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## Original Research Article

## Role of Documentary Photography in the Period of Revolution and War: Examining Some Viewpoints of George Lukács and Arnold Hauser\*

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### Abstract

**Problem statement:** Few studies have examined the role of documentary photography in the political, social, and cultural structures, in reflecting the events of the 1979 revolution and the war against Iraq, with social documentary, news, and war approaches.

**Research objectives:** This article aimed to study the relationship between documentary photography and the events of this decade, and examine the quality of documentary photography in the ruling power policies by using some viewpoints of Lukács and Hauser.

**Research method:** This qualitative research, used the descriptive-analytical method, and data were obtained from the written printed, and electronic literature.

**Conclusion:** Studies showed that documentary photography in this decade influenced the political, social, and cultural structures and in turn was influenced by the policies and ideology of the ruling power. Using photographs by the ruling power for propaganda-political purposes gave photography an institutional and ideological function and by the limitation socio-political sphere, photographers could not reflect the spirit of all dimensions of their era. Some factors, such as establishing publishing houses, printing photography books and magazines, establishing the photography field, and holding photography annuals and exhibitions, contributed to the development of documentary photography, and factors such as the limitation in the socio-political atmosphere, censorship and insecurity hindered its progress. Photographs that were in line with the ideology of the ruling political power or one of its idealisms were supported. According to the presented, documentary photography trend in the revolution and war period has been relatively in line with the views expressed by Lukács and Hauser.

**Keywords:** *Documentary Photography, Ruling Power, Limitation in the Political Sphere Reflection, Spirit of the Time.*

### Introduction

Documentary photography, one of the most important functional branches and the dominant trend of photography in the world, occupies an important and influential part of contemporary photography in Iran after the revolution of 1979,

and as a medium, has been influenced by the powers and ideologies of Iran, political, economic, social and cultural changes. And in turn. In the first decade of the revolution, the policies of the ruling power had affected the political, social, and economic situation, and these factors had

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sociology of art" is in progress under supervision of Dr. Seyyed Ali Rouhani at the faculty of theories and Art Studies, Art University of Tehran has been done.  
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affected all cultural and artistic fields, especially documentary photography, and documentary photography in turn had affected the political, social, and cultural fields. After the 1979 revolution, the diversity of the first decade's events provided a suitable platform for the experimentalism of Iranian documentary photographers.

Using some opinions of two sociologists of art, George Lukács, and Arnold Hauser, this article tried to investigate and explain the role and impact of documentary photography in Iran from the beginning of the revolution of 1979 to the end of the Iran-Iraq war. Its secondary goal is to clarify the factors that have played a role in the ups and downs of Iran's documentary photography during the revolution and the war. To achieve these goals, the present article sought answers to the following main and secondary questions: What is the role of documentary photography in the era of the revolution and the war from the perspective of some opinions of Lukács and Hauser? What factors and components in the ups and downs of documentary photography in Iran, after the Islamic revolution until 1990, have had an effective and positive role or an inhibiting and negative role? Considering that the current research method is qualitative and historical, so is not hypothetical. The present article can play an effective role in learning from experience and gaining insight that will guide the future of Iranian photography and be used as a source for the development and enrichment of existing knowledge about Iranian documentary photography; On the other hand, the more we move away from the time of the 1979 revolution, the structural changes and major developments cause us to forget the events of the revolution and the war, which also show the importance and necessity of this research, as well as with a general understanding of the situation of documentary photography in Iran in this period, it is possible to compare Iran's documentary photos as a documentary visual history with its written history in this period. While presenting the background and theoretical foundations of the research, this article

tried as much as possible to extract and analyze the role and influence of documentary photography in Iran in this era, as well as the factors influencing it, and provide photos to clarify the theoretical issues. The study scope of documentary photography in the current research includes photography of social events (social documentary photography, photojournalism, and war photography) in Iran and it does not include the photography of other branches or other topics of documentary photography such as landscape and nature photography, buildings, architecture, scientific. This research only includes Iranian photographers who have photographed within the borders of this land during this decade.

## Research Background

About the topic of the research, various resources such as books, dissertations, articles, and magazines have been inspiring and guiding, from which I have sometimes cited the resources; it should be noted that the theoretical nature and content of the present article, comprehensive and purposeful studies about the role of documentary photography in the revolution and the war period by using some opinions of Lukács and Hauser has not to be found and also, there weren't any studies in the line with the goals of this research so that could connect all historical, political, social and cultural changes and events and be temporal and subjective comprehensive as the subject of this research. In this area, only a few hints are found which are mentioned briefly here. Hoshang Zakavati's (2014) thesis under the title "Examination of social-political photos of Tabriz during the Islamic Revolution" discusses the photography of events of the revolution in Tabriz. He believes that as a medium in advancing the revolution, photography was effective and an opportunity for the presence of amateur photographers in capturing the events of the revolution in the new form of experimentalism in social documentary photography. Sharareh Mohammadi in her thesis entitled "Analysis and Study of the Documentary of the Iranian Revolution According to the Narratives of Domestic and Foreign

Photographers” (2011) introduces ten Iranian photographers and seven foreign photographers and examines their works, and concludes that the Iranian photographers, in showing the phenomenon of the revolution, in addition, to emphasize on the external form, they also emphasize on people’s inner feelings, emotions, and beliefs achieved by getting close to them. The thesis: “An Analysis of the Modern Documentary Photography and Its Effects on Contemporary Photography in Iran” written by Mohammad Rahimi (2010) examines the new documentary approach to the world of photography from the 1960s onwards; from his viewpoint, documentary photography is more personal, poetic, and intrinsic, and due to the lack of the necessary context and background, contemporary Iranian documentary photography did not progress along with the world documentary photography. The conclusion of Imran Nikzad’s thesis with the title: “Investigation of the Role of Photography in the Reflection of Important Political Events from the Second Pahlavi Period to the Present Era” (2009) shows that the Pahlavi regime tried to censor photos and control photography, but the opponents of the regime used photography and photos to convey voices of the public. Most of the printed books about the events of the revolution and the war are mostly presented in the form of documentary photo albums, and in these books there are a short text about the photographer, the title, explanations about the photos and sometimes theoretical discussions about documentary photography in the form of conversation, education or memory, as such: “Days of Blood and Days of Fire” (1979); “Five Glances at the Soil” (Dehghanpour et al., 1982); The book “Year 30: pictorial Journal of Iran after the Islamic Revolution 1978-2009” (2012); “Turbanites” (2016); “Revolutionaries of the First Decade” (2017); “Kaveh Golestan, Photos and A Conversation” (Golestan & Ghazvini, 2004); “Documentary Photography” by Shirjian (2013); “Photography in War” by Saeed Janbozorgi (2013); “Cultural-Artistic Functions of Photography in Iran (1951-2001)” by

Mohammad Khodadadi Motarjemzade (2014), who expresses his views on Iranian photography from a modernist view and has a brief and historical look at photography in the revolution and the role of photography in the press. The Association of Holy Defense Photographers has also collected photos and printed books of war photographers’ works along with text about those photographers without analyzing them. An article entitled “The story of an Iranian Witness: A Glimpse of Some Issues of Iranian Documentary Photography”, by Mehran Mohajer, which has been presented in the magazine “Herfeh-Honarmand” (64), has a personal and selective view of the historical process of Iranian documentary photography in chronological order and while mentioning the name of various photographers, mentions their works but did not analyze them. None of the mentioned cases refer to the analysis of the photography of this decade and the factors influencing it. Also, in the translated and untranslated foreign sources, a direct article about the title and topic of the research was not found. Only documentary photos of some contemporary Iranian photographers have been published selectively in some books such as “Iranian Photography Now”, “Another Perspective” (Deghati & Deghati, 2014) and “Photography, A Crash Course” along with the names of the photographers and a short explanation from Dave Yorath about the subject of those photos.

### Theoretical Foundation

In the theoretical foundations, some opinions of George Lukács and Arnold Hauser are used in the field of sociology of art. Lukács belongs to “the first generation of sociology of art, i.e. “sociological aesthetics”. This trend gives importance to the “Interiority of art” and by focusing on artworks, seeks to establish bridges between art and society” (Heinich, 2008, 28). Hauser is from the second generation of sociology of art, i.e., the movement of “social history of art”, focusing on the role of art in society, and by the methods of documentary and historical investigation, pays attention to the

“Exteriority of art” and the social, economic, cultural and institutional contexts of production or the acceptance of works” (ibid., 2008, 45).

Lukács discussed art as a historical and social product and emphasized the material context of art evolution. According to his belief, “the economic infrastructure cannot directly determine the cultural infrastructure, because society is made up of different parts that have complex relationships and are considered as a whole, he called these complex relationships “mediation”. According to Lukács, each part of a certain society should be considered as a part of the whole society, which is called “social totality”, and every part of the society is formed by the nature of the totality. For this reason, culture is not formed by the infrastructure and directly, but the special order of its different parts of the social totality shape it, and political and economic systems and different sectors are in turn influenced by the cultural sector. To understand the works of art and how they are formed, we must consider the production of these works as a part of a specific social totality, and examine the relationships between different sectors, such as politics, economy, education system and artistic production areas” (Inglis & Hughson, 2016, 58). According to Lukács, various artworks are created when a great event and development in history, such as a revolution, a conflict between two factions, classes and groups happens or an epidemic, earthquake, and so on, appears. According to him in the book “History and Class Consciousness”, “the readiness of a class to achieve dominance means that it can organize the whole society based on its interests and class consciousness. In the final analysis, the decisive and fundamental issue in every class struggle is about which class, at the appropriate and decisive moment has the ability and class consciousness to organize the whole society.” (Lukács, 1998, 163). Any classes that cannot do this organization have an inferior role in society and it will not be able to have a debilitating or advancing effect in the course of history.

Lukács considered the literary work as a reflection of

social realities and as a mirror that passively reflects its age and period. “The literary work is a reflection of social realities or the content of the work, but the content is not directly traced in it; rather the real bearers of ideology in art are the forms of the work, instead of the experiential content. Therefore, the form of the work is a reflection of its content, and the content of the work is not expressed except in the form of form.” (Valipour Hafshejani, 2007, 124). Then, in the Marxist point of view, the form issue is not ignored, but the focus is on how ideology and social totality and mediation or ruling power shape the form of the work. According to the reflection approach, the spirit of the era or the spirit of the time is manifested and reflected in the artwork, provided that the work is realistic, and in such a work, different dimensions of the rituals of real life reveal themselves to us. According to Lukács, realistic artworks are the only ones that reconstruct social life in its full meaning. He believed that the similarity of the structure of realistic works with the structure of the existing reality caused the transformation of the existing social system. Based on this, we can say that “art cannot be considered apart from its surrounding environment, especially when issues such as technology or social class are involved.” (D’Alleva, 2015, 71) Lukács considered only critical realism, which can overcome all ideologies and worldviews, as true realism. He knew the characteristics of a true realist as follows: “Fiercy passion for reality, prejudice towards reality and its moral aspect, honesty of the author, stubbornness to direct and mental adherence to the world” (Lukács, 2002, 20). In his opinion, if such a writer is in the position of choosing between “his ideologies and the actual process of the events of the story, he will always prefer the latter to the former and will not sacrifice reality for his ideological tendencies” (Valipour Hafshejani, 2007, 124). The Marxist view can analyze and examine the artworks that have the power to challenge the dominant ideologies or the ruling power, and in this context, he gives an example of Balzac who, despite being interested in

the royal system, shows the fall of the aristocracy and the rise of the middle class in his works. But there are writers who act against it and determine the path of their fictional characters according to their ideology, not based on the inner dialectics of the fictional characters. In general, historical Marxist thinkers and commentators are of the opinion that the works of art produced by artists are purchased by different social institutions in different ways and methods. These artworks “reflect and decipher social structures of their era in their formats [or forms] and aesthetic contents” (Ramin, 2020, 76). Arnold Hauser, one of the art history analysts in the field of historical Marxism analysis in the 20th century, also believes that: “The mutual relationship between art and society cannot be simply reversed. Whatever society is, it is not an aesthetic phenomenon, while art is a clearly social achievement. Despite its nature, art is the product of social forces and the source of social effects” (Hauser, 2003, 336). In *Social History of Art*, he writes: “Every revolution must transform society before it changes art, although art itself is the means of this transformation and subject to a complex relationship of action and reaction with social flow” (Hauser, 1998, 793). From Hauser’s perspective, the art works is considered to be a reflection of economic and social conditions, which could be extended to political, religious and cultural crises and conditions. He points out: “Art can express the structures of a particular society both negatively and positively, agree with some structures of the society and disagree with others, strengthen some characteristics of a society and disagree with others and slow down and weaken them, art can act both as a weapon and propaganda tool and as a defensive agent” (Hauser, 2003, 326).

The main issue that Marxist thinkers and critics have common opinion in relation to art is that “the ruling and upper classes of society reduce the material means of life and livelihood of the lower class, who constitute a huge mass of people in society, to produce an artistic work and achieve their desires, and the other is that the relations of

social classes are reflected by the aesthetic contents that works of art provide, and these contents, in addition to reflecting the ideology of the ruling classes, confirm their domination. Also, art is valuable for society when it causes revolution or in to participate in the revolutionary struggle, creates a historical transformation and shows the class distinction” (Ramin, 2020, 77). Like pre-communist art that “contains a potential moment of truth, but this potential moment of truth is waiting to be through the revolutionary actions” (ibid., 79). Lukács’ discussions and ideas related to mediation, social totality and how culture is formed by different parts of social totality, the impact of culture on different structures, how artworks are formed and the relationships between different areas, the role of the ruling and subordinate classes, as well his opinions about the fields of artistic production, the theory of reflection and the structure of his realistic works, also Hauser’s opinions about the impact of different social classes on the production of works of art, the theory of reflection of his works of art, as well the functions and effects of art on the structures of a community is used as a theoretical framework in this article. In my opinion, considering the current conditions of Iran, in the analysis of the role of documentary photography during the revolution and war, one trend could not answer the questions of this research, and regarding that, the opinions of the two trends of the first and second generations of the sociology of art are not separate from each other and give a better result in overlapping with each other, I use both groups in this article.

## Research Method

The research method of this descriptive-analytical paper is qualitative. Primary data and information were collected and studied by reviewing printed, visual and electronic literature related to the period of the revolution and the war. The photos for this article were selected from various sources and through sampling from the research community, and the combination of two methods “targeted non-

probability” due to the large volume of photos, and the “probability clustering” method due to the lack of a complete list of photos from the first decade of the revolution, were used. To analyze qualitative data, which is one of the methods used in qualitative research and is based on the inductive approach, this article uses historical methodology. The data examines “people, meanings, events or ideas” in relation to the past” (Ghasemi et al., 2020, 296). This research includes the “study, understanding and description of past events. Its purpose is to reach results related to the causes of past influences or trends” (ibid., 296), and also seeks pathology and truth-seeking and “relies on logical analyzes based on research data. At this stage, the researcher has to “describe and then explain the data as it deals with two main steps in the analysis of historical data” (ibid., 304). Finally, the researcher “discusses and draws conclusions from the research findings with an interpretive and critical approach... and gives meaning to historical facts” (ibid., 305).

### **The Role of Documentary Photography During the Revolution and War**

With the political developments of the revolution of 1979 and the changes in the class structure of the Iranian society, simultaneously Imam’s ideas became dominant as the ruling power in Iran by removing its political rivals. After that, the revolutionary society of Iran witnessed changes in the political, social, and cultural structures. These changes were based on the ideology of the ruling system that brought prohibitions and restrictions to the Iranian people, drastically changed the social atmosphere of Iran, limited social freedoms, and blocked the political atmosphere of the country. These socio-cultural changes, as Hauser believed, were based on class conflict, or as Lukács said, were like a revolution, that became more intense during the imposed war. These issues were noticed by documentary photographers. They tried to make different aspects of these social and class changes in the subject of their photography, but prohibitions and restrictions

engaged the photographers in the early years of the revolution and the war (apart from photographing events amid the revolution) and were a big obstacle on the way of photographers and caused them to not be able to reflect the social realities of this decade as it was. But despite these limitations, the visual reflection of social realities and the content of the photographs of this period, in addition to showing the harsh political, social, economic, and cultural conditions of Iranian society, was the beginning that marked the development and progress of documentary photography.

At the beginning of the revolution and at the same time as the political foundations of the new system were established, because Iraq attacked Iran, the atmosphere of revolution and war is mixed with fire, blood, death, etc., for this reason, it can be said that the era of revolution and war have a common nature in terms of history and structure, and consequently, the art and photography of this era will also have a common nature. The photography of the revolution period can be divided into two stages: the formation of the revolution and the stabilization of the political system of the revolution. At the same time as the first popular movements and demonstrations in different parts of Iran against the Pahlavi regime, Iranian photographers and even ordinary people who had cameras and the ability to take pictures considered themselves as a part of revolutionaries, according to their revolutionary commitment, covered a part of the events of the revolution. Photographers had little experience in the field of photographing an event like the revolution, and they were in the heart of the events of the revolution independently, or as co-photographers of newspapers and news agencies; In a way, they confirmed Lukács’ statement that artwork is created during a great event and transformation like a revolution occurs in society. Mojtaba Rizvani’s photographs of the victims of the Rex Abadan cinema accident in August 1978 in the city cemetery and Abbas Maleki’s photographs of the Black and Bloody Friday incident on the 8th of September 1978 (Figs. 1 & 2) can be considered the



Fig. 1. Mojtaba Rezvani; The bodies of the Victims of the Rex Cinema accident in the city cemetery, Abadan August 19, 1978. Source: Taherkhani, 2012, 49.

turning points of the photography of the revolution, which show violence against people clearly. With the increasing publication of photos and news of the events of the days after these events in the media, the press “unreservedly informed the people about the news of the protests all over the country. The news about the number of deaths and possible injuries in the newspaper caused the people to become more excited and braver on their part” (Nikzad, 2009, 171). This shows more effect and domination of the newspapers in the heart of Iranian society which itself was the first step in the rise of the use of photographs. In addition to reflecting the events of the revolution, the photos also participated in the revolution in some way, so they played an essential role in provoking people to fight and participate in protests and demonstrations against the Pahlavi regime. As “Klingender” states that “artworks should be considered not only as reflective but also as participants in the revolution and artists as leaders of this process” (Heinich, 2008, 35). In addition to that, the photos were displayed in exhibitions and numerous places in different cities, or were distributed hand to hand by people, and had the role of informing the public about the ongoing disasters of those days. What Hauser refers to as the means of transformation and Lukács as a part of the social totality, which in turn had an impact on political and social structures, the themes of realistic photos of the events of the revolution were somethings such as demonstrations, street fighting, urban warfare, carrying the wounded, the



Fig. 2. Abbas Maleki; Jhaleh Square (martyrs), Tehran, September 8, 1978 (17 Shahrivar 1357). Source: Taherkhani, 2012, 56.

shrouded corpses were in laundromats and etc, which, according to Lukács, reflected the spirit of the era and caused the transformation of the existing social system, or were against the Pahlavi regime, but they were in line with the ideology of the revolutionaries and were considered as their ideals, and according to Hauser, the revolutionaries used it as a weapon and a very effective propaganda tool. An exhibition of Bahman Jalali’s photos with several photos by Rana Javadi, Hadi Haraji, Mahmoud Mohammadi, Shahram Golparian, Mahmoud Ramezani, and Behrouz Shahidi from the events of the revolution at Farabi University and the Faculty of Fine Arts in March 1979 and the publication of the book “Days of Blood and Days of Fire” from some of the photos of this exhibition in May 1979 are an example of documentary representation of the bitter and violent realities of the events of the revolution. (Fig. 3)

From the very beginning of the revolution, what Lukács referred to as critical realism, occupied a large part of the works of photographers, such as the documentary recording of the bitter realities of the scenes of the revolution that showed the occurrence of violence from both the Pahlavi government and the revolutionaries, like the photo of the execution of supporters and officials of the Pahlavi regime by the revolutionaries, and the publication and reflection of the photos of these scenes in the domestic and foreign media and press, which brought many condemnations, especially for the revolutionaries who had just come to power. Thus the revolutionaries realized

the power of photographs and photography as they started restricting the activities of photographers. (Figs. 4-6) This meant the beginning of a new time of photo censorship in the newly established power system. Therefore the acting field for photographers became narrow and they left or turned to other branches of photography, but many photographers of the revolution, who were in line with the ideology of the ruling power, were able to continue their



Fig. 3. Bahman Jalali. Tehran, Savak office (Government agency), Zarabkhaneh St. February 12, 1979. Source: Jalali, 1979.

activities by using the facilities and supports of the revolutionary government and continue to photograph war scenes. Using the opportunity, some of the other photographers opened their way to magazines, photo agencies, and news agencies of the world, and gradually became famous and well-known figures of photography in the world, and through this, documentary and news photos of Iran were published on a wider level in the world.



Fig. 4. Jahangir Razmi. The trial and execution of eleven Kurds against the new revolutionary government. Sanandaj, August 27, 1979. Source: www. Pulitzer.



Fig. 5. Kaveh Golestan. The bodies of the members of the Shah's cabinet after being executed in a hospital in the south of Tehran, February 15, 1979. Source: Behnoud & Sepahvand, 2008.



Fig. 6. Ghorban Khalili. The people were directly shot by one of the soldiers of the Imperial Guard. Tehran, 30 Metri Jey, January 29, 1979. Source: Taherkhani, 2012, 110.

In this way, photos were censored by the ruling power or, in some cases, photography was prohibited, and it was used for political, social, cultural, etc. purposes, especially during the war period, at the national and international levels, and for political propaganda. "Political power arising from the revolution after the transition is hardened and blocked from the first years and it conquers the public sphere one-sidedly and completely and.... This blockage and the absence of those institutions (independent civil institutions) in the 70s make the work atmosphere for the documentarian narrow. This bottleneck makes documentary photographers either caught in the dry and predetermined frameworks and mostly ordered by official and government institutions, or leads them to cooperate with foreign media" (Mohajer, 2017, 51). As Willi Muenzenberg wrote about the advertising use of photographs: "Photography has become an outstanding and necessary propaganda tool in the revolutionary class struggle." (Beloff, 1996, 109).

With the beginning of the war, Iranian photographers sought to record and represent the war events realistically. And more than any artists, these were the photographers who, in addition to recording the scenes behind the war fronts, were directly present on the front lines of the war as a soldier. The recording of the events of the war was only limited to the realities of the war. In these photographs, the form and content were parallel and in the direction of representing the realities, and as Lukács called critical realism, which surpasses all ideologies, as true realism, Iranian photographers, apart from adhering to the ideology of the revolution and the ruling power, presented the real process of war events in their photographs. This confirms the opinion of Hauser and Lukács that artworks reflect the economic, political, social and cultural conditions of a society; Lukács referred to it as a mirror that shows the social reality or the content as the form. The realistic dimension and content of the war photos conflicted with the goals of the ruling power's policies in the war, which sought

to push the war towards its ideals and show Iran's oppression in the war at the level of domestic and foreign policy scenes. In this sense, only photos of the war that were in line with the standards and ideals of the revolution and war could be presented to the public or the media, and according to Hauser, it reflected the ideology of the ruling power. These photos either inspired the defense of the land, homeland, and honor, or showed the victory and pride of the warriors on the fronts, etc., or they glorified a spiritual atmosphere and reaching to the transcendental Karbala and the liberation of Qods in the mind of the audience. Photographs like seeing off the warriors and dispatch of fresh forces and mobilization of the dead behind the fronts, flags in hand with colored headbands with signs and religious writings on them; A Basiji fighter's farewell to his mother or his wife, etc, are examples of the valuable themes of war photos. In some war photographs, we also see a kind of mixing of time and place, such as the photographs of the martyrs of the war and how they are placed in the frame of the photograph while the blood is flowing from their heads and faces, which were ideal scenes according to the ideology of the ruling power. These photos connect the dead (martyrs) of the war with the martyrs of Karbala in the 60s of AH, and create Hosseini's rebellion among the masses of people and the youth of the country against the enemy, and push them to go to the fronts (Figs 7 & 8). "Once the revolution of 1979 unconsciously brought the camera to people and the camera itself became an effective activist in this field. With the outbreak of the war, this popular development, considering the official establishment of the government and its view on the effect and the national and global improvement of photography, this media also has taken an institutional function" (Mohajer, 2019, 87).

The effectiveness of the photos of war martyrs among the masses of people was rooted in the general culture of the Iranian people, in which Imam Hussein, the uprising of Ashura, the land of Karbala, and generally the culture of the Shiite religion of



Fig. 7. Sasan Moayyedi. Sending people's forces to the war, in front of the Islamic Council. Tehran, 1986. Source: Taherkhani, 2012, 632.



Fig. 8. Ali Fareyduni. The moment of the martyrdom of one of the soldiers of the 10th division of Seyyed al-Shohda due to being hit by a mortar shell, Karbala operation 5; Shalamcheh, three ways of martyrdom. January 13, 1987. Source: Taherkhani, 2012, 711.

Islam had a special place and had become a part of the ideology of the revolution. In this way, "the War Propaganda Headquarters, which was responsible for the final decisions on the publication of war news and images, controlled and published the war news and images very sensitively. And merely that part of the photographs that showed cooperation, empathy, and the enthusiasm of the presence of the warriors was published" (Moridi, 2018, 172). In some respect, in the display of photos of war scenes surveillance and selection were applied, and in this way, public opinion was put under the control of the ruling power. French political activist and artist "Guy Debord," writes that: "The dominant classes control the spectacles, to the extent that all other manifestations and forms of representation are considered illegitimate, and in such a context, the

spectacle cannot be separated from the government is used to reproduce social divisions and the formation of classes. Like Lukács, he also questions the extent to which art colludes with capitalist power structures or weakens such structures" (D'Alleva, 2015, 72).

On the other hand, the ruling power for political and propaganda purposes, (apart from war photos that could be presented to the public or the media) and to create ideal and sacred images and scenes used other arts such as painting, graphics, poster making, collage, stamps, etc. as advertising tools, with a combination of black and white and color photos of the war. It also used national and religious elements and signs, such as the flag, the shrine and the shrine of the martyrs in Karbala, Qods-E- Sharif, iconic images of Imams and innocents along with the brilliance of light rays to create or show the spiritual spaces of the fronts and the martyrs reaching their peak and turning the land of the fronts into the promised paradise and... Which are extremely surreal and heroic images, These images were presented in the form of paintings on canvas and billboards, or were used in posters, catalogs and brochures related to war propaganda, as well painting portraits of martyrs and war leaders on very large scales on the walls of cities that are almost in the middle years of the war and to the aim of beautifying the cities or combining photos with sentences from Ayatollah Khomeini and others, which was possible as a poster and the ruling power used them in war propaganda. (Figs. 9-12) These pictures were a kind of controlled representation of war photos by the ruling power, which was very far from the pictures and the terrible reality of the war, and while reflecting the ideology of the ruling power, it gave a seal of approval to their domination and the power of their propaganda. Thereby, the artists turned the pictures of war into the idealist style desired by the ruling power and gave a high and sublime aspect to war and even to death, and presented it as a beautiful, original, and spiritual work. On the other hand, the ruling power used these images as a weapon and propaganda tool,

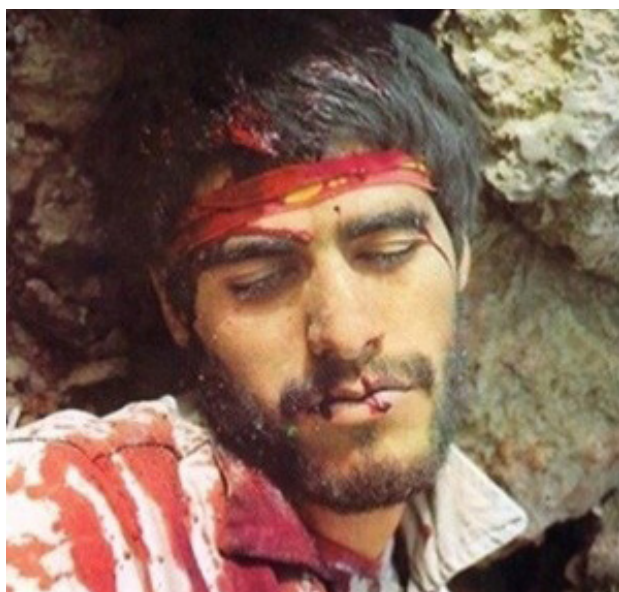


Fig. 9. Left: Ehsan Rajabi. Martyr Amir Haj Amini, from the war collection. Source: <https://shoaresal.ir>;  
Right: Wall painting from the photo of Ehsan Rajabi, Islamic Revolution Martyr Foundation, Larestan city, Fars province. Source: Authors' archive.

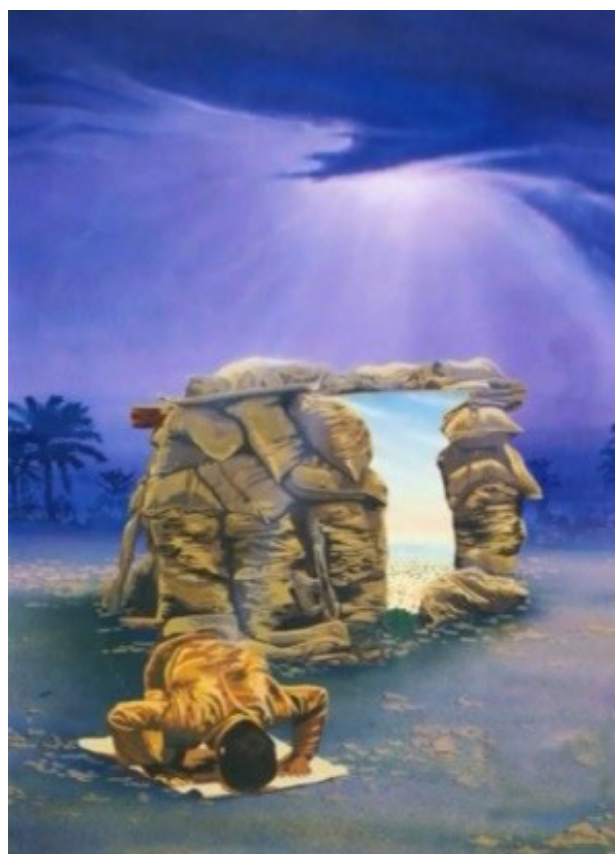


Fig. 10. Amir Ali Javadian. one of the warriors praying, around Khorramshahr, from the war collection, June 1361. Source: Silver Windows, 2006, 67;  
Left: Seyed Hamid Sharifi Al Hashem. Sangar Eshgh (Bastion of love), painting using the photo of Amir Ali Javadian. Source: Godarzi, 1989.

showed the structures of Iranian society during the war in a positive way, and in this way strengthened the morale of the people involved in the war. Along with the photography of the events of the

years of revolution and war and parallel to them, the flow of social documentary photography and the concern of showing people's daily life continued but slowly by some photographers and independently.



Fig. 11. A propaganda poster for war using a photo combined with a sentence by Ayat Khomeini. Source: Authors' archive.



Fig. 12. Mural painting in the city using photo portraits of martyrs. Source: Authors' archive

The topics and content of these photos reflected not-so-good social conditions and realities of Iran and the economic and cultural situation of the Iranian society in the first decade of the revolution. The social photos showed various aspects of the social life of the Iranian people, from the entertainment of the wealthy classes of the society to the miserable life of the marginal residents of Tehran, the effects of war on the lives of people behind the war fronts, the lives of the war wounded and the evolving native architecture of Iran at that time along with recording the local and rural culture of different regions, which can be exemplified in the photos of the book “Five Glances at the Soil”. Another type of documentary photography can be seen in the photography of urban spaces and ruins left over from the war, the death of the enemy, etc., which have been photographed with a straight approach by some photographers, and in them, the rough and naked reality of the photographed scenes can be seen with impressive formalism. The photographs reflect not only the war itself but also the underlying layers resulting from the war and its effects (Figs. 13-16). Relatedly, two books by Bahman Jalali (1979; 1981), “Khorramshahr” and “Abadan Fights on A Photographic Testimony”, are exemplified. It may be said that during the period of war, the doors were not so open for social documentary photographers, but war documentary photography continued its way with more strength and prevailed over other methods of photography.

Undoubtedly, “the simultaneous establishment

of the independent field of photography in three universities as a branch of visual arts” (Khodadadi Motarjemzade, 2014, 26) by the government institution at the same time as the reopening of the universities after the “Cultural Revolution” in 1983, was due to knowledge that the ruling power had got about the power of photography since the revolution. In addition to training a new generation of photographers, the entering of photography into the courses of universities provided the presence of some photography students and graduates in documenting the Iranian society and war events, and it was a way towards the professionalization of photography and contemporary documentary photographers of Iran. In this way, young photographers gradually pervaded the corners of people’s daily lives in cities and villages and started documenting various topics and shared their experiences in the few newly established private galleries such as Seyhoun, Golestan, etc. as private institutions and also exhibited in the Museum of Contemporary Art as a government institution “The presentation of the photos in exhibitions which after the revolution was mostly as a part of the large government places with themes related to the revolution and war and in a documentary format, began in the mid-70s. It was realized through the efforts of small groups of students in the space of private galleries” (Mohajer, 2006, 105). At the peak of the rocket attack on the Iranian cities by the Iraqi regime and very difficult war conditions on the war fronts, the Tehran Museum of Contemporary

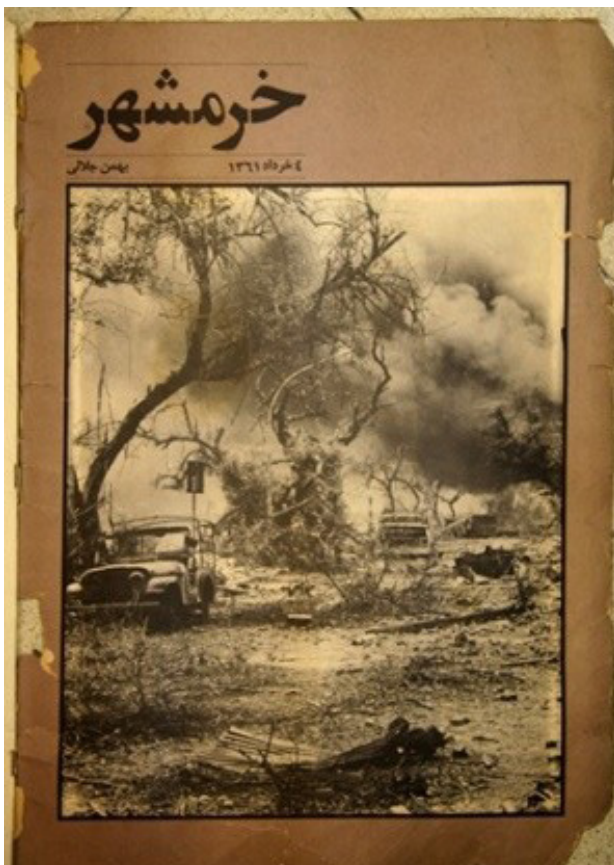


Fig. 13. Bahman Jalali. On the cover of Khorramshahr book, 1982. Source: Jalali, 1983.

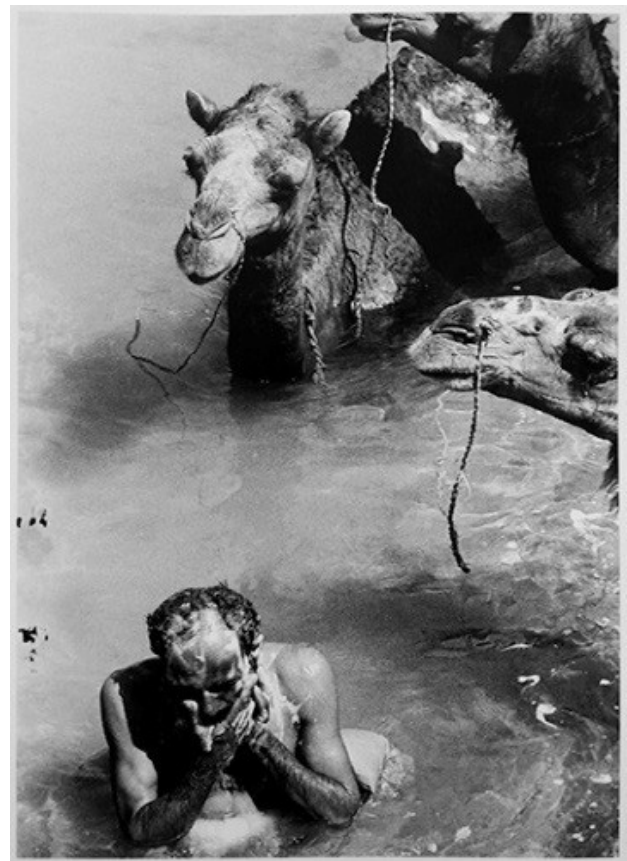


Fig. 14. Bahman Jalali. Sistan and Balouchestan, 1985. Source: Javadi, 2020.



Fig. 15. Kaveh Kazemi. The ski resort is divided into two sections for women and men. Tehran, Dizin, 1984. Source: Kazemi, 2017.



Fig. 16. Kaveh Kazemi. Iran-Iraq war veterans' hospital. Tehran, 1985. Source: Kazemi, 2017.

Arts 1987 held the Iranian First Annual Exhibition, which had an impact on strengthening the spirit of endurance and resistance of the war-torn people and the progress of documentary photography in Iran. The publication of "Aks" magazine in 1986 as the only photography magazine in Iran, by the Iranian Youth Cinema Association as a government institution, had a tremendous impact

on the expansion and development of photography among young photographers and photography enthusiasts, especially in the documentary, news and war photography. During this period, many young photographers got acquainted with the world of photography through this magazine and joined the circle of Iranian photographers in the following years.

## Conclusion

During the revolution, the confrontation and conflict of different social classes with the Pahlavi regime as the ruling class, and after the revolution, the confrontation of different political currents to gain political power and dominate each other as the ruling class or power, and also during the imposed war, the confrontation between the forces of Iranian and Iraqi military and the defense of the homeland, were among the most important factors for the creation of social, news and war documentary photography images that reflected the scene of these conflicts, confrontations, changes, and events. According to the opinions of Lukács and Hauser mentioned in this article, the analysis of the obtained data showed that documentary photography in the first decade after the revolution of 1979 was influenced by the policies and ideology of the ruling power. And according to Lukács, the factors of political, economic, social, and cultural structures as different parts of the social totality, and through the complex relations of mediation, had an impact on the process of documentary photography during the revolution and war. It must be noted that documentary photography, in its turn, is a part of the cultural structure, with different methods such as visual recording and reflecting on the various events during the revolution and war, raising awareness and informing through the media, or by stimulating and inciting different social classes to attend various events and as a means to transform existing political and social structures and classes, etc., was effective in political, social and cultural fields.

But since the early beginning of the revolution and during its first decade, due to the creation and existence of obstruction of the political atmosphere and the restriction of social freedoms, there were obstacles and prohibitions on the way of photographers (who were initially active according to their revolutionary commitment) by the revolutionaries and some institutions and forces related to the ruling power (through photo censorship and auditing, narrowing the field for photographers

and not allowing photography, and creating a security atmosphere, etc.). Therefore, documentary photography could not play its role essentially and necessarily reflect the events and social realities of this era and could not perform and display the spirit of the era, as Lukács said, in all its dimensions and challenge the ideology of the ruling power.

Due to the political conditions prevailing in this decade, photographers could not do true realism or, from Lukács' viewpoint, they could not present critical realism correctly and show their photographs based on it. Because either there was a ban on access to subjects for photography, or to maintain their security, photographers were forced to self-censor, delete some realistic photos, or align themselves or their photos with the ideology of the ruling power. Therefore, only photos that matched the goals of the ideology of the ruling power or were considered a part of its idealism were displayed to the public, and according to Hauser's opinion, the helm of documentary photography was in the hands of the ruling and dominant political class of the society.

By referring to the content of selected photos from this era, the class distinction in Iranian society and the power and dominance of the ideology of the ruling power that had unilaterally conquered the public scene can be seen so clearly. According to Hauser's opinion, the ruling power in this era, based on its ideology, used documentary photography as a weapon and propaganda tool and sought to change and transform the minds of society according to its ideals. So, photography takes an institutional and ideological function. To do so, the ruling power, in addition to the photos of the war that could be presented to the public, used the other images that were obtained by photos and in the form of other arts such as painting, graphics, poster making, collage, etc., as the desired ideal images. By the way, the ruling power followed the path of correct education and civilizing the society and channelized the public mind according to its ideals, and added to the resistance and standing of the people, especially during the period of war. In the months

leading up to the victory of the revolution and its early years, documentary photography was mostly used with a news documentary approach to record the events of the revolution, but in the first decade of the revolution, the doors were not so open for social documentary photography and this branch of photography could not influence the pillars of Iranian civil society and the self-awareness of modern citizens freely in the form of visual culture. But the support given to war photography made it expand more and more, and war photographers were placed in a better position. According to the topics, it can be concluded that the flow of documentary photography during the revolution and war was relatively consistent with the opinions of Lukács and Hauser.

In general, it can be said that some components such as the establishment of public and private publishing houses and the printing of photographic books by them, the establishment of the photography field by the government institution of the university, execution of the photo exhibitions by private galleries and government institutions, the publication of photo magazines by the government institution, the development of competitions, festivals and the photographic annuals amid war, the cooperation of photographers with the world's famous media, agencies, and news agencies, and the material and spiritual support of some photographers who were in sync with the ideals of the revolution and the ideology of the ruling power, were effective in the progress of documentary photography during the revolution and war. Factors such as blocking the political-social atmosphere and limiting social freedoms, the effect and supervision of the ruling political power, the application of censorship and audits in the publication of photos, and the lack of job and life security have had an impact on the lack of progress in documentary photography. As a result, the political and social events and developments of the revolution and war eras have been turning points in the development of documentary photography and an unrepeatable opportunity for

the experimentalism of Iranian photographers and a very good springboard for them.

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