A Ccomparative Study of Visual Culture in the Iran and Iraq War and Britain World War I Posters*

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Abstract

Contemporary world recognizes the predominance of visual forms of media communication. In our contemporary Visual Culture, visual images are everywhere in all imaginable forms. So we need to be able to read and analyze these images and understand how they relate to each other and communicate meanings to different viewers. By introducing ideas from theories of Visual Culture this study aims to provide a deeper understanding of images in contemporary culture. In visual culture studies, there is a relation between images and consumers that are evaluated for their cultural significance, not just the image in and of it and, as a focus on cultural meaning of a work of art, rather than on its aesthetic value.

World War1 was a balanced confrontation, not only in terms of armed forces, but also regarding ideologies and cultures. The protection of specific cultural contexts, including Aboriginal and regional cultures is observed In world war 1 posters design, so it is comparable to the Iran and Iraq war posters. The question is: what is the role of visual culture in the Iran posters design in the Iran and Iraq war and British World War I posters? This paper presents a selection of examples from posters of Britain and Iran to interpret the hidden meanings behind these images by using the analytic and descriptive method. In addition, the posters of the two countries are compared to each other in order to identify and develop a deeper understanding of visual culture. The result of this study reveals that reflections of British and Iranian cultures in poster design, along with the use of cultural codes that are generally used consciously depending on the designer's knowledge of the cultural values of the society in which they live influences both the society's esthetics preferences and its visual culture. Data collection and sampling of documents is optional.

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Introduction

We live in the age of visual enclosure today in which we are surrounded by every imaginable form of image. Therefore, we have to be able to read and analyze the images and find out how they relate and communicate to each other and to their addressees in terms of meaning. In this case, perception of visual culture and focusing on its related theories leads to a deeper understanding of images. Visual culture is a new way of looking in which motivations, prospects and hidden layers of meanings in every artwork are revealed (Mirzoeff, 1999: 3). This article aims at focusing on the significance of visual culture as a newfound concept for further understanding of its status and scope in the contemporary world as an interdisciplinary field of study. More importantly, this article tries to display the way by which visual culture interprets images from a new point of view. The presence of some common features in the social and political conditions at the time of Iran-Iraq war (the Holy Defense) and World War I in Britain was the reason for writing this paper. These features mainly includes unity and cohesion in society; voluntary participation of people in battlefield, emphasis on human virtues and moral values such as bravery, courage, forgiveness, sacrifice , national honor and patriotism as well as the presence of religion in poster designs. In spite of having some similarities, the bold differences of poster designs in the mentioned countries are more highlighted in this paper that can be attributed to differences of society's and designs' look to the war and its related issues. It can be indicated that the different aspects of cultures as a rich source of inspiration for poster designers has led to creation of entirely distinct posters with distinct identity that roots in the society's visual culture. It can be deduced that not only are posters the tool for transferring data and information and a way for introduction or advertisement of a product, but also they are cultural elements that are in constant interaction with the society. Culture and beliefs of a society as well as behavioral patterns, values and traditions can influence the poster design process since the designer requires a visual language for an effective perceivable communication with the addressees in visual communications design. As a result, poster artists and designers are under the influence of society and reflect the culture of their society.

Research Background

No previous researches are found on this issue; however, some related articles to visual culture and graphic design have been published such as "Critical frameworks for graphic design: graphic design and visual culture" by Michele Dauppe in 2011. This article mainly introduces visual culture and discusses the relations of graphic design and visual culture. The author believes that the underdevelopment of graphic designs in contrast to other fields of study such as industrial design and architecture stems from neglecting interdisciplinary researches of graphic designs and visual culture as well as the culture itself. She believes that an approach toward visual culture would be greatly effective in graphic design. "From Visual Culture to Design Culture" by Guy Julier is another relevant article in which visual culture is introduced as a challenging academic major in European and American universities. He believes that challenges and researches of visual culture are much more pervasive than Art History. He claims that the use of visual culture is currently confined to understanding the role of culture in the design and the significance of visual culture is immensely neglected in emergence of culture.

"Art and visual culture" is another article which initially defines visual culture and its relation with art history. The author introduces the study of visual culture as a significant interdisciplinary study and investigates the relation of visual arts and the common culture. He considers the creation of artwork as a cultural activity and recognizes graphic design as a cultural act and finally emphasizes on its relation with visual culture.

Khazaee in his article entitled "Art of mystical epic, an introduction to Holy Defense posters" puts

some posters of the iran-Iraq war (the Holy defense) and their symbolic concepts into scrutiny. Having referred to Saghakhane movement, he believes the Islamic Revolution and the imposed Iran-Iraq war led to a situation in which young artists could create innovative works in various fields of art and form the foundations of Islamic Revolution art based on Iranian art and spiritual settings of Islamic culture. The author finally concludes that the Holy Defense posters are not mere colors and shapes. They are embodied spiritual and epic works of art created by precise selection of the characteristics of Iranian art such as abstraction, brevity, aesthetics and symbolism in which spiritual values are manifested symbolically in shapes and colors.

 "A study of declaration semiotics from the Islamic Revolution of Iran to 2001" is another article written by Emamifar. He categorizes the social evolutions of Iran after the Islamic revolution into three periods. According to his division, posters of 1978 to1981are positioned in the first category, the posters of the duration of Iran-Iraq war are placed in the second category and the posters after the imposed war up to 2001 are placed in the third category. Having discussed the basics and foundations of cultural symbolism, the author analyzes the cultural posters of this period and explains the creation of meaning and relation of these concepts according to sociological, anthropological and artwork aspects. Finally, he concludes that the poster designers used iconic symbols and narrative expression to convey a message in the first period. Symbolic signs and metaphoric expressions were used in the second period, and eventually indexical signs and conceptual expressions were used in the third period. Thereby, the posters of the second period in Amamifar's research are relevant to the purposes of this article.

Research methodology

Descriptive, analytical and qualitative methods have been used in this study. This paper firstly discusses the causes and contexts of the emergence of visual culture and its significance in the contemporary world. Secondly, some posters of Iran-Iraq war (the Holy Defense) and World War I in Britain are appointed by selective methods to be analyzed and interpreted according to concepts of visual culture. Lastly, the findings of posters analysis are compiled, compared and concluded in the final stage.

Theoretical basis

The theory of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) in the 18th century is a philosophical provision and aesthetic explanation of formalism which is based on aesthetic judgments. Accordingly, reaction to artworks, interpretation of art and addressees' judgment is based on the artwork itself. In the early twentieth century, Clive Bell and Roger Fry developed formalism approaches more precisely. "Fry believes that the artwork has little or no significant meaningful association with the author or culture of the society to which he belongs" (Adams, 2011: 29). In formalism approaches, evaluation of artwork is attributed to physical qualities such as color, size, shape, line, texture, and visual qualities such as balance, emphasis, movement, rhythm, repetition, contrast, harmony, variety, consistency, and composition (in which all works of art are common). While the content of the artwork, ideas, social, cultural, political and historical aspects are ignored (Tekiner, 2000: 32).

In the 1950s, Herbert Read published the first important critic on formalism in an article entitled "Farewell to Formalism" in Art News. He quotes: "while there are many very different types of modern with different objectives, criticism of all modern art has been dominated by hazardous combination of subjective judgment and formal analysis" (Read, 1952: 36). The critics advocated this theory until the 1960s and 1970s, until it was clarified that this theory alone does not seem enough for precise understanding and recognition of artworks. Further scrutiny on content, context and circumstances surrounding the work of art seemed necessary for further interpretation and explanation of artworks. This shift in the understanding of art is a resultant

of replacement of modernism theories with post-modernism theories. Formalism has provided a set of criteria for observations of contemporary art, while other criteria are considered in postmodern theory. The content of the artwork and the surrounding conditions (personal, historical, social, aesthetic and cultural), are all involved in the perception and understanding of the art meaning. Many scholars and contemporary art theorists categorize the visual arts in a broader framework entitled visual culture (Gudelius and Spears, 2011: 20-23).

Visual culture

Visual language has had a special significance throughout history. However, the verbal and textual culture has undergone cultural and social changes over the last 50 years which have accelerated from the past 20 to 10 years (Dauppe, 2011). Factors such as globalization of markets and cultural aspects of art; recognition of domination of visual forms over verbal and textual forms due to new communication media; the fast growth of digital technology in production and spread of images; cheap, easy and quick access and imitation and copying of images; the impact of visual arts and visual elements on public culture; mass media domination over the whole world through TV and Internet; Globalization of advertisement and advertising tool and their role in human life today; the psychological impact of images according to publishers, users and views and their pivotal role in formation of values and beliefs of the society; loss of geographical boundaries and ambiguity of cultural boundaries; globalization and its effects on culture and civilization; marginalization of identity in the international community, rapid expansion of cultural studies, visual culture and image studies all over the world has led to conservation of national identity by conservation and preservation of special cultural contexts such as local and indigenous cultures.

Over the past ten years, cultural studies have formed an idea (that is not less than a revolution in methods of fine arts) and visual culture is the child of this revolution. "Culture" is more about sociology than aesthetics. Raymond Williams considers culture the whole life of a society which includes all of our activities as a social human (Schirato, tony and Webb, 2004, IIX). As a result, while the 'art' provides techniques, structures and mechanisms for creation of a unique artwork, 'culture' forms the social and ideological conditions in which artworks can be generated and distributed. In addition, Kate Kenny believes that the theoretical framework that defines and describes the viewer's opinion is deeply influenced by exerted cultural beliefs (Kenney, 2005: 116). Nicolas Mirzoeff quotes: "visual culture is not just a part of the daily life, but the daily life itself" (Mirzoeff, 1999: 3). So we can conclude that visual culture encompasses all the things we do, because what we are doing is directly influenced by the things that we see and what we see are the images that surround us. This sentence of Mirzoeff shows the obvious importance of visual culture in the world today. So far researchers have not provided a clear definition of visual culture. However, the relation of the images and the viewers in this case is more important than the relation of artists and their works in visual art. The effect of the historical, social, political, religious and cultural background is more discussed in visual culture than the technical skills, artistic and aesthetic aspects that depend on talents and individual creativity in the artistic works. It is very important for visual culture how a work of art will act in the cultural, social, political and religious context.

Visual culture mostly emphasizes on aspects and cultural meanings of images and artwork, and discusses the state of society that is saturated by visual technologies and aims to form the identity and social environments (Irvine, 2011: 42). Visual culture encompasses many different areas and seeks to describe and scrutinize political, moral, race relations, gender, history of art, media issues and study the effective factors of visual behavior and observation in every society and every period of time (Mitchell, 2002: 166-171).

Posters in World War I

Analysts believe that militarism, alliances, imperialism, and nationalism were the main causes of World War I (1918-1914). The war led to industrialization, urbanization, the emergence and growth of mass media and emphasis on national power and identity which are all evident in the war posters (James, 2009: 1-12). The posters had evolved over a century as a promotional tool when World War I began. Therefore, in order to provide a connection between people and war, posters were brought from theatres and advertising business to politics to be used as a popular war advertising media. According to Maurice Rickards, poster was a great tool of mass communication, for being understandable and cheap and accepted by the public.

Baker believes posters were media tools for creating visual rhetoric of national identity, an identity for which the war was started (Baker, 1990: 24). Although the war was modern, war posters combined new national identity with the past nostalgic images. Posters were exhibited in the form of a complex mix of arts, traditional arts, modern art and a sense of subtle advertising entity in which the war emphasized on cultural backgrounds such as tradition, family, sentimentalism and military heroism (James, 2009: 3). Here, all mentioned issues rooted in visual culture and correspond to this article in terms of purpose.

War poster collection opens a window into a world that has largely vanished, to a place where the image icons were left behind and were hardly reminders of the war for us. Many war poster designers used their personal experience and memories of living during war and observed realities of war. However, we describe, analyze and sometimes interpret them on the basis of their contents and signs. War poster objectives and purposes are the same in all countries; to recruit soldiers by encouraging a sense of patriotism and instilling a sense of guilt in people. As quoted by Jeremy Aynsley: "although similar techniques of visual movements were used in the creation of war posters, they all root in patriotic context and visual traditions and tried to display the national and religious rituals." (Aynsley, 2001: 45) National Posters mobilized civilians to participate in war in form of a public effort to win the war. In other words, posters of World War I were new visual and verbal languages in shaping the idea to fight. They used all possibilities of visual and literary rhetoric to achieve and convince people to participate in war.

Posters in Britain

Not only should posters be read by their visual aspect, but also they should be interpreted in a broader discursive context of the image. Therefore, they have to be read in their cultural context for further consideration of cultural concepts. Designing graphic symbols and visual elements regardless of the customs, traditions, religious beliefs and literary eloquence, which all imply ancient cultural traditions, is incomplete. Jakup Kazecki and Jason Lieblang argue that too much emphasis on the global aspects of posters would degrade the meaning, concept and function of the posters for local addressees (James, 2009: 20-21). The notable fact in posters of Britain during World War I and the Holy Defense posters is that they both address this issue.

Jay Winter believes that militarism in British culture was alive before World War I because the Britain's military was present in India, Egypt, and South Africa. The prevailing ambience mostly advocated courage, heroism, and bravery. Mourning ceremony for the victims prior to 1914 is an indicative of this. The story of Captain Scott's expedition to the South Pole in 1913 and the story of his efforts to save the lives of his colleagues and ultimately the death of his team members indicate the appreciated bravery and courage in the community and accepting the hardships or even death without complaints (James, 2009: 40-44). National pride attracted men in 1914 as a bold characteristic in the community of Britain and the pubic culture was known as expressive codes. Cultural codes and business strategies formed a cohesive community and millions joined the army

voluntarily without any obligations. The simple truth was that "people are more influenced by what they see, rather than what they read or hear". Propagandas also benefited from this fact to a great extent and caused the posters to be used as a visual media in Britain during war.

The posters powerfully showed that the war is a more immediate and serious threat than what people think. The designer showed this threat by displaying a village in flames and a mother and her child running from the fire in Fig. 1. The second poster shows German soldiers at the door and explains that the enemy is closer than what we think to emphasize the seriousness of the enemy's presence in British lands in Fig. 2. Moreover, this posters and similar posters try to assert that the German army is at the gates of the city. This is considered a threat for the authority of Britain and consciously challenges the beliefs of a nation that considers itself one of the world's leading powers and finally motivates them to fight and enlist as volunteers. However, these kinds of posters are never used in the Holy Defense despite the country's being occupied partially and the moral aspects of joining the defense are depicted on posters to a greater extent. Although the posters of the two countries have a common goal of recruitment, this act is demonstrated differently in the images due to cultural differences. It was the warrior's religious beliefs, human values and spirituality that brought them to the battlefields in Iran, not the finite values or the threat of land concurrence by Iraq.

War posters in Britain focused on patriotism. The most famous of them for motivating soldiers to serve in war was "Brighton wants you" (Fig. 3). The poster depicts Lord Kitchener, the British Secretary of State for War, wearing the cap of a British Field Marshal and his military ranks (Hollis, 2004: 33). This poster shows military superiority in British culture at that time. Carlo Ginzburg believes the poster owes its influence to Kitchener's popularity, the use of bold colors and utilization of familiar traditional images that expresses authority on the addressees (Ginzburg, 2001: 12).

Fig. 1. Anonymous, April 1925. Source: James, 2009: 44.

Fig. 2. Anonymous, July 1915. Source: James, 2009: 45.

In similar posters calling on people to battle in Iran, the hand of Ayatollah Khomeini is depicted in an image with a slogan of "Is there a champion to help me" which refers to Ashura incidence in Karbala and it is derived from religious beliefs and Islamic cultures (Fig. 4 & 5).

On the other hand chivalry and knighthood became a valuable norm in Britain. Medieval chivalry was appreciated and practiced by people who wanted to be decent and honorable in the existing world. The concept of being a gentleman was a part of medieval chivalry and it was accepted as a positive feature in modern ordinary life. Courage was also intrinsically tied to the concept of service and loyalty to the community. Responsibility was also highlighted during war and propaganda efforts at the beginning of the war relied on voluntary service and insisted the features of bravery. Poster commissioned by The British Parliamentary Recruiting Committee in 1915 saying "Britain needs you once" indicates this fact. The poster depicts St. George wearing a knight›s armor and fighting a dragon (Goebel, 2007: 57). Knights are symbols of the highly responsible people who are always ready to serve and even die (Woods, 1916: 16).
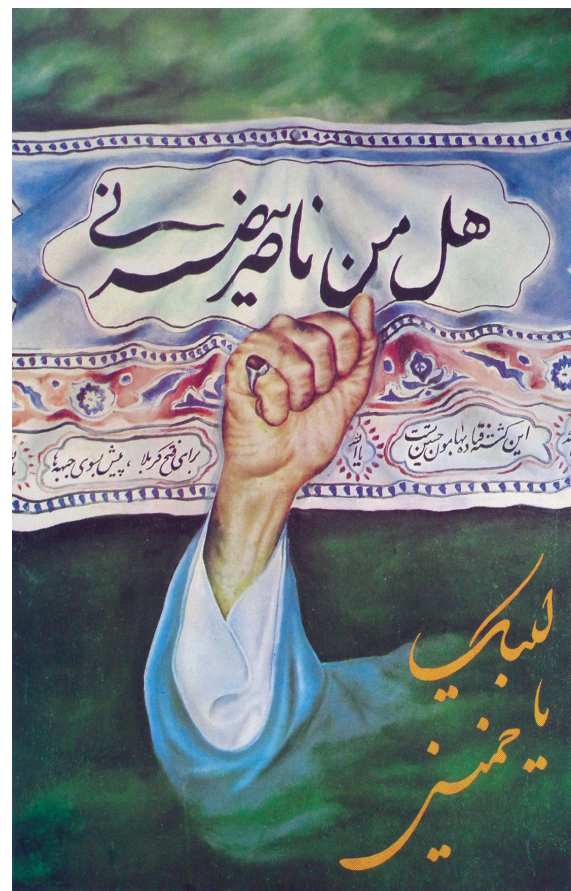

Fig. 4. I accept. Source: Aali, 1989:100.

Fig. 3. Alfred Leete, 1915. Source: Meggs, 2009: 303.

Fig. 5. Anonymous . Source: James, 2009: 80.

Chivalry and Christianity were united by church missionaries who expressed the unwritten rules of chivalry. Even, some fanatical preachers did not hesitate to refer to Jesus Christ as a chivalrous gentleman, or a perfect knight that the world had not ever seen before (Marrin, 1975: 153). This fact is also evident in the war posters in which efforts to establish a connection between chivalry and faith in order to affirm that true Christianity is about justice and chivalry is obvious. In these images, the knights are depicted with a sword that evokes the images of the cross and refers to chivalry and bravery. Every British soldier who was killed in the war was considered as a brave dutiful, honorable, righteous and holy knight, even if he had killed another human being (James, 2009: 101- 103). Family relations were also subjects of the posters in Britain which aimed at provoking family members to cooperate in war. It can be indicated that in Great Britain propagandas on non-military acts and ideals such as honor, bravery, responsibility and civic values were superior to military virtues.

The Holy Defense Posters (Iran-Iraq War)

Signs of military conflict between Iraq and Iran were immediately revealed after the Islamic Revolution of Iran. The various reasons of Iran-Iraq war includes restoration of the 1975 Algiers Agreement, resturning the three islands (Tonb islands and Abumusa Island) to Arabs, absolute sovereignty over the Shatt Al-Arab policies of the United States, Saddam policies to draw attention of the U.S. on capabilities of Iraq to success Iran as a regional power, domination of the Persian Gulf and perhaps the Middle East, increasing the culture of the Iraq in the region, detachment of Khuzestan, overthrowing the Islamic Republic and resolution of Iranian territorial integrity (Ostadi Moghaddam, 2008: 73-108). Iraq invaded Iran on 22 September 1980 and aimed at conquering Khorramshahr, Abadan, Ahwaz, Dezfoul and Soosangerd. However, Iraq armored forces were hindered by spontaneous resistance of people who had little weapons such as guns, grenades and

Molotov cocktails, the people who were not militarily trained, but highly motivated. They fought with such passion that not only Iraqis but also many Western observers were surprised (Sonnenberg, 1985: 21-26). It was the longest war of the twentieth century; a war for hundreds of kilometers of land border which was not limited to air and ground battles and targeted both military forces and civilians. The enemy employed conventional and unconventional weapons unlimitedly (Sonnenberg, 1985: 34-39). Resisting against the imposed war was called the Holy Defense because it was a defense against invasion of illegitimate beliefs, history, identity and geography of a nation.

Warriors only inclined to God, asking His help and the Imams'. Quranic verses were prevalent and the Holy Defense leaders were vanguard of jihad and martyrdom rather than just being commanders. The growth of religious beliefs in the holy war was enormous. Mosques were centers for voluntarily soldier recruitments. Everything in front and behind battlefields had a divine color and essence. Faith, spirituality and devotion spirit was prevalent in the community. People and soldiers considered participation in war as a religious duty to which they were responsible, whether they die or live. These strong motivations led the nation into battle fronts.

This war began shortly after the Islamic revolution in Iran. The revolution was an event under whose influence different forms of art evolved. Many artists tried to illustrate religious subjects derived from the imposed war and Islamic revolution in agreement with Islamic culture and combined traditional symbolic patterns (Ayatollahi, 2001: 28). Propensity to Islamic values and religious art in graphic design and particularly poster design of the Holy Defense was no exception. Taking Islamic concepts and values into consideration after the war is evident in artworks of young and revolutionary artists of that time who considered concepts such as jihad, resistance, sacrifice, martyrdom, ascension and liberation, as the main subjects of their works. The spirit of worship, respect and sincere devotion to God, relation to

Quran, praying and dependence to the Ahl al-Bayt (AS), sacrifice and martyrdom, steadfastness and resistance were prevailing in characteristics of the warriors and public and were stunningly reflected in war posters by the artists. Tendency toward religious traditional art and Islamic Iranian culture was perhaps the only way to achieve this eminent goal. The use of abstract patterns is the basics of art which make people to refer to their culture and identity. This approach has a special place in visual arts, especially graphics of the Holy Defense. Regarding the posters of the Holy defense, "symbolism" and use of symbolic is another characteristic of these posters which is highly appreciated (Khazaee, 2006: 20-21). Basically, the religion uses art for conveying its inexpressible spiritual aspects and art exists on spiritual principles and concepts of religion (Firouzan, 2011: 57). The features of religious art including creation of a sacred space, reflection of the intrinsic value of the materials and its perfection, efforts to connect man and after life and expression of symbolic aspects are almost evident in posters of the Holy defense. The remarkable point is that these posters try to detach from the real space and approach the higher existence. The spiritual and mythical ambience became prevalent in this period and human beings transformed from being real, tangible, achievable and engaged in social interaction in pre-war period to unreal, unachievable and angelic figures during war. Considering the society during the war, use of symbolic signs and posters is evident in these posters (Emamifar, 2010: 80-81); (Fig. 6 & 7). God says in verse 35 of Nur verse: God is the light of the heavens and the earth ... and will guide whomever He wills with light (Holy Quran, Nur verse, verse 35). The similarity of "light" and "existence" in Islamic mysticism corroborates that the "existence" of the transcend Absolute is emerged in form of light.

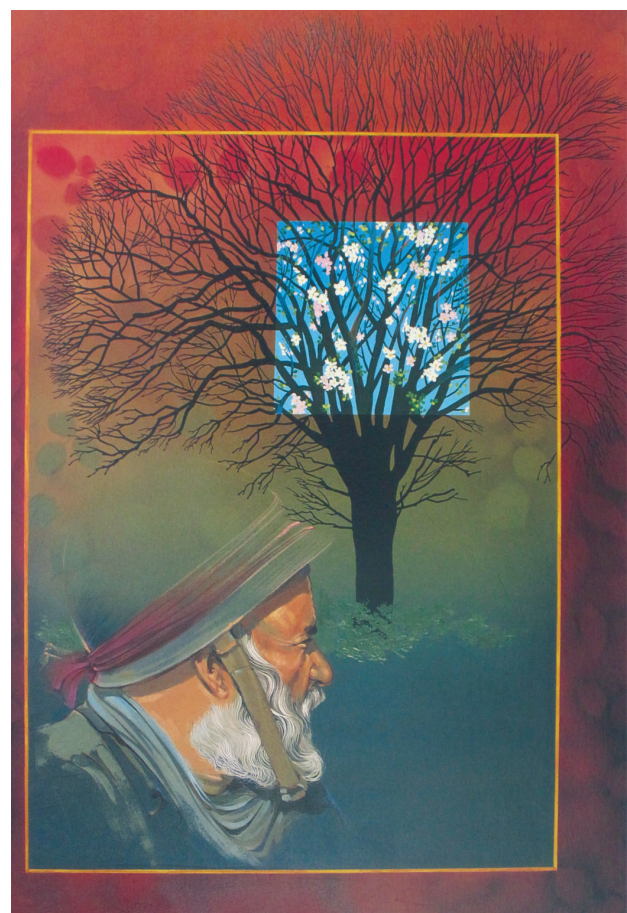

Fig. 6. Fly, Mohammad Khazaee. Source: Aali, 1989: 39.

Fig. 7. Birth, Mostafa Goodarzi. Source: Aali, 1989: 133.

Fig. 8. Trench of Love, Hamid Sharifi. Source: Aali, 1989: 53.

Where there is an "existence", there is the light of God. Islamic scholars agree that the forms of the perfect world are shaped out of light. Accordingly, the sages, mystics and artists enter the territory of light after being refined from the material world. They enter the territory of detached forms from the physical world (Bolkhari, 2009: 361). The poster designers of the Holy Defense were greatly inspired by Quranic verses and religious beliefs. Henry Corbin believes that this light is the same halo surrounding the creatures that belong to the world of light (Corbin, 1995: 59). Using light element in the posters (Fig. 8 & 9) also indicates that the warriors are guided and belong to the higher world. They have a halo of light and they are from another world (Table 1).

Maximun refers to Iranian paintings as a magical work that unleashes the prisoned light from the material world (Corbin, 1998: 196). Seyyed Hossein Nasr also believes that painting is an attempt to depict the nature of heaven which is the initial creation of

Fig. 9. Holy defense, Mostafa Goodarzi. Source: Aali, 1988: 138.

Fig. 10. Every day as Ashura, Kazem Chalipa. Source: Aali, 1988:173.

Table 1. Table of comparative study of research findings derived from analysis of Iran-Iraq war (the holy defense) posters and World War I posters in Britain, from the visual culture point of view. Source: authors.

	poster						society		
	General properties	subjects	Visual elements	Design goals	title	country	Prevailing ambience	The purpose of war	People's motivation to fight in war
	- Reflecting courage, heroism, self-sacrifices and bravery - Bold use of color - Taking advantage of the familiar traditional images - Benefitting from religion	-Scenes of war -Family ties -Funding the war -Preservation of food - Linking chivalry and faith - Courage, generosity and loyalty - Honoring the victims of war - Joining the war	- national and patriotic symbols - medieval knights - Religious symbols such as the cross	- Creating a sense of patriotism - Inciting people to engage in war - Collective effort to win the war - Persuasion of addressees and convincing the community - Militarism superiority in Britain's culture - Creating a sense of chivalry, bravery and loyalty - Linking chivalry and faith - Restoring a sense of moral superiority	war	Britain	- The spirit of militarism was prevailing and alive in the Britain's culture - The dominant ambience was filled with words such as courage, heroism, self-sacrifice and bravery - The above assumptions were accepted about the war as well - National pride attracted men as an accentuated feature in the community - The society was cohesive - Medieval chivalry of knights was role modeled	- Protection of territorial integrity and independence of the country	- Patriotism - Protection of family - Protection of life and property
	-Tendency to Islamic values and religious art -Consideration of Iranian culture and traditions -Illustration of concepts such as jihad, resistance, sacrifice, martyrdom, ascension and liberation - Using symbolic patterns with symbolic and spiritual implications - Using green, blue and cold colors that imply more spirituality	-Scenes of battle victory -Scenes of sending soldiers to the front - Images of lead soldier with luminous halos -Worship and devotion -Spirituality in battlefields - The introduction of warriors and martyrs - Displaying the rank of martyrs - Concepts such as jihad, resistance, sacrifice, martyrdom, bravery, ascension and liberation - sincere and pure devotion of warriors to God, believing and reading Quran, praying and implorign to the Ahl al-Bayt (AS) - Expressing characters of warriors such as martyrdom, steadfastness and resistance - Expressing the dominant culture of war	- National and patriotic symbols - Using painting and its elements - Religious symbols - Flags decorated with religious slogans - Elements of Islamic architecture and arabesque patterns - Using the element of light - Using verses of Quran - Headband with the names of the Imams - Symbols of Ashura mourning ceremony - Religious poetry	- Creating a sense of patriotism - Inciting people to engage in war - Commemorating the fighters, commanders and martyrs- creating a sacred space - Trying to make a connection between man and afterlife - Introduction of lead soldiers as human who belong to the world of light with luminous halo	Iran-Iraq war (the holy defense)	Iran	- The incidence of the Islamic Revolution - Anti-Western attitudes in society - Growth of religious beliefs - Turning mosques into centers for registration and organization volunteers - Predominance of the spirit of faith, spirituality and devotion to community - Divinity of everything behind and in front line of the war - The active presence of God and Ahl al-Bayt (AS) in the community, battlefields and trenches of warriors - Consideration of concepts and values	- Protection of territorial integrity and independence of the country - Defense against imposing beliefs, history and identity - Protection of religion - Protection of revolution	- Patriotism - Protection of family - responding to duty - Defense against imposing beliefs, history, identity and country's geography - Martyrdom

nature or the divine world or the eternal paradise that exist in the above world (Nasr, 1996: 175). Using painting and its elements in the posters designs of the Holy Defense also expresses this theme.

Using of religious symbols, flags decorated with religious rituals, elements of Islamic architecture and Arabesque motifs with colors of green, red, black and blue have specific meanings and special applications in Islamic and Iranian culture in religious graphics and they are widely used by designers in these posters patriots and martyrs of the Holy Defense are depicted divinely as they are from "the world of lights" (Fig. 10 & 11).

Fig. 11. Water of life, Mostafa Goodarzi. Source: Aali, 1988:145.

Conclusion

In the time of war, every country inevitably tries to motivate and encourage people to participate in war. Posters are tools that are employed for this purpose. It can be noted that while both Iranian and British posters try to depict the common issues of "war" and "encourage and motivate" people to "participate in war", they are vividly different in content. This is due to the way every country tries to protect its territorial integrity and independence, and defend its nationality, identity, culture and traditions manifested in poster design. The culture and social beliefs of the society, behavioral patterns, values and traditions can influence the poster design process since the designer has to use a perceivable visual language that can be recognized by the addressees.

Therefore, artists and poster designers are directly under the influence of society and reflect the culture of their society. Poster designers in every country use visual, written and spoken elements that root in the culture, civilization, traditions and beliefs to create visual icons based on visual culture of the society. Therefore, visual culture is the main forming factor of identity for being an element that belongs to a particular society with a particular culture. The strong tie between war and religious beliefs and religious beliefs and the presence of spirituality and religious beliefs in the posters of the Holy Defense makes them distinct from the posters of World War I despite being common in features. The British posters refer to Jesus Christ (religion) as a chivalrous knight and trying to depict Jesus in an earthly figure while the patriots and martyrs of the Holy Defense are depicted divinely as they are from "the world of lights".

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