

Original Research Article

An Analytical Study on Contemporary Iranian Artworks Based on the Concepts and Functions of the “Appropriation”*

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Abstract

Problem statement: Contemporary art has developed various outcomes and phenomena that do not comply with traditional artistic norms. One of these emerging phenomena in modern art is “appropriation,” which has piqued the curiosity of numerous artists. Artists today are also art consumers, in addition to their cultural activities. In this regard, “appropriation” may be seen as a contemporary art strategy for returning to the past, using pre-existing motifs, and reproducing works with new concepts. This approach has gained popularity among Iranian artists at the same time as it has in the Western world.

Research objective: This research aims to observe, examine, and evaluate contemporary Iranian art, mainly the works of modern Iranian painters, to investigate the idea of “appropriation” and identify its ways and functions with regard to Iranian contemporary art.

Research method: The descriptive-analytical method was used in this study, and data were gathered using field and desk research methodologies. First, we examined the similarities and overlap between this phenomenon in Iran and the Western world using definitions and studies associated with “appropriation” in Western art. Then, we highlighted contemporary Iranian artists whose work follows the “appropriation” principles.

Conclusion: According to the results, contemporary Iranian artists have predominantly accepted this method. As a consequence, artists have applied the notion of “appropriation” for a variety of purposes, three of which are noted below: 1- “Recycling the past within modern contexts,” 2- “Fostering intercultural dialogue and translation,” and 3- “Transposing the meanings of native artworks.” This study examines a range of appropriated works by contemporary artists under each of these functions. In the first function, artists’ attention has been drawn to the representation of the splendor of the past and the difficulties or concerns of contemporary man. In contrast, in the second function, the fusion of Iranian culture and art with renowned Western works has been highlighted. Finally, in the third function, we see previously recognized Iranian pieces distorted or tampered with, as well as new meanings added to them. Thus, some characteristics of works created through the “appropriation” strategy include modern and critical reproduction of images and works from the past to develop new meanings, link the past to the future, and refer to or retell the past.

Keywords: *Appropriation, Iranian contemporary art, Iranian contemporary painting, Tampering, Strategies and functions of appropriation.*

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Introduction

In the modern period, artists are encouraged to experiment with new approaches more than ever. Among the various factors influencing the dynamism and formation of a new perspective in contemporary art¹, the considerable increase in the number of artists and aficionados in this field, as well as the young generation's enthusiasm for creating works of art, should be highlighted. Furthermore, an increase in the number of galleries, associations, and specialized art publications, an increase in the number of seats in higher education institutions and art graduates, and, most importantly, the emergence of new digital techniques, social media, and mass communication made Iranian artists more familiar with global artistic discourses. Thus, the influence of Western modern art movements such as minimalism and conceptual art, as well as other forms of postmodernist art such as "appropriation"², on Iranian art appeared to be inevitable. This research aimed to observe, examine, and evaluate Iranian works of art to identify this phenomenon's presence. To achieve this goal, we will first study the theoretical foundations and definitions of "appropriation," as well as artists that adopt this approach. Following a short examination of the function of "appropriation" in Western art and the introduction of important pioneers or theorists involved in the emergence of this artistic phenomenon, we will investigate the context in which it emerged. Studies or works on "appropriation" in contemporary Iranian art are highlighted in the literature review. The three primary functions of "appropriation" in modern Iranian art are presented and discussed in the article's main body. These three functions are as follows: 1. "Recycling the past within modern contexts", 2. "Fostering intercultural dialogue and translation," and 3. "Transposing the meanings of native artworks." In this regard, we have addressed each of these three functions using examples from the appropriated artworks of two artists. Here, we analyze the process and show how the artist uses the original artwork to produce a new one. Because many modern Iranian artists³ have used the "appropriation", and it is hard to cover all of them in this short article, only the most notable artists in this area, whose works

are perfectly in line with the article's purposes, have been reviewed.

Theoretical Literature

Adaptation⁴ or "appropriation" refers to the reproduction or replication of the works of other artists. Many modern artists interpret the earlier artworks using new media⁵ and fresh concepts. In "appropriation" (appropriate adoption)⁶, the artist either reproduces prior works to return them to the sphere of art or incorporates them into his works with a different perspective (Stokes, 2001, 125). According to the "appropriation" approach, an artist takes and appropriates whatever image he wants from the works of his predecessors or contemporaries. Appropriation may include adapting culture and visual arts, borrowing from art forms or styles, replication or duplication, and trying to possess artistic ideas, symbols, antiquities, images, sounds, artifacts, art history, popular culture, and human relics.

Barthes, a literary and cultural critic, speaks to the willing of modern art to obliterate the creator or the author of the work in his 1966 essay, "The Death of the Author." In this essay, he argues that when the reader's attention is drawn to the message and idea of an artwork, as well as its interpretation or meaning, the author of the work would not seem to be so crucial since the uniqueness of the artwork is dependent on the concept it communicates to the audience (Rowe, 2011, 3). "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," by Benjamin (1998)⁷, and *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths*, by Krauss (1986)⁸, are two other significant works that have inspired "appropriation" approach in contemporary art. To reproduce works of art, these two articles call into question the art's sanctity and uniqueness. Consequently, postmodern art⁹ returns to and tries to emulate past arts intentionally. In this type of art, the meaning of images is then transformed by incorporating them into a new text (Janson, 2002, 41). According to these arguments, "tampering"¹⁰ or "appropriation" is a conceptual art genre in which the work of art focuses mainly on meaning by using existing imagery and their preconceptions rather than relying on creativity or originality. Many tampering

methods include replicating the work of another artist. Consequently, rather than making a new image, the artist picks one of the old ones and continues to add a new idea to the previous ones (Sami Azar, 2012). Representatives of postmodern art adapt and “appropriate” the various concepts, motifs, and works that exist in art history rather than developing their own artistic style (Bocola, 2008, 521).

An appropriating artist is one who has consciously replicated or altered a pre-existing image, object, or piece of art. Appropriated works¹¹ blend and take from prior works by other artists. “Contemporary artists only communicate their creative ideas through the development of works that are either extremely simple or heavily relied on the works of others” (Zahedi & Sharifzadeh, 2016, 60). As a result, appropriated artworks, like other contemporary arts, are difficult to classify in the category of original works and cannot be included under classic notions of authenticity¹². Pop art has a long history of adapting popular culture items, pictures from magazines, films, daily objects, or consumer goods that originally had a different meaning or function for their audience¹³ (Johannes, 2011, 10).

Research Methodology

The descriptive-analytical method was used to write this paper, and the data were gathered via a field study and desk research. In this study, we first describe the phenomena of “appropriation” from the standpoint of Western art and then discuss its similarities with contemporary Iranian art. We will then showcase modern Iranian artists whose “appropriation” mentality is evident in their works. This research relates to artists and works that have borrowed from well-known or previously recognized artworks in their pieces, and there is no question that their works have developed using the ways of “appropriation”. In this study, to indicate the methods and variations of this approach in the works of modern Iranian artists, both the appropriated and the original works are described and analyzed.

Literature Review

There have been very few studies on “appropriation”.

Most of these studies have simply explored the concepts and development of “appropriation”, as well as its genesis or position in Western art. However, no survey of “appropriation” in modern Iranian art has been conducted, and experts have only vaguely mentioned this approach. One of the studies mentioning the origin of “appropriation” is Gharebaghi’s (1999) paper, in which the author presents appropriation as the first strategy of postmodern art. Another paper by Gharebaghi (2000) that addresses the art of reproducing is available. In his article, he views reproduction to be an art form that has meticulously copied the past and thereby appropriated it. In their study on the originality of works of art, Baghban Maher and Gholamian (2010) pointed out that reproduced works are not always labeled fraudulent works. They ask why the Mona Lisa of Marcel Duchamp was never shown as a counterfeit. Jahangir (2013) has also addressed appropriation in Western art.

Faraji (2011) explores the impact of postmodernism on contemporary Iranian painting and, using Walter Benjamin’s thesis, shows how Western artists use the “appropriation” technique to advance postmodernist concepts in the visual arts. In a section of his research on meta-image and self-reference, Sadeh Panah (2011) refers to “the art of quotation”¹⁴ as an image of a famous painting in a new style. On the other hand, Zahedi & Sharifzadeh (2016) have addressed the legal status of contemporary art forms in the context of all types of creative outputs, explicitly addressing the “derivative works.” They see these works as profoundly inspired by the works of other artists and classify them as a subclass of “appropriation”, an art form that overtly borrows imagery from other sources. The article “Copy, forgery, and appropriation” (Ghiasi, 2016) defines and differentiates forgery and appropriation. In addition, in his paper, Taheri (2016) studies the application of “appropriation” in commercial advertising.

As can be observed, earlier researchers have not conducted much research on this topic in modern Iranian art. As a result, in this article, we plan to analyze “appropriation” in contemporary Iranian art from a hitherto unconsidered viewpoint, and by introducing

the works of modern Iranian artists, we will attempt to demonstrate the many purposes of applying this approach by them.

The Functions of “Appropriation” in Contemporary Iranian Art

Although the “appropriation” approach explicitly incorporates the use of modern images and works of art from the past, contemporary artists exploit these images and artworks in various ways. As a result, the ways and functions of “appropriation” can be divided into several categories. Three of these regularly occurring and essential functions among artists using appropriation are analyzed in this study: 1- “Recycling the past within modern contexts,” 2- “Fostering intercultural dialogue and translation,” and 3- “Transposing the meanings of native artworks.” In the first category, retrieving the past takes the form of artistic creation, with the artist’s purpose being to praise, applaud, celebrate, or honor the magnificence and brilliance of previous images and artworks. In the second category, Iranian artists have sought to integrate their cultural artworks with earlier pieces and images of the art world, as well as to merge the signs of Iranian art with images of notable Western works under the effect of globalization discourses. In the third category, Iranian artists utilized “appropriation” to form entirely new works with new meanings by altering their original concepts or values.

Recycling the past within modern contexts

One of the essential functions of “appropriation” is to revisit earlier artists’ works and return to them. Contemporary artists that adopt appropriation pick an artwork from among previous works and re-use it in a new manner by tampering with it. This appropriation sub-strategy is carried out to celebrate and respect the artistic past. The contemporary artist sees himself in opposition to the magnificence of the past and the turmoil of the current era and thus places notable works of the old days as proof of the past’s greatness versus modern artworks. Borrowing an aesthetic image from the past and putting it in an unexpected and unrelated context gives the audience a feeling of asynchrony,

incoherence, or incompatibility, encouraging them to contemplate. When an image and its intended effect are removed from its original settings and used in a different location and time, its concept and function completely change, and they continue to exist in a new form.

Mehrdad Moheb Ali is among the artists who have created notable “appropriated” pieces. He mixes the actions of the modern people around him through the remarkable works of the French Revolutionary artists and doing so makes them comparable. Through honoring the artists of Europe’s classical and romantic periods, he reminds us that history needs new myths all the time, and thus paintings can never be solely narrators of a single event (Shehani, 2014, 10). Géricault’s “The Raft of the Medusa” depicts the narrative of the Medusa, which sank off the coast of Senegal in 1816. This painting, illustrating a human disaster in the heart of the aristocracy era, is regarded as the most brilliant masterwork of French romantic paintings. This magnificent painting by Géricault is claimed to have sparked the French Revolution because it represents the interminable suffering of the lower classes in the face of the aristocracy’s injustice (Wilder, 2016, 262). The fundamental theme of this artwork is the examination of human suffering in the conflict between life and death (Pakbaz, 2002, 291). In this painting, we observe frail, muscular bodies lying on the ground in direct sunshine, some of them have lost their lives, and others have attempted to survive at all costs, even becoming cannibals. In the painting, a black man is standing on the top like a hero, waving a cloth so that other ships may see them and save them (Fig. 1).

Moheb Ali has drawn the audience’s attention to the contradiction between the past and the present by quoting the narrative of the painting “The Raft of the Medusa” and drawing the figure of contemporary humans in standardized and monochromatic clothes in the foreground of the image. The figures of the subjects in this “appropriated” painting are created in such a manner that it seems as if they all suddenly rise as a result of a momentous occurrence, and their attention is focused on a spot beyond the painting. These subjects seem to need to do something or make a collective

decision, but they do not want to do anything and want to wait and see what occurs in the end. In his works, Moheb Ali depicts individuals who are trapped in an ambiguous environment and lack decision-making ability. All of his works' protagonists have aspirations and desire redemption, but in fact, they are rather passive and indifferent. By borrowing the great paintings of the French Revolution, Mehrdad Moheb Ali has mixed and portrayed traditional themes like idealism, success, and loss with the apathy of modern man (Fig. 2). Jinoos Taghizadeh, a contemporary artist, is another venturesome modernist who has tried to employ glorious imagery and works from the past. She interacts with the audience with a different historical narrative in her collection of works named "Rock, Paper, Scissors." Here, she uses a kind of 3D technique and combines images, newspapers, and re-representations of certain historical paintings. Taghizadeh appropriated the past and history by reinterpreting political headlines from newspapers from the early days of the Iranian revolution. She starts by blending images of French Revolution artworks with contemporary newspapers and publications about the Iranian Revolution. Then, in the work's external semantic layer, she attempts to convey to the audience the concept of luck-based winning and losing through the images and layout of a hand that depicts the game of "rock, paper, scissors." She blended the contents of newspapers from the first decade of the Iranian revolution with Jacques-Louis David's paintings "The Death of Marat" and "Oath of the Horatii," which she used precisely and without alterations. In one of the



Fig. 1. The Raft of the Medusa. Théodore Géricault. (1818-1819). Oil painting on canvas. 480×690cm. Louvre, Paris. Source: Halimi, 2004, 43.

collection's pieces, entitled "The End of a Century of Censorship," she included the sorrowful painting "The Death of Marat" with the headline "Government Guarantees Freedom of the Press." By doing so, she aims to criticize the past and demonstrate the incompatibility of the status quo with reality. (The original artwork, "The Death of Marat," depicts the radical French revolutionary writer with a fallen quill in his right hand and a letter in his left that he was unable to finish due to his murder). In the same work, under the caption "I write; therefore, I am," she sketched three hands showing the V sign. A single clenched fist is shown at the opposite end of these hands. At the top of the page are three open fists, representing the hope for victory (Fig. 3).

In another piece, Taghizadeh blended the headline "The Iranian government became the Islamic Republic" from the same newspapers with Jacques-Louis David's iconic painting "Oath of the Horatii" and resurrected a glorious past in the context of current circumstances. "Oath of the Horatii" alludes to the Horatii brothers' pre-war union and is a sign of their unwavering loyalty in the face of enemies (the Curiatii). The purpose of Jacques-Louis David's revolutionary artwork was to inspire the Republicans of the period. In fact, she wants to inform Republicans that, like the Horatii brothers, they need devotion and fidelity (McCoy, 2017). Taghizadeh explores commonalities or similar messages by using this work and mixing it with the contents of the first publications of the Iranian Revolution. With a closer look, she refreshes the notion of unity and oath and



Fig. 2. Early Infinite, Mehrdad. Moheb Ali. (2014). Acrylic painting on canvas. 250*180cm. Source: www.galleryetamad.com.

employs appropriation in her predecessors' works, connecting the splendor of the past to the criticism of current events (Fig. 4).

Fostering intercultural dialogue and translation

Interaction between Iranian artists and foreign nations has expanded dramatically in recent years, owing to current political orientations in society, greater immigration, and the involvement of artists in major international events. With so many visual media accessible, contemporary artists choose to use their work to reflect their individual experiences rather than communal identity concerns. Of course, significant socio-cultural advancements have always affected these personal experiences and attitudes. As a result, the modern era may be seen as a time of artists' ambition to experiment with new strategies, which allows them to stir the attention of others outside of Iran's borders and achieve credibility in international circles (Keshmirshakan, 2017, 332). Artists of this period, both those who have migrated and those who have stayed in Iran, have used the approach of "appropriation" to merge the works of Western artists with the new culture, tradition, or contemporary context of Iranian society to establish international communication and dialogue. Mahmoud Sabzi is one of these artists. In his works, Mahmoud Sabzi, an artist whose interest is the modern period and its social conditions, has merged Iranian culture with the culture of other societies. In other words, he has practiced "appropriation". Sabzi's creative works started with oil paintings of different individuals or reproductions of the work of world-renowned artists. After acquiring experience and competence, he made 25 pop artworks in the "Towards Nowhere" collection employing an acrylic technique and mixed media, addressing the cultural identity. By fusing eastern and western cultural symbols, his paintings exhibit a fabricated and interconnected identity that he believes portrays the hidden and growing wounds that have emerged in the cultural body of our society. In several works, he combines portraits of Andy Warhol, many of which represent the features of Hollywood celebrities



Fig. 3. Untitled. From Rock, Paper, Scissors collection. Jinoos Taghizadeh. 2009. 3D printing, on lenticular. 50×35cm. Source: www.theguardian.com.



Fig. 4. Untitled. From Rock, Paper, Scissors collection. Jinoos Taghizadeh. 2009. 3D printing, on lenticular. 50×35cm. Source: www.theguardian.com.

like Marilyn Monroe, with cultural symbolism and Iranian artistic identity. He has also merged prominent Western icons such as McDonald's, Mickey Mouse, and Hollywood stars with traditional eastern images to create incoherent cultural collages (Mahmoud Sabzi, 2014). In doing so, he attempted to depict today's volatile and multidimensional culture.

"Marilyn Monroe" is a portrait created by Andy Warhol. This piece is an adaptation of Monroe's photograph (Yasrebi, 2011, 23), which was widely published. It seems to be an uncaptioned advertisement product and, in reality, is a picture devoid of features and details, with no real meaning (Davies, Hefricher & Roberts, 2009, 2). However, we cannot deny that Warhol's "Marilyn Monroe" is much more well-known than the original photograph (Torsen, 2006, 59). There is no impression of Andy Warhol's portrait of Marilyn Monroe in Mahmoud Sabzi's appropriated pieces. Instead, he used these artworks to reflect his cultural heritage; hence, oriental themes and motifs predominated. The combination of Marilyn Monroe's portrait with Persian illuminated motifs and margins inspired by Persian carpet patterns takes the observer into a timeless and formless vacuum. In a world where all contrasting or homogeneous phenomena are intertwined, and our surroundings are filled with these contrasting or homogeneous objects, these images create tangible or understandable experiences for modern humans, trapping them in a place and time between the past and the present, or between tradition and modernity (Figs. 5 & 6).

Farideh Lashai, a modernist Iranian painter, is another artist who has created pieces in this global dialogical context, merging it with Iranian art and culture. One of these pieces is a reinterpretation of a painting titled "The Luncheon on the Grass." "The Luncheon on the Grass" is an oil painting by French artist Edouard Manet. The artist displays a nude lady with men dressed in formal suits in this (Pakbaz, 2002, 513). This artwork was quite controversial at the time, and many people condemned Manet for its nudity, claiming that it represented immorality in society (ibid., 238) (Fig. 7).

Farideh Lashai's painting, through appropriating

"The Luncheon on the Grass," adopts Manet's idea of a woman accompanying men under the new title of "Breakfast in Mellat Park," but instead of a naked woman, she depicts a woman with her body clothed in a patterned textile or chador. Unlike Manet's work, these individuals are not seated amid the grasses or in a natural landscape but in a setting like a notebook on which Persian words are written, as though they are surrounded by words. By altering the piece's title to "Breakfast in Mellat Park," Lashai has established a new concept: a meaningful breakfast in a park in Tehran. Lashai abandons Manet's personal freedom in this piece and conforms to Iranian cultural icons. In Lashai's work, the characters from the original painting are given Iranian looks and placed in the context of Persian words. These words are, in fact, Persian phrases from the title of Lashai's work (Breakfast in Mellat Park), which has been repeated many times in the background. The male characters in the painting are clothed in sophisticated, intellectual clothing, and they are sitting with a woman dressed in a chador and having a traditional appearance; therefore, she is depicted in contrast to the men. In this work, the artist has extracted a new perspective from "The Luncheon on the Grass" that requires a different interpretation since it is no longer similar to the original piece (Fig. 8). The essential quality of the artists we mentioned in this section is their proclivity to represent biographies in the context of Iranian society. Therefore, in addition to recycling themes from Western works, Sabzi and Lashai have attempted to develop their own biographies in the form of new works, thereby participating in a modern global dialogue with other artists.

Transposing the meanings of old native artworks

One of the essential functions of "appropriation" is to modify the prior work and deplete it of the previous concepts so that the new work's meaning is no longer compatible with the original piece and becomes an independent work. This strategy is one of the most practical examples of "appropriation," resulting in a semantic plurality of images and allowing for multiple



Fig. 5. Mahmoud Sabzi. Acrylic and gouache on canvas. 122×122cm. Source: www.shiringallery.com.



Fig. 6. Mahmoud Sabzi. Acrylic and gouache on canvas. 122×122cm. Source: www.shiringallery.com.

interpretations at different times. Giving an old work a new form and structure might result in new and unexpected meanings or values. As with previous “appropriation” strategies, the pre-existing image is tampered with this function and finally presented with a fundamental synthesis of concepts.

Shahpour Pouyan is one of the artists who, by depleting the meanings of pre-existing artworks, portrays the representation of classic paintings and, by doing so, recontextualizes their ambiance. He retains the essential features of the original artwork while removing the events or figures. Pouyan deconstructs the foundation of classic Iranian paintings, which are based on human actions or historical and literary events, and depicts a vacant space empty of life. In this way, by comparing his mental image from previous paintings with the new image, the audience of Pouyan’s works will be mystified and astonished. In Fig. 9, Pouyan confidently employs the tampering procedure to transform Kamālud-Dīn Behzad’s “The Building of the Khawarnaq Palace” (Fig. 10) into a scene devoid of human figures or actions. His work depicts the setting in which the Khawarnaq Palace is built, as well as the scaffolding and ladders used by the workers to climb the building. However, Pouyan has removed people

from the painting; it is as if all of these people stopped working and left only a minute ago. According to Shahpour Pouyan, human activity is the most significant component of Iranian paintings. By removing it, he reminds the audience that creating valuable and meaningful works in the history of art without humans and human omission equals a significant loss. He engages the audience in a mental game, inviting them to explore their historical memory of the omitted events of painting by looking at the empty image and setting. Hojjat Amani, a modern painter, has incorporated a wide range of themes and discourses in his work, including pre-existing poems and images as well as the usage of new media and technologies. His goal in combining these many themes is to create a new conception in the realm of art (Panart Editorial, 2018). He has depicted a lady with two colorful wings on her shoulders in a piece entitled “The Angel” (Fig. 11). Amani used a tampering procedure to make and duplicate this piece based on a painting from the Qajar era. The title of this Qajar artwork is “The Lady Who Has Taken Her Veil Off” (Fig. 12). Using cutting-edge technology, he created an image of a lady with the wings of an angel, as well as an aura of his previous paintings and images. The original painting’s female character’s veil can also be



Fig. 7. The Luncheon on the Grass. Édouard Manet (1863). Oil painting on canvas. 208.3*264.2cm. Musée d'Orsay, Paris. Source: Gardner, 2002, 592.

seen in this replicated version. This veil, however, has been placed on the woman's wings rather than being held by her hand. Like the original figure in the Qajar painting, this woman is dressed in entirely traditional clothing, yet she is standing in a modern setting. In fact, Amani presents us with a new image of this Qajar lady, one that has lost its original meaning. This lady is no longer from the past; she is not a modern woman; she is not even a celestial angel; she is a synthesis of all we see and everything we don't see. Perhaps, the complicated events of the period, such as social and political turmoil, cultural blending and uncertainty in the industrial world, and the influx of numerous images, have prompted today's appropriating-style artists to react to and tamper with the works of previous artists. Perhaps, in pursuit of his lost ideals, such an artist attempted to reproduce scenes from the past in a manner that mirrored his ideals.

Conclusion

The use of the "appropriation" approach in modern Iranian art is noteworthy, particularly among pioneering contemporary artists who have replicated or altered the works of great artists with remarkable competence and proficiency, as well as among artists of successive generations. Indeed, despite being misjudged and denied, modern art has always found its way to the future, and the "appropriation" method is no exception. Because Iranians have a long tradition of reproducing works of art in commemoration of previous masters, this approach may be more embraced in Iranian art discourse than in other areas worldwide. This is why, to reconcile the past with the present, many Iranian



Fig. 8. Breakfast in Mellat Park (2010). Projected animation on painting. 100*150cm. Source: www.artnet.com.

artists have adopted the "appropriation" approach or have referenced previous works. In today's art, the approaches or strategies for returning to the past are considerably different from the old methods. In an age where the conceptual or intellectual dimension of works of art has surpassed the skill and competence of the artists, they are constantly striving to develop numerous multidimensional concepts and themes. Such art is not meant to belong wholly to the past or entirely to today's world, but rather to be art in the form of global dialogue, inspired by everything we are used to, or even distanced from, in the modern world. Based on the investigations and research conducted in this study, it is possible to realize the scope and variation of "appropriation" strategies used in contemporary Iranian art and painting. The most significant functions of this approach in modern Iranian art are divided into three categories in this study: 1- "Recycling the past within modern contexts," 2- "Fostering intercultural dialogue and translation," and 3- "Transposing the meanings of native artworks." As examples of the first function, we cited the works of Mehrdad Moheb Ali and Jinoos Taghizadeh in this study. This function is more concerned with depicting the magnificence of the past or exposing contemporary human challenges and sufferings. For the second function of "appropriation," we cited the works of Mahmoud Sabzi and Farideh Lashai. These artists have merged indigenous culture and art with significant or controversial Western works, expressing them in novel ways. Finally, we looked at Shahpour Pouyan and Hojjat Amani's works for the third function. Through the process of tampering and alteration of prior Iranian works, these artists have given

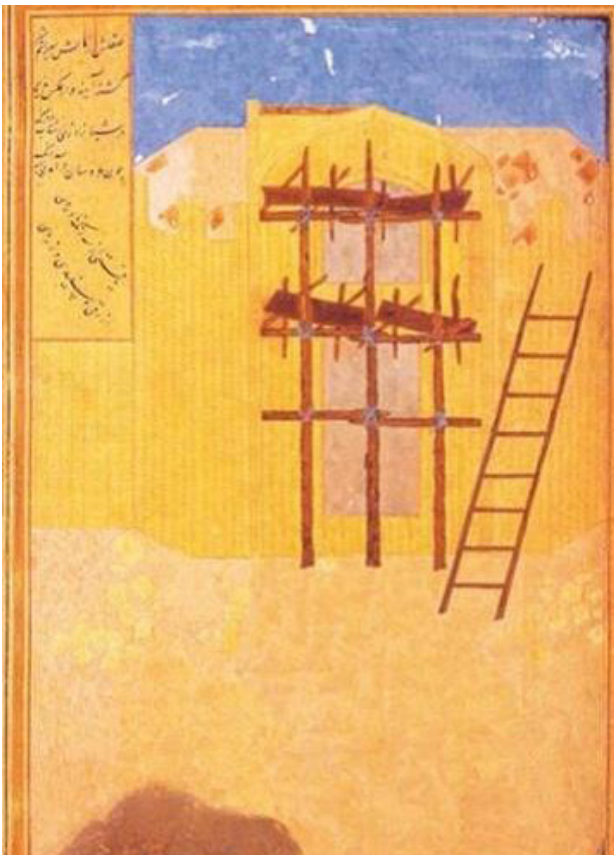


Fig. 9. History Travels at Different Speeds. Shahpour Pouyan. 2015. Mixed media on paper. 12*14cm. Source: www.copperfieldgallery.com.



Fig. 10. The Building of the Famous Castle of Khawarnaq. Kamālud-Dīn Behzād. 898 AH (1493). Khamṣa of Nizami. Source: Ajand, 2010, 308.



Fig. 11. The Angeles. Hojjat Amani. 2010. Inkjet on canvas. 70*100cm. Source: www.janetradyfineart.com.



Fig. 12. The Lady who has Taken her Veil off. Attributed to Muhammad. 13th century AH. Oil painting on canvas. 46.5*31.5cm. Source: Pakbaz, 2004, 156.

them new meanings. In summary, modern works based on the “appropriation” approach include the following characteristics: the use of earlier images and works with new and critical methods in order to generate a new meaning, merging the past and the future, referencing the history and its narrative. It should be highlighted that these works need further research and understanding. Lack of attention to the evaluation of these works, as well as a lack of proper research on the use of “appropriation” among contemporary Iranian artists, leads to the omission of a significant proportion of modern works of art, the number of which is growing day by day.

Endnotes

1. Contemporary art refers to arts that are still in the process of development and experimentation or that are offered in the form of new experiences. The prominent feature of contemporary art is “its vitality and employing a new language and representation. Also, the use of cutting-edge technology in displaying works of art may also be a criterion for distinguishing contemporary art (Shamkhani, 2017, 10). See Millet (2017) for more information about modern art.
2. Appropriation
3. Bahman Jalali, Kambiz Darmabakhsh, Abdi Asbaghi, Aneh Mohammad Tatari, Mohammad Hadi Fadavi, Shadi Ghadirian, Samira Ali Khanzadeh, and Behnam Kamrani are among Iranian contemporary artists that use appropriation in their artworks. Meanwhile, Aydin Aghdashloo is one of the most well-known artists who has employed the “appropriation” approach in his works and has made several pieces in this genre. In another study, we will go through Aydin Aghdashloo’s art and the works he developed using the appropriation approach in great depth.
4. The term applies to quoting or borrowing something from something else. Adaptation is the process of creating a piece based on another piece.
5. Many modern artists have re-created older paintings and works in more contemporary styles by using digital platforms or new media. They have, for example, shown old artworks in unrealistic dimensions using video, animation, music, sound, and light, among other approaches.
6. According to Sami Azar, the terms appropriate adoption and appropriation are equivalent and analogous. For further detail, see: Lucie-Smith, (2001, 254) and Mirizzi (2011).
7. Benjamin tries to analyze the influence of mass production and consumption of contemporary technologies on the status of works of art in this article (Kamali & Akbari, 2008, 128). Walter Benjamin was the first author to conceptually develop a discourse on the elimination of modern art’s sacredness. See: Benjamin (1998); Stein (2003) and Benjamin (2005).
8. Rosalind Krauss was an art theorist and art critic. She is well renowned for her 20th-century art, sculpture, and photography knowledge. For further information, see Baharloo (2014).
9. In the late 1960s, postmodernism predicted the death of art and the end of art history. Postmodernism’s reasons for making such a claim were as follows: 1. The doors of art were opened to all discourses and multiplicities of discourse, and the old definition of art and its uniqueness was lost. 2. As prophesied by Walter Benjamin in “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction”, new technology and mass production were one of the causes driving the end of the painting age. 3. The transcendent art had come to an end. Further reading may be found in Ali Asghar Gharebaghi (2000a); and Kamali & Akbari (2008).
10. Using someone else’s work and finding a new function for it does not necessarily imply creating a new image.
11. In a nutshell, derivation refers to the process of extracting one word from another. It also refers to adaption and extraction.
12. For additional information on the authenticity and status of contemporary artwork, as well as the obstacles that this set of works faces, and to find a

solution to the issue of whether such works and works like them have legal protections under the law (see Zahedi & Sharifzadeh, 2016).

13. Pop art is an abbreviation for “popular art” and refers to “popular mass art.” This trend is practically a celebration of the popular consumerist culture that evolved following World War II in nations like the United Kingdom and the United States. Pop art was the first movement to openly discuss the relationship between art and commerce, adapting to marketing methods and embracing the artist’s shifting position. By tugging a mustache and beard on a poster of Mona Lisa and Andy Warhol, Henri-Robert-Marcel Duchamp replicated the Mona Lisa’s face in 6 horizontal and 5 vertical columns (Fenzel, 2007, 552). He then developed new works with astounding effects, putting a layer of paint on images of actors and celebrities such as Marilyn Monroe and repeating them frequently (Lynton, 2003, 343).

14- The term refers to reproducing works from the past as well as repeating works by previous artists. In Iran, the art of citation or quoting has a long history. Gharebaghi, 2000, provides further research and information on the art of citation.

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