers it as an instrument of domination, control and surveillance, and repression, there is Foucault’s approach which provides ways to resistance against power by the broader definition of power and emphasis on empowerment and human activity. Foucault suggests a set of resistances which opposition to the power of men over women is one of them. According to his viewpoint, common factor of all these resistances are: 1. They are “transversal”

struggles: that are not limited to a particular country, 2. The target of struggle is to influence the effect of power, 3. The struggles are “immediate” for two reasons: firstly, criticizing the instances of power that are the closest to them, those which exercise their action on individuals and secondly, because it is not expected to achieve a solution in the future date (for example in the case of liberation promising), 4. They are struggles which question the status of the individual; 5. they stand against with those effects of power which are linked to knowledge, qualification and competence and finally; 6. all these struggles revolve around the question of : Who we are?. It means to refuse the abstractions of economic and ideological state violence which ignores individuality and to reject a scientific or administrative inquisition that determines who one is [identity]. In such concept, the main objective of them is more likely a special technique, a form of power rather than attack on the institution of power or a group, class or elites. This form of power which influence on daily life immediately, recognizes people with their special individuality, limits them to their identity and imposes them a law of truth that they must recognize and others must have recognize in him. it is a form of power that makes individuals subjects, (Foucault, 2000: 329-331). “A power relationship can only be articulated on the basis of two elements that are indispensable if it is really to be a power relationship: that “the other”(the one over whom power is exercised) is recognized and maintained to the very end as a subject who acts: and that, faced with a relationship of power a whole field of responses, reactions, results and possible inventions may open up”, (Ibid: 340).

### Analytical Model

Among four types of gazes posed by Chandler (Chandler, 1998), three types were selected to answer to the main question of the study about the exercise of power in representation of the female figure in paintings<sup>4</sup>: 1. The look of the spectator: an artist may use visual factors and techniques to put an component

in exposure to looking which can lead to “the gaze” i.e. a constant eye of viewer on the element; or it may lead that the element to be seen periodic with looking around whole of work without gazing on a special element in the work which is overall called “the look”. Two categories of visual factors can highlight the represented female figure and subjected her to “be gazed”. The first category includes: spatial location, being dominance in the composition, the position to the points and golden ratios, the use of perspective, color composition, the use of light, contrast in darkness and light and exposure by other components and other components be recessive in the work. The other category includes ocular factors like: naked body, emphasizing the characteristics of a woman’s body, covered figures and beautiful or ideal portrayal of women which could highlight the figure of woman and causes her to be looked or gazed. For investigation of the visual factors 19 questions and 6 ones for ocular factors have been used in a special order. The hedonistic pleasures are achieved in representing a woman in the painting, when the figure is exposure to ocular factors of nudity such as being naked and emphasize the feminine features of organs or representing woman in a seductive mode which are analyzed by using 5 questions. 2. The extra-diegetic Look: the depicted figures can gaze to the viewer (extra-diegetic address), looking at the viewer, gaze or look to a direction out of painting or none of them. Studying this kind of looking links to the representation status of figure’s eyes, direction of the look, facial expressions and posture of the head relative to the body which investigated by posing 6 questions. 3. The Look of artist: in addition to direct influence of the artist on three previous parts, an artist displays his understanding and recognition about depicted figure by visual provisions such as angle of view, distance, apparent proximity (in relation to camera work: shots, and in visual arts we can call it view), frame and also other types of ocular factors such as dynamics and mobility and interactivity and vulnerabilities of figure or possession the figure to

give it a role apart from being a woman; and also determines it for viewer to how see and act. The factors were investigated by 18 questions. The analysis of 14 questions about the posture the head of figure to the body, the status of the eye representation, facial expressions, the size of body of woman, the angle of view in horizontal and vertical axis, the apparent proximity in representation, the state of allegory and not to take the possession of the figure of woman to induce her to have another entity instead of her, and being invulnerable, puts her in the power position, that could answer to the question of the relation of being in the power position and the look of the woman figure.

### Results and discussion

**The look of the spectator:** With summarizing the most important visual elements and ocular factors affecting the issue of female figure's exposure to look in tables 1 and 2, it can be observed that in 48.3% of the artworks the female figure is being gazed by spectator, in 44.4% is just looking by the viewer without any special attention and in 7.3% the depicted figure is not under vision. The statistical test was used to evaluate the accuracy of results and since the variables of study are non-parametric, the nonparametric test of Tau -B. Kendall showed that there is a significant statistical relationship between exposing figure to look and using visual elements based on obtained correlation coefficient (0.533) and Sig=0.000, which shows the 99% confidence level in error level of less than 0.01. But the results for utilizing ocular factors to exposure to look of female figure indicated that according to the amount of Sig=0.331 which is higher than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H0) is being confirmed, that means the use of ocular factors to exposure female figure to look, is not common in studied artworks. The correlation coefficient (0.066) also indicated the matter.

**The extra-diegetic Look:** Table 3 shows the relation between the look outside the artworks and the representation of eyes, facial expressions and the

posture of the head of the figure relative to its body. In 60.1% of the artworks the look out of the frame is seen in which in 39.3%; the depicted woman is gazed to the spectator, in 3.9% looks at viewer, in 11.8% gazed somewhere outside the frame and in 5.1% just looking outside. One-sample chi-square test confirms these results (df=4, Sig.=0.000, the chi-square value is 117.281).

**The artist's look:** In 49.4% of the works artist has shown the portrait, in 28.7% the bust and in 21.9% the full-length body have been used to represent the female figure. The ways of utilizing the angle of view in vertical and horizontal axes, apparent proximity, and possession of female figure for another entity and the status of being invulnerable by artist to represent the woman are shown in tables 4 and 5 in brief.

**Woman in power position:** In this test, being in a position of power for the female figure was obtained by investigating the state of figure's head to its body, the representation of the eyes, facial expressions, how the female figure in terms of body size, full-face pose, angle of view in the horizontal and vertical axes, the used apparent proximity (view), possession of female figure for another entity and the status of being invulnerable of represented woman. The Kendall Tau coefficient (0.677) and the value of Sig.= 0.000, indicate a significant relationship at confidence level of 99%. It means that there is a relationship between woman's gaze to the audience and being her in the power position.

### The quantitative discussion

According to the two categories of definitions were stated to power, the gaze theories use the current division of powers with the oppositions of subject / object, dominant / subordinate and men/women with affirmation on exposing female figure to look. In these theories the emphasis is on active / male and passive / female which indicate the sexual and social power of him. It means that the person in the position of power has the right to look. Inability to restore sight means getting in the position of obedience. It

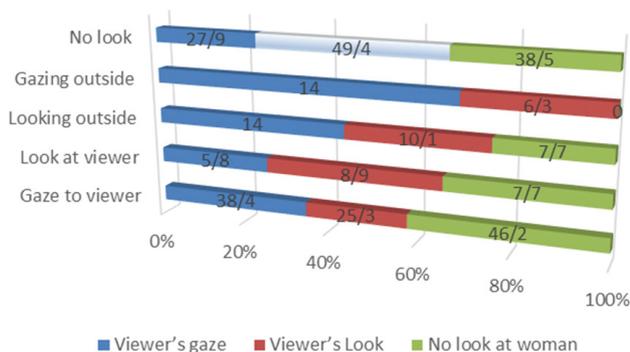
Table 1. The effect of visual factors on the look of spectator's to the female figures. Source: authors.

Visual Factors		Spectator's Look		The Spectator's Look to Represented Woman					
				Spectator's Gaze		Spectator's Look		No look to Woman	
				Frequency	Number	Frequency	Number	Frequency	Number
				48.3	86	44.4	79	7.3	13
The woman's placement in composition	Foreground	77.9	67	60.8	48	46.2	6		
	Middle ground	20.9	18	36.7	29	30.8	4		
	Background	0.0	0	2.5	2	23.1	3		
The dominance of figure in composition	Very dominant & dominant	88.4	76	36.7	25	7.6	1		
	No matter	9.3	8	49.3	39	30.8	4		
	Defeated & very Defeated	2.3	2	14	11	61.6	8		
The scale of figure to the composition	Very large & Large	58.1	50	15.3	12	7.7	1		
	Proportional	38.4	33	75.9	60	61.5	8		
	Small & very small	3.5	3	8.8	7	30.8	4		
The size of figure to other components	Very large & Large	10.5	9	5	4	7.7	1		
	Proportional	53.3	46	79.9	63	76.9	10		
	Small & very small	1.2	1	5.1	4	15.4	2		
The placement of figure to golden ratios	In Golden ratios	98.8	5	97.5	77	76.9	10		
	In Golden Points	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0		
	Out of golden ratios and points	1.2	1	2.5	2	23.1	3		
The visibility of figure by other components	Yes	52.3	45	58.2	46	7.7	1		
	No	47.4	41	41.8	33	92.3	12		
The visibility of figure by color composition	Yes	76.7	66	54.4	43	15.4	2		
	No	23.3	20	45.3	36	84.6	11		
The contrast in artwork	Very Intense & Intense	51.2	44	27.8	22	7.7	1		
	Moderate	43	37	50.6	40	69.2	9		
	Low & very Low	5.8	5	21.6	17	23.1	3		
The Lightening of figure	Very Intense & Intense	57	49	38	30	61.5	8		
	Moderate	25.6	22	15.2	12	7.7	1		
	Low & very Low	15.1	13	38	30	30.8	4		
The placement of figure to negative and positive space	In Positive space	98.8	85	92.4	73	84.6	11		
	In Negative space	1.2	1	7.6	6	15.4	2		

was seen in present study that in the 48.3% of works, female figure has exposed to the gaze of viewer. This highlighting just been made by visual factors. The under study ocular factors included factors that could expose female figure in hedonistic and voyeuristic gaze. According to the table (2), only in 12.8% percent of works female figure has been exposed to gaze by representing bare body and for this reason, the woman can be considered naked. But, even in this partial representing only in 1.2% the woman's body organs has been emphasized and just in 2.3% the details of the body are shown, which the results can be neglected. There was observed no seductive mode in figures representation. It means that although the represented female figure has been exposed to gaze, but its purpose was not to turn female figure to be the subject of voyeuristic male pleasure.

According to the table (3), 39.3% percent of female figure of represented woman has gazed out the story to the audience. In a comparative study between works with audience's look to woman and works with restoring sight to the viewers by women, it was found that in 38.4% of those works which the woman has been exposed to gaze by viewer, the viewer has been also gazed by woman in the paintings, (Fig. 1-a). In 25.3% of those works which the female has been exposed to look by viewer, the viewer has been also looked by female figure (Fig. 1-b.); but in those works (46.2%) which female figure has not been exposed to the gaze or look of viewer, the woman in the painting has gazed to the viewer, (Fig. 1-c.); (Diagram 1).

Comparison of the gaze to woman and its restoration by woman



These results suggest that the represented women are not in the passive position and themselves are beginner of an action and escape from to be subjected. When the artist uses visual factors and provisions for artistic expression, besides strengthening the apparent of structure, they also transfer a concept and meaning. The used apparent proximate (view) and angle of view in artworks guide the audience about how to see by transferring related information to him. In using various apparent proximate (views) in a visual artwork, the close-up view reflects the focus on the main theme, emphasizing individuality, exposing emotions, spirit and inner emotions and details. The medium shot view reflect subject interaction with the environment, relationships between people (in a limited community) and the subject's action and in long- shot view a glimpse, a precursor to a general event information, publicity and the shallow and general relationship between the subject and the background (dominance of the context) is mentioned. Artist with a choice of viewing angles in the horizontal axis intends to transfer some concepts. The facing viewing angle indicates closely relations and participation, the angle from behind means unbiased and non-invasive, the side view angle reflects alienation and resignation and the three quarters-face angle reflects being stranger. In choosing the viewing angle in the vertical axis; upward angle expresses the power and magnitude, importance and victory, the level angle means equality, natural and being realistic and downward viewing angles is a sign of weakness and small and unimportant losers, (Sedghi, 2010: 106 & 125). In moving from full-height body representing to the portrait, showing details and recognition about the topic of representation is increased (Table 2,3).

The results of tables 4 and 5 show that the artist's using of apparent proximity (view) is in accordance with visual principles and the portrait and bust of figure has been mostly represented by very close-up and close-up view and the long-shot and very far has been mostly used to show full-height of the figure. The long-shot and full-height of the figure has had a

<p>1.a. Viewer gaze- gaze to viewer</p>	<p>1.b. Viewer look- Look at viewer</p>
	
<p>1.c. No look at woman- gaze at viewer</p>	<p>Fig.1. The Look of viewer to woman and the restored look by woman to viewer. Source: AIP website.                  Artist's Name: 1-c.)Mozafari, Masoumeh.                  1-a.)Movahed, Mohadeseh.                  1-b.)Karami, Samira.</p>
	

glimpse to the topic and expresses the relationship between subject and the context. In 95.7% of portraits represented by close-up and very close-up view, the woman has been exposed to the gaze of viewer and in contrast, in 75% percent of under study artworks, the represented woman in the painting has gazed to the viewer in a same view.

It seems that such kind of closeness not only brings the audience to focus on the issue and emphasizes on the identity of represented female, but also closes the woman to audience by bringing her to the surface of painting and also provides the same viewpoint for woman's look to the viewer. In 66.7% of selected samples, the view angle in horizontal axis, is the facing view and in 29.2% is the oblique angle of view, it means that the artists has clearly exposed woman to viewer with an "self" identity. According to the significant difference of these two viewing

angles, considering "the other" identity for woman has been occurred gradually with selecting oblique angle. But about the artworks in which the represented woman has gazed to audience, in 85% of them the frontal angle and in 15% oblique angle have been selected, which can mean clear participation and interaction of depicted woman with the viewer without assuming the audience as "the other" and vice versa. In the case of half-length represented figures, 55.2% percent have been painted by very close-up and close-up view. In 37.9% medium shot angles are the selection. Since depicting the figure in half-length causes the reduction of the topic's identification compared to Portrait representation, the results are expectable. The same results have been repeated for the case of represented figure gazing to the viewer. It means that the close-up and very close-up view in 44.4% of samples are the selection and medium shot viewing angles have been used in 33.3% of cases to represent bust of the figure. The selected viewing angles in horizontal axes of 69% of artworks were facing angle and just 20.7% of them have used the oblique angle, (Fig. 2.a. - 2.1.). In 72.2% of represented busts the depicted

Table 2. The effects of Ocular factors on the look of the spectator’s on female figure. Source: authors.

Spectator’s Look		The Spectator’s Look to Represented Woman					
		Spectator’s Gaze		Spectator’s Look		No look to Woman	
		Frequency	Number	Frequency	Number	Frequency	Number
Ocular Factors		48.3	86	44.4	79	7.3	13
Being naked	Yes	12.8	11	5.1	4	7.7	1
	No	87.2	75	94.9	75	92.3	12
Emphasize on woman organs if naked	Not represented	72.3	63	81	64	100	13
	Covered with visual techniques	10.5	9	6.3	5	0.0	0
	Just represented	15.1	13	10.1	8	0.0	0
	Emphasized	1.2	1	1.3	1	0.0	0
Women features representation	Symbolic	0.0	0	2.5	2	0.0	0
	Showing details of organs	2.3	2	2.5	2	0.0	0
	Showing fertility characteristic	2.3	2	0.0	0	0.0	0
	Organs representation without emphasize and unclear	17.4	15	12.7	10	0.0	0
The status of hijab	Head uncovered	83.7	72	69.6	55	53.8	7
	Just head covered	9.3	8	20.3	16	30.8	4
	Covered in chador	5.8	5	7.6	6	15.4	2

figure has gazed to the audience in facing view and 22.2% in oblique angle, which are expected. The procedure has been also observed in full-height representation of the figure. The female figure has been exposed to the gaze of audience in medium shot in 48.5% of works and 45.5% with long-shot views. The subject can be in acting position or interaction by using medium shot view (Fig. 2-m. -2.p.)

With comparing the results of represented woman gaze to the audience, it can be seen that in 28.6% of cases, the represented woman has gazed at the audience in medium shot view and also in 66.7% of them in long-shot view. It means that more than half of women whom had been gazed by audience in medium shot view, have had participated the action and gazed at the audience and women who gazed in outer (long-shot) view, besides having relationship with the context, have had interaction with audience,

(Fig. 2.q - 2-r.).

About choosing viewing angle in vertical axis, in all three representation groups of portrait, bust and full-height with 85% upward trend, the level viewing angle has been selected. It means that the represented figure is in equal status with the audience.

The results of table 4 show that the artist has not possession over the represented woman to makes her to have another identity instead of herself. In 79.8% percent of cases, the represented woman is not vulnerable and it is not needed to argue that lack of ownership and delegated other roles can show woman’s individual identity and lack of vulnerability is a sign of her power and having no trend to be dominated by others.

**The qualitative discussion**

According to the obtained results, it can be said that

Table 3. The look of represented woman to the spectator. Source: authors.

The look out of painting		The look of woman to spectator									
		Gaze to viewer		Look to viewer		Looking outside		Gazing outside		No look	
		Frequency	Number	Frequency	Number	Frequency	Number	Frequency	Number	Frequency	Number
The effective factors in represented look		39.3	70	3.9	7	5.1	9	11.8	21	39.9	71
eyes condition	Completely open and gazed	88.6	62	0.0	0	11.1	1	90.5	19	5.6	4
	Open , not gazed	0.0	0	42.9	3	33.3	3	0.0	0	7.0	5
	Closed eyes or eliminated	5.7	4	57.1	4	44.4	4	4.8	1	50.7	36
	The empty eye sockets	2.9	2	0.0	0	0.0	0	4.8	1	0.0	0
	Covered eyes	2.9	2	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	1.4	1
The face expression	Active	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0
	Happy	8.6	6	14.3	1	0.0	0	0.4	1	9.9	7
	Cold	64.3	45	57.1	4	55.6	5	81.0	17	29.6	21
	Sad	15.7	11	0.0	0	11.1	1	4.8	1	21.1	15
	Astonished	11.4	8	28.6	2	22.2	2	9.5	2	8.5	6
The posture of head	Firm and steady	58.6	41	85.7	6	44.4	4	47.6	10	45.1	32
	Towards down	7.1	5	0.0	0	11.1	1	19.0	4	12.7	9
	Towards up	11.4	8	14.3	1	22.2	2	9.5	2	5.6	4
	Stooped to the body	21.4	15	0.0	0	22.2	2	23.8	5	33.8	24

the power has been represented in under study artworks by utilizing from “looking up”, is not from a type of common definition of power and what has been stated in the gaze theories with interactions of dominant/ subordinated. The represented woman resistances to be subjected and she begins to act and at a same time, gazes at audience by getting into the position of active. In this type of power relation, the participating elements include artist, represented woman, audience and the cultural, political, social authority that exercises its power to the painters Association. In the first glance it seems that the artist is at the top of a pyramid of power and influences

other elements of this pyramid by representing the depicted woman and determining the way in which the painted woman should be exposed to the look of audience, but the results showed that, the artist himself is an audience and exposed to be subjected and gazed when the represented woman resistances to be subjected and restores the gaze to the audience by getting into the level position with the audience. According to the Foucault’s approach this power relation cannot be considered as a power relation from artist to the represented woman, because the represented woman doesn’t remain subjected until the end of action and the relation is cut by subject

2.a. very close view- The gaze to viewer	2.b. very close view- The gaze to viewer	2.c. Facing View-The gaze of viewer	2.d.Three quarter angle- The gaze of viewer
			
2.e. Facing view- The gaze to viewer	2. f. Three quarter angle- The gaze to viewer	2.g. Close view-The gaze of viewer	2.h. Medium view-The gaze of viewer
			
2.i. Close view- The gaze to viewer	2.j. Medium view- The gaze to viewer	2.k. Facing view- The gaze of viewer	2. l. Three quarter angle- The gaze of viewer
			
2.m. Facing view- The gaze to viewer	2. n. Three quarter angle- The gaze to viewer	2.o. Medium view-The gaze of viewer	2.p. Far view- The gaze of viewer
			
2.q. Medium view- The gaze to viewer	2.r. Far view -The gaze to viewer	<p>Fig. 2. The status of using view and angle of view by artist. Source: AIP website.</p> <p>Artist's Name: 2-a.) Masoodi, Alireza. 2-b.) Shams, Nadia.2-c.) Haghghat, Soheila. 2-d.) Nehdaran Dana. 2-e.) Nourowzi, Shiva. 2-f.) Karimi, Atena. 2-g.) NikRavesh, Afshin, 2-h.) Rad, Amir, 2-i.) Zabeti, Ali. 2-j.) Khorshidi, Zahra, 2-k.) Edalat, shohreh.2-l.) Hafezi,Narges. 2-m.) Zeraati, Hossein. 2-n.) Amini, Firoozeh. 2-o.) Yamini Sharif, Fereshteh. 2-p.) Bagheri, Sodeh. 2-q.) Oshidari, Pooneh. 2-r.) Vartanian, Armineh.</p>	
			

changing.

But the relation can be considered as power relation about the artist and audience. The artist exercises his power to the audience by utilizing from all the techniques and determines that how he should see. He has used all the visual elements to subjugate the audience. He even determines the way and position of looking to the created work for audience. Here, an important point is the power relation between artist and official institution of cultural / political authority. According to religious, political and social rules about the ban of representing naked and without hijab female figure, the official state of authority determines the way in which artworks must be presented in the website of Painters Association. Since the artist is under social and religious beliefs,

refuses representing naked woman, but representing the depicted woman without any hijab in most of artworks reveals the power of artist and his opposition with any exercise of power in the face of what is in his mind to represent.

Generally, it can be said that although the present study has different theoretical approach from previous studies on representation of women in contemporary Iranian painting, but its obtained results is similar to the results of previous studies which indicates changes in attitude of the artist to look at the female as a topic. The artists try to change the common attitude of making subjected and aggressive attitude of men to women in the visual look mechanism of resistance.

## Conclusion

Painting is a discursive action which is embodied by its techniques and influences. As it was observed, the members of Association of Iranian Painters have used all the visual elements and techniques and by highlighting the representation of female figure, has utilized these proficiencies to explain the concepts which they have had in their minds. In addition, they utilized these techniques to creating and participating in actions and interactions. Simultaneously, the artist has put the represented woman in the position of action and interaction with the viewer and himself. the woman has been refused to represent in the manner of passive and dominated and subjected to male hedonistic, voyeuristic gaze which undermines the common conception of power relation. The resistance and opposition with this concept of power have been done by representing and highlighting “the look” which can be a tool to exercise power.

It influences masculine power on woman by restoring the look to audience with the conception of being subject and exposing to looking. This immediate influence is exercises on the power agent i.e. the male audience and even on the artist himself which causes them to be in the position of subject and the status of them is under question. But about the interaction between the artist and official institution of cultural, political and social authority, although the artist shows his opposition with being under the control and monitoring his activity by depicting woman without hijab,, the dominance of cultural, social and religious reasons are more important than hedonistic visual feeling and causes him to refuses representing naked female figure. In partial cases, makes it hidden from public view by technical methods which prevents woman of being as subject to the hedonistic feelings and a passive or dominated being that is the main cultural difference in west cultural gaze principles.

## Endnote

1. We call its abbreviation AIP during this study.
2. Requirement for membership in the Association of Iranian Painters is to having one of these conditions which include all professional artists: A) Holding at least a solo exhibition of works by members of the applicant to the date of submission for membership in a trustworthy location, B) having at least one year experience of teaching in the field of painting in a domestic universities or abroad, C) bachelor’s degrees or higher in the field of painting

Table 4. The look of artist I representation of woman and the situation of woman being looked. Source: authors.

Viewer's Look		The viewer's look at female figure								
		the gaze to woman			The look at woman			No look		
Status of represented woman		Portrait's Frequency	Bust's Frequency	Full length's Frequency	Portrait's Frequency	Bust's Frequency	Full length's Frequency	Portrait's Frequency	Bust's Frequency	Full length's Frequency
The artist's look										
Status of woman's face	Full-face	50.0	55.2	54.5	69.2	7.1	38.5	50.0	0.0	66.7
	Three quarters-face	45.8	34.5	30.3	23.1	78.6	40.4	50.0	37.5	33.3
	Profile (side view)	4.2	10.3	15.2	7.7	14.3	19.2	0.0	25.0	0.0
Apparent proximate	Very close & close	95.9	55.2	6.1	23.1	28.6	1.9	0.0	12.5	0.0
	Medium	0.0	37.9	48.5	30.8	28.6	23.1	0.0	12.5	0.0
	Far & very Far	4.2	6.8	45.4	46.2	42.9	75.0	100	75.0	100
Horizontal angle of view	Facing view	66.7	69.0	69.7	76.9	42.9	61.5	50.0	50.0	66.7
	Angle from behind	0.0	10.3	12.1	0.0	0.0	1.9	0.0	12.5	33.3
	Side view	4.2	0.0	9.1	7.7	14.3	15.4	0.0	25.0	0.0
	Three quarter-face	29.2	20.7	9.1	15.4	42.9	21.2	50.0	12.5	0.0
Vertical angle of view	Downward	8.3	0.0	9.1	0.0	0.0	5.8	100	0.0	0.0
	In level	87.5	96.6	87.9	100	92.9	94.2	0.0	100	100
	Upward	4.2	3.4	3.0	0.0	7.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Woman's allegorical status	Representation of reality	83.3	89.7	78.8	76.9	92.9	78.8	100	87.5	100
	Symbolic by signs and symbols	12.5	3.4	9.1	15.4	0.0	13.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Symbolic representation of realism	4.2	6.9	12.1	7.7	7.1	7.7	0.0	12.5	0.0
Possession of woman as another being	Possession by using signs in figure	4.2	0.0	0.0	15.4	0.0	5.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Possession by using signs in other components	4.2	0.0	3.0	0.0	0.0	7.7	0.0	12.5	0.0
	Representation of real life	66.7	79.3	72.7	76.9	71.4	75.0	100	87.5	100
	No Possession	25.0	20.7	24.2	7.7	28.6	11.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
Woman's vulnerability	Invulnerable or little vulnerability	63.6	72.4	75.0	96.2	78.6	92.3	66.7	75.0	50.0
	vulnerable	15.2	3.4	4.2	1.9	14.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Almost vulnerable or completely vulnerable	21.2	24.1	20.8	1.9	7.1	7.7	33.3	25.0	50
The woman's beauty	Very beautiful(ideal)	0.0	3.4	6.1	0.0	0.0	5.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Usual beauty	87.5	82.8	78.8	69.2	85.7	80.8	50.0	62.5	33.3
	No beauty	12.5	13.8	15.1	30.8	14.3	13.4	50.0	37.5	66.6

Table 5. The look of artist and the spectator's situation of being looked by represented woman. Source: authors.

The look of woman to viewer		The look of woman to the Spectator								
		Gazed to the viewer			Looking at viewer			No look to viewer		
Status of represented woman	The artist's look	Portrait's Frequency	Bust's Frequency	Full length's Frequency	Portrait's Frequency	Bust's Frequency	Full length's Frequency	Portrait's Frequency	Bust's Frequency	Full length's Frequency
Status of woman's face	Full-face	85.7	61.1	80.0	83.3	0.0	100	23.3	21.1	33.3
	Three quarters-face	14.3	38.9	20.0	16.7	100	0.0	44.2	47.4	66.7
	Profile (side view)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	32.6	31.6	0.0
Apparent proximate	Very close & close	75.0	44.4	4.8	0.0	75.0	0.0	66.7	31.6	4.7
	Medium	10.0	33.3	22.2	33.3	25.0	16.7	0.0	26.3	27.9
	Far & very Far	15.0	22.2	66.7	66.6	0.0	83.3	33.4	42.1	67.5
Horizontal angle of view	Facing view	85.0	72.2	90.5	100	25.0	83.3	66.7	47.4	51.2
	Angle from behind	0.0	5.6	0.0	0.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	10.5	14.0
	Side view	0.0	0.0	4.8	0.0	0.0	16.7	0.0	21.1	18.6
	Three quarter-face	15.0	22.2	4.8	0.0	50.0	0.0	33.3	21.1	16.3
Vertical angle of view	Downward	5.0	0.0	14.3	33.3	0.0	0.0	16.7	0.0	4.7
	In level	90.0	94.4	85.7	66.7	100	100	83.3	94.7	95.3
	Upward	5.0	5.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.3	0.0
Woman's allegorical status	Representation of reality	85.0	83.3	57.1	33.3	100	83.3	100	94.7	86.0
	Symbolic by signs and symbols	10.0	5.6	19.0	66.7	0.0	16.7	0.0	0.0	7.0
	Symbolic representation of realism	5.0	11.1	23.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.3	7.0
Possession of woman as another being	Possession by using signs in figure	5.0	0.0	9.5	66.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Possession by using signs in other components	0.0	0.0	4.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.3	9.3
	Representation of real life	80.0	66.7	52.4	33.3	75.0	83.3	66.7	84.2	83.7
	No Possession	15.0	33.3	33.3	0.0	25.0	16.7	33.3	10.5	7.0
Woman's vulnerability	Invulnerable or little vulnerability	85.7	83.3	80.0	100	25.0	66.7	83.7	68.4	83.3
	vulnerable	9.5	0.0	5.0	0.0	25.0	0.0	7.0	5.3	0.0
	Almost vulnerable or completely vulnerable	4.8	16.7	15.0	0.0	50.0	33.3	9.3	26.3	16.7
The woman's beauty	Very beautiful(ideal)	0.0	0.0	9.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.3	4.7
	Usual beauty	83.3	80.0	83.3	33.4	25.0	83.3	83.3	78.9	86.0
	No beauty	20.0	16.7	19.0	66.6	75.0	16.7	16.7	15.8	9.3

3. Cochran formula is one of the common formulas to calculate the sample size:

Cochran formula is one of the common for

$$n = (t^2pq/d^2) / \left( \left( \frac{t^2pq}{d^2} - 1 \right) \times 1 + 1 / N \right)$$

Where, d is the maximum permissible error and equal to 0.05,  $t=1.96$  at the confidence level of 95%, the values of p and q are equal to 0.5 and N is the sample size. The amount of p value is considered 0.5, because if  $P=0.5$ , the n can achieves its maximum value and this matter leads that the sample size be large enough (Hafeznia, 2011: 140).

4. Since the Intra-diegetic look has no effect on the relationship of artist, audience and represented female figure, it was neglected in present study.

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