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The place of the human in the paintings of Mohammad Siahghalam and Hieronymus Bosch from Freud's point of view

Abstract

Problem Definition: The discussion of the place of the human in the paintings painted by wonder painters can be a window to better understand the spirit and mood of painters as well as the audience of their time from a psychological point of view. In the present study, an attempt has been made to address this issue from the perspective of Sigmund Freud in the paintings of Mohammad Siahghalam and Hieronymus Bosch, who are considered to be among the wonder painters of their time due to the depiction of strange forms.

Objective: The aim of the present study is to examine the human position from Freud's point of view in the paintings of Hieronymus Bosch and Mohammad Siahghalam.

Research Method: The research has been conducted in a descriptive-analytical manner and data has been collected using library resources.

Results: Using Sigmund Freud's theory of death and life instincts, results have been obtained regarding the role and place of the human in these works. Mohammad Siahghalam and Hieronymus Bosch were the wonder painters of the Eastern and Western worlds, respectively. The high aesthetic value of the works of Mohammad Siahghalam and Hieronymus Bosch as well as the critical, shrewd, and subtle view of everyday issues are rooted in their different thoughts and approaches.

Keywords: Hieronymus Bosch, Mohammad Siahghalam, Grotesque, Sigmund Freud, the death instinct, life instinct.

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Introduction

Among Iran's historical works, one can find miraculous paintings and grotesque depictions in the work of Mohammad Siahqalam, a painter of the Herat period, and Hieronymus Bosch, a Dutch painter of the 16th century. Regarding Hieronymus Bosch's works, according to Dariush Shaygan, whose book "Asia vs. the West" is a witness to the fact painted faces such as Hieronymus Bosch are twisted, scary, and apprehensive (Shaygan, 1977, 265). The two issues under study in this research include: What is the role of the human being in the paintings of Siahqalam and Bosch from the perspective of Sigmund Freud? What is the difference and resemblance between human beings in the works of these two artists from the viewpoint of behavioral and anthropological roles, while taking into account life and death instincts? In all, Sigmund Freud's ideas impact personality theories more than any other specialist and his approach to psychoanalysis is still widely used and has become the most influential theories of personality. Even if Freud's theories are now seen as offensive, his ideas are widely used in the field of understanding human personality. In addition to being an important contribution to understanding mental illness and the human psyche, Freud's theories had a powerful impact on how we see ourselves as human beings; moreover, history has seldom seen such a far-reaching effect of a theory (Schultz, D. & Schultz, A, 2010, 48).

Research Method

The study approach of this paper follows an in-depth and data-based descriptive-analytical procedure whilst relying on library research.

Research Background

The wonders of the paintings of Mohammad Siahqalam and Hieronymus Bush have always been considered, including "A Comparative Comparison of Illustrated Demons of the Paintings of Mohammad Siahqalam Compared with the Demons of Iranian Paintings in the Books of Merajnameh and Khavarannameh" by Khabiri (2009). In order to scrutinize the identity of Mohammad Siahqalam, paintings containing images of demons and the study of the effects of the role of demons in the paintings of Master Mohammad Siahqalam on the painting demons of Iran, in the books: Merajnameh and Khavarannameh versions have been arranged. In addition, it is exposed that Master Mohammad Siah al-Qalam is the same as "Ghiasuddin Mohammad Naghash". Another paper by Kheiri, Mousavi, and Sojudi from 2015 explores "The Social Semiotics Patterns in two Works by Hieronymus Bosch." The results obtained in this analysis show how the patterns mentioned in the works of this artist function and what common and dominant discourses show the human being and the space applied in these works. The outcomes of this investigation demonstrate how the themes outlined in this artist's works are accomplished whilst determining the types of discourse that are consistent and

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prevalent. Shaban wrote a book on the meanings and concepts of grotesque art in 2012 entitled "Study of the Origins of Miraculous Works in the Works of Hieronymus Bosch." The study discussed the lengthy history and development of grotesque art, as well as its prominence in Western art and literature and its unconventional style with a long history and great evolution. Occasionally it is considered as an imaginary and surreal way of thinking, in some periods its ridiculous aspects are considered, and in others, it is considered as a way in which its scary dimension prevails. Mirzaei Mehr in the article "Mohammad Siahghalam, Haj Mohammad Heravi or Ghiasuddin Mohammad Naghash (a critique of the book of Master Mohammad Siahghalam by Dr. Yaghoub Azhand) has asked questions about the concepts of black pen drawings and Indo-Buddhist or Chinese-Buddhist myths. According to Dr. Azhand, these paintings are taken from the images of temples. It is further concluded that these images, especially the images of statues, were so familiar to the people of that time that Ghias al-Din (the black pen) did not feel the need to explain them. What distinguishes this study from previous studies is the study of the human image in the works of Muhammad Siahqalam and Hieronymus Bush from the point of view of Sigmund Freud, the father of psychology. Furthermore, Mirazi Mehr in his essay "Mohammad Siahqalam, Haj Mohammad Heravi, or Ghiasuddin Mohammad Naghash (A Critique of the Book of Master Mohammad Siahqalam Written by Yaghoub Azhand)," inquires the ideas of Siahghalam drawings and Indo-Buddhist or Chinese-Buddhist tales as Azhand believes that these paintings are based on temple imagery. It is further concluded that these illustrations, especially the images of statues, were so conversant to the people of that time that Ghias al-Din did not feel the need to enlighten the issue. What distinguishes this study from prior research, is the fact that his paper seeks to study the human image in the works of Muhammad Siahqalam and Hieronymus Bush from the point of view of Sigmund Freud, the father of psychology.

Sigmund Freud

When looking at Freud's ideas in the Siah Galam and Hieronymus Bosch paintings, it is essential to further discuss the features of this principle in more detail. Instincts are a major part of human nature and serve as a driving force behind action while influencing the choices made. When a human desires something, he or she experiences a sense of urgency or stress. Instinctive behavior serves the purpose of meeting needs and therefore reducing stress. The fact that Freud's theory contends that humans are compelled to return to a state of physiological equilibrium to relieve stress in the body makes it an ideal technique for restoring that balance. According to Freud, humans possess two types of instincts: those associated with life and those related to death. Sigmund regarded the life instinct as a strong sexual urge, which he saw as being a widespread phenomenon. He was not speaking about stimulating desire alone, but also about the numerous

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delightful actions and ideas that go along with it. Contrary to the need to live, Freud asserted the existence of the death instinct or the death drive. He showed that death and decay are the natural order of things, using biology as his guide as he believed that we are unconsciously driven to perish. The death instinct, as he said, has aggressiveness as one of its components, which he defined as a death wishes directed at external things. The aggressive urge pushes us to defeat, conquer, and kill. According to Freud, "aggressiveness is a primary part of human nature" (Schultz, D. & Schultz, A, 2010, 56-57). Freud supposed that our goal in life was to return to a life of inorganic matter. He argued that if we assume that life was made from inert matter in the distant past, then instincts designed to both recreate the initial inorganic life and destroy it was developed at the same time. In other words, this urge is the personification of a drive that we feel throughout our lives and whose efforts are directed towards the dual goals of stasis and death. According to Freud, humans are not just capable of defending themselves only when attacked; instead, a great deal of aggression and a tendency to rape have been deposited in their instincts, which must be taken into account. As a result, they identify themselves as someone who not only may be asked for help or sexual pleasure but may also be tempted to aggressively alleviate their sense of aggression and exploit their labor force without pay. Satisfaction should be used as a means of extinguishing lust, and his property should be confiscated, humiliated, and defeated, and he should be tortured and killed (Freud, 2003, 33).

Mohammad Siahqalam

The identification of the Siahqalam has been a topic of debate among many theorists. Haji Mohammad, a painter from Heravi known for odd behavior and drawings, is sometimes considered to be him; also, some identified him as Haji Mohammad Bakhshi, Shah Rukh's envoy to China. The travel diary he wrote on his trip to China is referred to in many historical sources, and historians have speculated that he is the painter Ghias al-Din, who left Iran with a mission from Shah Rukh's son Basangar Mirza. Opinions have been made about the subject of Mohammad Siahqalam's paintings, and the nature of his work is subject to debate. Some of them are Chinese-influenced, with their heritage traced back to China. At one time, they were believed to be a personification of the nomadic and shamanic cultures of Central Asian nations (269). According to Pakbaz, the illustrative technique may be paraphrased as follows: He is remembered as one of the few distinctive painters in the history of Iranian painting because of his ability to convey a sense of awe through his work. In the Herat school, he drew initially in an ordinary manner with Chinese paintings, angels, divans, lords of Qalandaran, toilers, and animal and plant themes. During this time, he had a strong fascination with ethnography. His method of working shifted, and he opted for a humorous and horrific kind of societal critique. The features of Chinese culture, such as women's

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faces, Jamgan, flowers, and painting techniques, are present in his works, making it evident that he had visited China (Pakbaz, 2016, 52). Master Mohammad Siahqalam and his inventions have fascinated academics for almost a century, yet it is still unclear what their study results mean. When portraying humans in the works of the Siahqalam, it is claimed that they are drawn in a peculiar and harsh manner, such as having big and rough legs and a huge, partially-naked head. The color scheme is a little drab and gloomy, mainly consisting of Siahqalam with a hint of blue and red (Azhand, 1998, 270). Some think that they are the caricatures of Central Asian deserters, shamans, sorcerers, and enchanters. Others believe that they represent the redemption of demons in the unknown realm of ancient times. Those on the opposite side of their society have been likened to Hieronymus Bosch and Francisco, who were apparently fabricated. There are two categories of Siahqalam artwork: religious work and art with a desert theme. They have no similarities with the teachings of monotheistic faiths, and the religious concepts they include are much more akin to chemistry. Demons come in the guise of wandering creatures in these artworks' primary protagonists. The characters have unsightly characteristics such as animal tails, horns, and faces. However, many of them are quite similar to humans (Azhand, 1998, 286). The Siah Galam paintings' odd imagery has long been of interest. The demons also bear designs that resemble creatures from Gothic fiction. It is possible that they are symbols of the demonic essence of some ancient faiths, representing the strange and nefarious powers of nature. A number may have been shamans in disguise, wearing costumes and masks and representing the court in the battle to free people and animals (Grabar 2000, 74). The other group of black-and-white images, according to Azhand, contain the stories of tent life. The legs of the characters are clearly depicted. They travel barefoot and live next to their livestock. In this kind of rough life, there is no place for romantic concepts. Nonetheless, a kind of calm can be felt in their tents and huts. Here Siahqalam does not mention the hardships and violence of life. The statues are closely related to the nature around them and are drawn in a white space without depth. The characters are far apart and features such as the glance and movement of the body have connected them. There are many resemblances between such illustrations and the art of shadow representation. This theory is especially strengthened by the outfit of some figures. Here we are more confronted with disguises and masks rather than the real faces of people. Even the movement of the limbs is measured, calculated, and drawn in a dramatic movement (Azhand, 1999, 287). In the following, some works of Mohammad Siahqalam have been criticized and analyzed In Figure 1, with the title of the displaced with a pot of food and a person who kills a donkey and pushes another, a badly inscribed figure: "The work of Mohammad Siahqalam" six figures in long dark clothes (black and red) with large arms and legs and a long beard. In this image, Mohammad Siahqalam may have shown a kind of narrative with exaggeration (See Figure 2). The difference in social status is well known. The artist

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did not use a specific color palette in his work and mostly showed the concept most beautifully with three colors: black, red, and brown. Strong and weak are determined by the type of clothing and limbs, even by comparing the body of animals, these two characteristics can be well understood.



Figure 1

Displaced people with food boiler, size 3/26, 4/14 cm, place of storage: Library of Topkapi Museum, Istanbul, Treasury 2153, sheet 55a, source: [Azhand, 1998, 298](#)



Figure 2

The camp scene, size 1/37. 19.8 cm Available in the Library of Topkapi Museum, Istanbul, Treasury 2153, Page 8b. source: [Azhand, 1998, 290](#)

In [Figure 3](#), two ascetics talking, with the signature of "The work of Mohammad Siahqalam", two ascetics, long pleated clothes in red and black, and details that Mohammad Siahqalam draws from large hands and feet, large head and face, brush design, line, and watercolor with gold spray. The artist has drawn the details of the clothes and limbs well as if he were recording a reality, however, in some cases, the exaggeration still distinguishes these works from the works of other painters.



Figure 3

two ascetics talking, late 15th century, probably in Tabriz, size 9/18. 9/27 cm, Istanbul Qapi Sarai Museum Library, Treasury 2153, leaf b106. source: [Azhand, 1998, 294](#).

In 1966, Bihan Qaramaqarali conducted significant research on the works of Mohammad Siahqalam. In her opinion, some of these works have been cut from somewhere and added to the marquis, but it seems that they are closely related to each other and form a certain composition. According to him, some of these

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images are apparently related to Sufi sects, and some of the sculptures can even be attributed to these sects. Among the Anatolian Sufi sects, the beliefs of the Barki and Shamanic sects have continued ([Azhand, 2008, 311](#)).

Hieronymus Bosch

Hieronymus Bosch was a Dutch painter who lived around 1450-1516. Due to his unconventional vision and good allegorical expression, he was considered one of the exceptional artists in the history of European painting. He was born into an artist family and took his name from his hometown of Sertuchen Boss in the Netherlands where he spent his entire life and was a member of the Holy Virgin Association ([Vandenbroeck, 1996, 449](#)). Bosch's art of presenting new perspectives was broad and full of new meanings with an ironic tone and full of irony. In any case, it was his imaginative and eerie imaginations that made up the spirit of his time. Evidence of this was the fear of witchcraft and evil spirits, which annoyingly predicted a reform in the decades to come. The image he puts before our eyes can easily be accused of exaggeration and betrayal of reality, but then again at the same time, it can be part of a whole that shows his abstract vision. The good and bad fortunes of human existence, the concepts hidden in the metaphorical language envelope and the riddle in the riddle; but what is its hidden meaning? Its hidden meaning is clear and at the same time full of ambiguity. In all of them, he speaks in the language of ambiguity and irony. It can be said that Bosch is inherently a realist ([Linfert, 1990, 10](#)). He usually portrays a pessimistic view of the world, in which people are full of sin and foolishness and only a few are saved and does not represent the resurrection of Christ from the dead. The distinction between sheep and goats is not clear here and compared to a very small number of the forgiven, they are a very large army of cursed people who are being tortured by demons on earth at the same time. Posthumous issues are of paramount importance in Bosch's work as he sees mankind in eternal light. Also, apocalyptic issues are the maximum he uses to legitimize his secular views. On the surface of a table, seven great sins and circles are drawn in a quadrangle with the four final things, death, hell, the earthly world, and heavenly paradise, with Christ, who has a comprehensive view of them and is centered on them. The straw chariot and the garden of earthly pleasures both have a display of hell in their right panel. Straw and hay at that time symbolized everything worthless. Bosch attributed this to all the fleeting riches and pleasures of life that man blindly and foolishly pursues, leading him to eternal damnation. Of course, the metaphor of the chariot was not his personal opinion; We also come across many of these titles in sixteenth-century printed works ([Vandenbroeck, 1996, 449](#)).

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Figure 4

The Garden of Worldly

Delicacies, Hieronymus Bosch.

Source: <https://pin.it/61Mmuc3>



Figure 5

The Seven Great Sins of

Hieronymus Bosch. Source:

<https://pin.it/1bsbkKWhttps>:



Figure 6

The final judgment of

Hieronymus Bosch.

Source: <https://pin.it/3qbQlj>

A painting by Hieronymus Bosch named "The Millennium" is another name for the Garden of Worldly Pleasures preserved at The Del Prado Museum in Spain since 1932. Hieronymus Bosch's most ambitious and well-known work is the Garden of Worldly Pleasures (See Figures 4 & 5). It easily portrays many biblical tales and blasphemous deeds. These accounts were in keeping with Christian dogma throughout the Middle Ages. The center panel horizon line is an identical continuation of the left panel's horizon line. These two pieces have a similar mood, and therefore it is logical to link them. An assortment of creatures, both realistic and bizarre, can be observed on the ground in the photo on the left. Individuals of all social classes are conducting all sorts of racy ceremonies. Enjoying pleasures like sex, riding animals, and consuming food and beverages are all activities that innocent people have become fond of. The image includes a crystal-like home with numerous fractures that runs the length of the photo. People in the bottom and center of this sphere are getting to undesirable deeds. In certain literary works, this realm represents the fragile nature of the sexual world. It follows that black people have equal rights to Bosch as a consequence of their existence. Some think that these barbaric aristocrats, who were purchased by capitalists at the time, have been reassigned to serve the new bosses. A Gialli lady's head is covered with the hair of another woman, and she is handing a glass to someone observing a shell that sits on top of her head. The individual in question provides civility to others by supplying them with refreshments. We observe the cyclical component of the seven major sins and the four final things as a consequence of the seven great sins. The composition and organization of the physics in the form of distinct parts and figures that are repeated in a row are according to old traditions, and with this technique, the composition and arrangement of the scenes also remind us of early romance. In the iris of Jesus Christ, painted on the pupil of the painting, the Seven Great Sins take shape. The Son of God gazes at the first instance of rage (Linfert, 1990). "Beware, because God is watching you." They are wrath, vanity, desire, sloth, greed, and envy. This piece has four more paintings with depictions of the afterlife, heaven, and hell, placed in each corner. A pair of biblical quotes appear both above and below the artwork. This work contains no sarcasm for every item

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and the idea is derived from empirical reality. Bosch shows a cross-section of humanity, but they are all sinners in reality (Battilotti, 815, 2011). A careful examination of Bosch's work displays sin as of great significance and this is obvious only when medieval art and speech are considered. In the "judgment of the afterlife," Bosch's most influential depiction of these ideas is found. The last judgment day will disclose the results of everything. Human history starts with Adam and Eve's exile from paradise. The day of the living rising from their graves, and when Christ returns to judge humanity and hand out rewards to those who merit them. Christ will announce to the faithful that they are certain to go to heaven, while he will tell the sinful and accursed that they are destined to face everlasting fire, where Satan and his demons are waiting. Time will cease and eternity will begin on that day (Coppens, 2011, 204). For many, the torments of hell are gruesome and excruciatingly painful. For Bosch, too, it is pain in the physical realm (See Figure 6). The doomed inhabitants of Hell in this picture are naked and pallid, and they have been chopped apart and separated from one another by snakes. The terrible heat of the fire destroys them all. A number have been tortured through different methods and the torture varieties are infinite. The man's ribs are being basted with melted butter as he cooks on a skewer over a flame. His tiny, fat tormentor wields a long whip to punish him with each lash. Standing next to him, someone is dismembering the victim by cooking them on a hot frying pan.

Discussion

As elaborated from the illustration of Table 1, human beings depicted by Mohammad Siahqalam bear large limbs that are often dark, black, and half-naked. Also in the image of the wandering monsters with horns, tails, unpleasant skins and faces, and other animal features but many ways like humans, the mind inclines to Freud that superstitious beliefs and ideas emanate from the human subconscious. In the book "School of Herat", Azhand states: "It is to be said that nothing is known about the style of Siahqalam's illustration for they have a unique atmosphere. In these images, we are confronted with an artist who has lived among the sculptures of his works and has been influenced by them. There is a kind of savage spirit in the works of Siahqhalam, and this does not correspond to the characteristics of Iranian painting. If it does not follow Islam and especially Iran and remains unique (Azhand, 2008, 289), the same unrestrained spirit in the pictures can be considered as the expression of Freud's death instinct, which is thus manifested in the paintings and strange forms of Siahqalam's artwork. Nevertheless, the human beings depicted in the images of the judgment of the Hereafter are a garden of delicacies, naked in the boat of Hieronymus Bosch, in a deplorable condition. He usually shows a pessimistic view of the world when all human beings are full of sin and folly and only a few are saved. Posthumous issues are of paramount

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Table 1. A study of two artists from the East and West with respect to their aesthetics, color schemes, and composition. Source: [Author](#).

Works of Mohammad Siahqalam	Works of Hieronymus Bosch
	
<p>Title of the work, Religious Ceremony People of considerable girth, unclothed and clad in crimson or black or brown. One may find Freud's death instincts hypothesis in the huge, semi-nude figures in the work, as well as in the dark and rugged hues they are portrayed in. According to Freud, human nature contains aggressiveness, as well as sexual desire, which the Siah Galam portrays by sketching big limbs and strong colors.</p>	<p>Title of the work, Judgment of the Hereafter Small, nude figures in a variety of hues, blue, green, pink, and brown. From Freud's perspective, man's primary motive is sexual desire, whereas erotic impulses come from the lusty parts of the body. The nudity and genital rot in these sculptures reflect the downfall of mankind.</p>
	
<p>The camp of black slaves serving embassies who have joined Mohammad Siahqalam. Their bodies are clothed, half-dressed, and shades of black and red dominate. In this illustration, individuals are seen from all levels of society. These measurements provide a good idea of the hues. The basic needs of man are said to come from inside him, and instincts that benefit survival and predispositions that do not help in his survival are stated by Freud. People of diverse skin tones in this picture reflect those impulses, according to the view of Mohammad Siah Ghalam.</p>	<p>The title of the Delicacy Garden by Hieronymus Bosch. In the book Theories of Personality, a miniature painting showing nude people, colors green, blue, pink, black, and brown, together with symbols and dream experiences and psychoanalytic significance, shown in this type are observed. One sign of such desire is being nude among a crowd, a reminder of giving birth and flying and wanting to return to a childlike stage when one is happy (Schultz, 2010, 80).</p>

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importance in Bosch's work, which he uses to legitimize his secular views. Many of his secular ethics were in fact a means of expressing his thoughts on norms and values. All sins to the corruptions and defects displayed by Bosch are constantly portrayed as foolishness, ignorance, and stupidity, and are attributed to various and colorful groups and classes of the lower classes of society. The main sins displayed are immorality and Vandebroek, 1996, 449 sees Freud as the stage of the human psyche, a struggle between two basic instincts called the passion of life and the passion of death, Death, which reflects the toothless and benevolent tendencies of man, always overcomes the instinct of life, which expresses love for life, love, affection, and friendship. And as soon as possible, the ratio of unconventional people also depends on the number and development of the death instinct, so the number of unconventional people is increasing day by day (Freud, 1964, 22). Freud's theory can easily be seen and followed in the works of Hieronymus Bosch, the struggle of the death instinct that overcomes love and friendship and can be considered the source of many sins. Two masterful painter painters, Mohammad Siahqalam and Hieronymus Bosch, beautifully depict concepts in the images of created human beings.

Conclusion

The Mohammad Siah Ghalam and Hieronymus Bosch's artistic merit, as well as the critical, perceptive point of view they share on universal life themes such as celebrating, eating, and drinking, put them at odds with their contemporaries. In addition to the utilization of joyful and loving aspects, as well as aberrant and violent characteristics, an unnerving allegory, as well as other kinds of play, is used to portray the comedic conflict between the characters. The human body is the center of the pen and the Bosch. Individuals who have lost their transcendent essence and who have human-like representations, as Freud explains. Freud's instinctual hypothesis, which held that human beings had two instincts—one leading to violent and sexual behaviors, and the other to death and life—are the only possibilities. Through the use of color and composition, the lifelike human figures in the artwork appear to be agitated and ready to act on violent tendencies. Freud felt that the superstitions and irrational beliefs of society were rooted in the human subconscious, which he thought was part of our basic nature and did not exist only in the minds of primitive people or low-class people. The art of Siahqalam, when looked at, is found to have an element of imagination and wonder that can also be observed in the works of Bosch. It is determined that human beings in Hieronymus Bosch's works are apocalyptic in origin and religious in nature. While it used fantastical elements to express its criticism of the social human conduct of its time, the work also makes a critique of the social human behavior of its period. Hence, the examination of the similarity between the authors Siahqalam and Bosch has been made in terms of their narration and fresh

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interpretations of the day's events, which can be described as a theological and narrative exploration of man's life and his status after death. No matter what, the manner in which the people in these two master painters' works are shown is often so complicated and confusing that their works can always be researched.

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