



Iconography of human images in wall paintings of the Qajar era in contemporary clothing design

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Iconography is a method of studying and interpreting works of art which has many applications in the field of theoretical and historical studies today. Using the iconography method, this research interprets the wall paintings of Golestan palace which is one of the most beautiful historical buildings in Iran. These paintings are used in today's clothing designs.

Methodology: This study is descriptive-analytical. The method of collecting information in this study is also in the form of library and documents.

Findings: Among the themes of wall paintings in Golestan palace, the most used images for the design of modern clothes are human images which were also respected by ancient Iranians. These wall images are combined with some special concepts and have become symbols in Iranian culture. Today, textile and clothing designers often implement these images with printing methods or using needlework on women's and men's clothing.

Conclusion: The images used in Golestan palace originate from the ancient culture, beliefs and customs of the people of this Iran. The painters of this collection by adapting western arts, have been able to evolve their native art. They have created a new art that is unique in the world. Recently clothing designers have also started designing clothes that are inspired by the wall paintings of Golestan palace as the most beautiful work of art in Iran. These designs are very beautiful, unique and describe the culture and customs of Iranian people.

Keyword:

Iconography, Golestan palace, wall paintings of the Qajar era, clothing design

1. Introduction

Graffiti is one of the types of art that is used to decorate walls. This art reached its peak in the Qajar era. In the Qajar era, graffiti continued the "pictorial-painting" style of the Safavid and Zandiyā eras. Of course, this art underwent fundamental changes in the Qajar era. In this era, due to the extensive relations of governments with foreign countries in various fields, a great transformation occurred in Iranian architecture. In this era, Western art and culture had a deep impact on Iranian art such as painting and graffiti. In fact graffiti in the Qajar era is a combination of the classical style of European art and Iranian miniature methods (Ehsani Eskoui and Orujelo, 2016). Therefore in this era, the decoration of architectural buildings and the connection between the art of painting and architecture were developed. The historical complex of Golestan palace is one of these buildings that remains from the historical citadel of old Tehran and is more than 440 years old. This royal building was noticed during the time of Naseroddin shah. Also due to the interest of the kings of the Qajar dynasty to continue the interior decorations of this building, arts such as plastering, mirroring, tiling and wall painting were used in this building (Panje Bashi and Farhad, 2016).

The wall paintings of Golestan palace have different images. According to the subject, they were divided into things such as mythological paintings, hunting, martial struggles, romance, sight, landscape, plants, animals, historical buildings, portraits of kings, courtiers, government officials, religious officials, etc. Artists have also created works of art based on their work style or the customer's request. The Qajar era is one of the historical eras of Iran in which traditional and new thinking collided with each other. In the Qajar era, new political, social, cultural and artistic developments took place in Iran. The Qajar era is one of the important periods of Iran's history in which due to Iran's connection with European countries, some artistic fields such as painting and clothing design were influenced by European works of art (Rezaey, 2019). Clothing and painting can reflect the historical, social and cultural characteristics of a country. Therefore they have an important image in the cultural survival of any country and knowledge of the fields related to these arts (including historical, religious, cultural and social elements) is very important in their evaluation.

By evaluating the wall paintings used in Golestan palace from the point of view of iconography, it is possible to know the historical, social and cultural characteristics of that era and the degree of influence of western culture in Iranian art. But today, new arts have emerged that are attractive and have many fans but since Iran has a historical culture and civilization, so now it is more important to preserve traditional arts. Based on this, new works can be created through the combination of traditional and modern arts and they can be used to revive and perpetuate Iranian culture and extend its scope to the point where it can cause the emergence of new and creative works. Also by introducing the historical, cultural, religious and social issues related to the images used in the clothing industry and combining it with fashion, it is possible to help the lovers of this art to choose their favorite type of clothing with a better attitude and be influenced by foreign patterns do not place.

Wall painting of the Qajar era

The tiles of Golestan palace represent traditional and integrated culture, life of courtiers, history, legends, stories and environment of Iran. In Golestan palace, the richest image tiles in terms of quality, quantity and coloring have been collected. In this collection, in addition to faience tiles and bannai script, seven-color tiles are also used in different levels of the building. The most excellent tiles of this collection are installed on the plinths of the Hall of Mirrors and Hall of Salam. These tiles are placed next to each other in the form of a set on some levels to express an event or a scene like the image of Naseroddin shah. In some cases, plinths in 2 or 3 rows are decorated with tiles, each of which is a decorative image, an event, a historical figure or a legendary figure (Riazi, 2015). Black white, blue, turquoise, red, yellow and fawn colors are the seven common colors used in these tiles which are often used in historical and religious buildings (Panje Bashi and Farhad, 2016). In the type of arrangement and composition, tiles and pictures have often been used in parallel and this has created a kind of uniform order and rhythm in the space. Also these tiles have shown the characteristics of Iranian culture in the form of various images and bright colors and in terms of themes, these images can be divided into four types (herbal, animal, geometric and human).

Pictorial paintings often include religious and royal figures which are the most numerous works. Of course, there are also a few graffiti with the theme of decorative painting and herbal images (abstract and natural) and in simple or mixed forms. In Golestan palace, examples of pictorial and herbal themes can be seen in the form of topography (Hamzoi, Watan Dost and Ahmadi, 2015).



Figure 1- examples of topography in Golestan palace (source: www.golestanpalace.com)

Evaluation of human images in Golestan palace and their iconography

Human-centered approach has always existed in Iranian miniature since ancient times. Also attention to aesthetics has never distanced Iranian painting from attention to human beings and visual values (Pakbaz, 2008). But after the arrival of Islam in Iran, human images faced drawing restrictions. This procedure existed until the Qajar era but in this era, the human face was drawn in the realism way. This transformation was due to the influence of European art.

Gradually, the realism method was also used for ceilings, walls, canvases, carpets, etc. For this reason, in the historical area of Golestan palace, human face painting is one of the most widely used cases. Also we can see the human face in the tiles of this historical collection in the form of various epic, fictional, national-historical, religious, convivial, etc. In the historical area of Golestan palace, the human image is divided into two groups from the point of view of gender: women's images and men's images. The number of images of men is much more than the number of images of women (Panje Bashi and Farhad, 2017).

In the history of Iranian art, women's faces have been used much less compared to the Western world. In Iran, in some ages, there have been images of women and in some ages, women's faces have not been used at all. In the petroglyphs of Persepolis, the images of women cannot be seen but with the occupation of Iran by the Greeks, the images of women entered the field of art. The image of the queen next to the king on Mount Khaje, the Chadorposh petroglyph and the petroglyphs of several female princesses of the Parthian dynasty are some of the petroglyphs of the Parthian dynasty. Important examples of female images from the Sassanid era can be seen on the Bishavar mosaics. Also there are images of women on pottery and tiles of different Islamic eras (late 6th, 7th and 11th centuries AH) (Karimi and Kiani, 1985).

Also the use of women's images in Qajar era artworks such as tiles, private and semi-private spaces of palaces and noble houses, was one of the characteristics of the Qajar era index. The images of women on the tiles showed a new face of women in identity interaction with western women. By examining the existing tiles, we realize that most of the images of women on the tiles are in the form of mythological images of angels or the sun but in a few cases, images of western women are seen which are undoubtedly drawn under the influence of western postcards. But the artists of the Qajar era were not successful in drawing these images and were only skilled in drawing beautiful faces and coloring. Also the interest in painting the image of women has been common in Iranian art since the previous ages such as the Chehelsoton palace of Isfahan and one of the rooms of the Karim Khan Zand palace, there are images of women (Panje Bashi and Farhad, 2017).

Considering the religious beliefs of Iranians, it is clear why fewer images of women are used in h and they are often used symbolically in the form of angels, suns and women's faces. In general, the image of women in Golestan palace images can be divided into mythical, literary, narrative and convivial types. The woman is drawn in the mythical type, in the form of an angel and the sun. In other types of images of women, their faces are used similar to men's faces. In the image of the woman in the form of the sun, we see a lion placed behind the sun. Also in the drawing of women's faces in the Qajar era, usually their eyebrows are connected. The pictures of women in the shape of the sun with black hair and clouds and big almond eyes and red cheeks represent eastern women. Below you can see examples of the mythical image of a woman in the form of the sun.



Figure 2- examples of the image of women in the form of the sun in the tiling of Golestan palace (Panje Bashi and Farhad, 2017)

The image of an angel is considered to be one of the mythological images that has been considered in different religions and cultures since ancient times. We can see these images on the Qajar era tiles. In these pictures, fat and short women are drawn in European clothes and half naked. With the arrival of new cultures and images adapted from stories and events in religious and fictional books, the images of angels in historical ages have been accompanied by differences in the type of face drawing, the type of clothes and the type of decorations (Maroufi Aghdam, Mahmoudi Nasab, 2013). In the Golestan palace, the clothes used to depict the angels are completely Western and their colors (i.e. yellow and red) are common colors of the Qajar era, originating from Baroque art. At the height of Baroque art, bright colors were often used to create an emotional impact on viewers.



Figure 3- examples of the image of a woman in the form of an angel in the tiling of Golestan palace (Panje Bashi and Farhad, 2017)

Convivial scenes can also be seen in the corridor hall and Golestan palace courtyard. Also on one of the tiles which has an eight-pointed star and blue glaze, there are two pictures of people sitting in a tent. Another image of a celebration in the rear part of the corridor can be seen on these tiles, where a man and a woman from the royal family are dancing with several others. This assembly is similar to the images we see in "Kamse Nezami" and the coronation of Bahram on Saturday in the Meshkin Dome. In this picture, Bahram and the king's daughter are sitting and in front of them are some women dancing and musicianship.



Figure 4.24- examples of convivial images in Golestan palace tiling (source: Pinterest)

Hunting and equitation scenes are among the most frequent images that we see on the tiles of Golestan collection. The use of these images is probably related to the strong interest of the Qajar kings in hunting. In these scenes, hunters are hunting lion, deer, elk, bear and hog. Also the image of some tiles is related to lion hunting. Here based on the turban on the hunter's head, the long mustache and the type of jewelry, it can be guessed that the image belongs to Shah

Abbas Safavi. In some other pictures, Shah Abbas Safavi is hunting lion or deer.



Figure 4.25- Shah Abbas Safavi's hunting scene in Golestan palace tiling (source: Khazaei, 2001)

In the tiling of Golestan palace, hunting scenes in the style of the Sassanid era are evident on the tiles. In one image, we see a hunter shooting himself in the back in the Sassanid style (Figure 26.4). On the other hand, next to images with Iranian clothing, we see hunting scenes of horsemen wearing European clothes. Here we see that the traditional paintings of Iran have been influenced by Western art. The interesting point in these paintings is the drawing of new hunting weapons at that time (Samanian, Mirazizi and Sadeghpour, 2013). Also in the corridor hall, we can see a set of tiles that show Naseroddin shah riding a horse and shooting with a gun. In other tiles, we see images of Naseroddin shah's companions holding a bird of prey and with animals such as dogs and rabbits. The background of these tiles is blue.



Figure 4.26- hunting scene in Sassanid style in Golestan palace tiling (source: www.golestan.com)

Some images in the Qajar era appeared for the first time in Iranian works of art such as the presence of ceremonial forces in some images with military equipment and musical instruments which are related to the presence of the king. There are examples of these images in the tiling and panels of Golestan palace. In these pictures, in addition to the use of arts of Achaemenid origin, there is also a naturalistic tendency. Also for the first time in the Qajar era, we see these images in tiles which were influenced by western art and imported postcards (Karimi, 2013). An example of these images can be seen the panel related to the coronation of Fatahi Shah. There is also an image of Jesus son of Maryam on the tiles of the corridor, adapted from a Christian narrative. In this picture, we see a person holding a cross and performing the baptism ceremony. There is a halo of light around the head of the person who is being baptized. This image is probably related to the baptism of

Jesus son of Maryam by Yahza son of Zakariya. The presence of a dove at the top of the image also refers to the presence of Le Saint-Esprit. The people in this picture are the Apostles, who show reactions under the influence of the spiritual atmosphere of the baptism ceremony. In the tiles related to Jesus son of Maryam and Apostles and the baptism ceremony, it is clear that the painter adapted from European works.



Figure 4.27- examples of religious themes in Golestan palace tiling (Samanian et al., 2014)

In the tiling of Golestan palace, an image of Gashtaseb can be seen which is similar to the images of Sassanid kings receiving the crown from Ahoramazda (Giresman, 1991). The shape of Gashtaseb's crown is similar to that of Ardeshir II in Taghbostan with an orb on top and a ribbon hanging from the back. Also in Ardeshir II's right hand is a crown given to him by Ahoramazda. The dress design of Ardeshir II is similar to the dress design of Sassanid kings.



Figure 4.28- image of Gashtaseb receiving the crown from Ahoramazda (Samanian et al., 2014)

In the corridor section of Golestan palace, we see a large number of tiles in three rows, on which there are images of the kings of different Sassanid, Parthian dynasties such as Hormuz, Yazdgerd, Bahram, Ghobad, Anoushirvan, Khosrow, Azarmidokht, Artabanus, Artaban, Tridat, Kiyomarth, Siamak, Tahmurs, Zakhak and Keyghobad.



Figure 4.29- examples of images of ancient kings in the tiling of Golestan palace (Khoshdal, 2014)

At the beginning of the Qajar era, the painters not only tended towards idealism and avoiding simulation in drawing women's faces but also followed this principle in drawing women's bodies and organs and painted women in a simple and abstract way. But in the middle of Fatahi Shah's reign, it became common to draw half-naked women and this was probably the first time that painters often drew half-naked women in paintings. Apparently, the shape of Iranian women's dresses and open collars during the reign of Fatahi Shah was influenced by European women and the origin of this issue was related to European paintings and the travel of Iranian princes to Europe.



Figure 4.47- painting of two princes in western clothes that was influenced by European postcards (Panje Bashi and Farhad, 2017)

Dress design inspired by wall pictures of Golestan palace
 In the design of today's clothes, adaptations have been made from the wall paintings of Golestan palace such as the use of Agha Mohammad Khan's face on women's short coats and men's shirts (Figure 5.1), the face of Fatahi Shah sitting on a throne (Figure 5.2), the face Fatahi Shah sitting on a carpet (Figure 5.3) and an image of Fatahi Shah standing (Figure 5.4). We can find these images on all kinds of women's and men's clothing such as T-shirts, women's and men's shirts, skirts, gowns and sportswear.



Figure 5.1- women's short coat and men's shirt with the face of Agha Mohammad Khan (Source: Cameron Zigzall brand)



Picture 5.2- T-shirt with the face of Fatahi Shah sitting on the throne (Source: Prince Brand)



Picture 5.3- examples of men's shirts, gowns and women's skirts with the face of Fatahi Shah sitting on a carpet (Source: Cameron Zigzall brand)



Figure 5.4 - examples of women's, men's and sportswear shirts with an image of Fatahi Shah in a standing position (Source: Cameron Zigzall brand)

Among the images of princes, courtiers and military forces of Golestan palace that are used in the design of today's clothes, we can find examples of the face of Mirza Taghi Khan Amir Kabir on a men's T-shirt (Figure 5.7) and the image of the princess with influence from postcards. European pointed out on the T-shirt (Figure 5.8).



Figure 5.7- an example of clothing designed inspired by the face of Mirza Taghi Khan Amir Kabir (Source: Cameron Zigzall brand)

Also examples of women's faces of this era can be seen in the tiles of Golestan palace with round faces and continuous eyebrows. They dance and perform musicianship in

celebrations. These types of themes are mostly printed on women's clothing and often on scarves and T-shirts (Figure 5.11).



Figure 5.11- image of a female musician on a scarf (Source: Tobi Artmis brand)

Conclusion

Human images are displayed in the tiles of Golestan's historical collection in the form of various topics of epic, fictional, mythological, historical, religious, political and convivial, romantic, etc. Drawing the faces of kings (both before and after the introduction of Islam) are among the most important subjects of these paintings. The Qajar kings had a strong interest in ancient Iran and were influenced by their art due to their contact with Western societies. Therefore the trend towards ancient Iranian art and European art is simultaneously and combined in the Qajar era artworks. Also apparently, the Qajar kings sought to increase their political and cultural prestige by issuing the order to draw these images. They tried to connect their government with the greatness of ancient Iran. Also they sought to establish their power as Shia leaders in Shia society and to have a link between social orders and ancient heritage. Painting the faces of the kings before the arrival of Islam in Iran, as well as painting the faces of the kings of the Islamic period are among the most important subjects of these images. These images were drawn on large rocks and objects such as dishes, textiles and coins for their long-term stability. In Iran, after the introduction of Islam, it seems that face painting declined for a while but some evidence shows that painting the faces of kings was still common at this time. Hunting and equitation scenes are one of the most frequent human images that we see on the tiles of Golestan collection. In addition to the historical record, the use of these images is probably related to the strong interest of the Qajar kings in hunting. Hunting which was one of the needs of early humans and a way for human survival, gradually acquired a recreational aspect and men, especially kings, and showed their skills and bravery through hunting. Hunting images have a very long history in Iran. For example, there are images of hunting in the caves of Lorestan or in some ancient hills such as Silk and Shosh. These pictures show the very long history of hunting in Iran.

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