

Original Research Article

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جستاری در جنبش هنر نوگرایی ایران در نقاشی خط (بر پایه گرایش به سویه‌های هنر سنتی و مدرن)

A Survey on the Modernist Art Movement of Iran in Calligram (Based on the Orientation Towards Traditional and Modern Art Strains)

Abstract

Problem Definition: This article seeks to have a historical and artistic analysis of the modern art movement of Iran, take a look at its roots and emergence contexts, to clarify the foundations of the innovational movement in the art of modern painting in Iran, especially in calligram. Calligraphy, which has a sacred background and is related to the writing of the divine book, has followed its historical course from the past centuries with a rich history until secularization and has gone through many ups and downs. The problem of this article is whether Calligram (Iranian Letterism Movement) can be classified in the contemporary art of Iran based on the duality of traditional and modern art? What characteristics does this classification explain the duality of traditional and modern art?

Objective: The purpose of this article is to study the cognitive style and discuss the visual culture of Iran, and it seeks to classify the Iranian Letterism movement based on the traditional and modern approach in the form of painting-calligraphy.

Research Method: The method of this fundamental research article is qualitative with a descriptive-analytical presentation. In obtaining results and collecting data and materials, this study has benefited from library resources and visual study of works.

Results: The achievement of this article makes it clear that calligram, following the modern "Letterism" movement in the West, was widely welcomed by artists in the Saqqakhane movement with an identity-oriented approach. It is divided into two types, traditional and modern, or calligraphic and painterly approaches.

Keywords

Traditional Calligraphy, Calligram, Modernist Art, Saqaqhana, Secular Art

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Introduction

Calligraphy, considered a way to spread knowledge and wisdom from the foundation, was a technique for scholars to transcribe scientific books that should be able to be read and used to expand knowledge and culture. Traditional calligraphers were also divided into two groups, the first group of calligraphers was scribes and transcribers who rewrote and transcribed Persian and Arabic texts, and the other group was calligraphers who were engaged in writing various pieces to show the beauty of the art of calligraphy and tried for the perfection of this noble art. In the first category, the readability of texts in scientific and cultural exploitation was considered necessary in writing texts. As "Sultan Ali Mashhadi" states in "Sarat al-Sotour" for calligraphers (Mashhadi, 1994, p. 22). Also, in the second category of calligraphers, while they tried to beautify and master its subtle techniques, it was essential for them to write beautiful pieces of calligraphy in the form of Chalipa, line (Satr), combined pieces, Muraqqa and Siyahmashq. Except for Siyahmashq, the works of the second class of calligraphers followed the principle of readability and legibility. In other words, the calligraphic artist in writing Siahmashq considers the beauty and eye-pleasantness of black (Savad) and white (Bayaz) spaces and observes the twelve technical principles of calligraphy. Also, contrary to the principle of readability, the artist does not give in to readability, and efficiency for reading is placed in the next stages. Therefore, Siahmashaq can be considered the beginning of the modernization of calligraphy in the Qajar period, and this is often clearly noticeable in "Mirza Gholamreza Esfahani's" Siahmashaq. The purpose of this article is the stylistic study and classification of post-Saqqakhane identity-oriented art in the form of calligram and works that have calligraphic visual elements based on two traditional and modern approaches. Also, it aims to analyze the approach of abstract painters of Saqqakhane in painting-calligraphy (Calligram). The calligraphic act has taken a different path due to its historical background and its reproduction in the contemporary art of Iran. "A Siahmashaq piece, in which letters and words are generally written without any specific meaning in mind, is an example of a traditional method in calligraphy in which meaning plays a secondary role compared to the visual representation of calligraphy. These samples usually involve placing and arranging lines and words together without insisting on the presence of continuity or meaning. This itself contradicts classical calligraphy's literary aspect" (Keshmirshakan, 2012, p. 28). Therefore, the question of this article is whether it is possible to divide the paintings-calligraphy (Calligram) works of modern period artists, who played a role in the flourishing of the Saqqakhane movement, into two traditional and modern groups? Also, if we consider such a classification in the use of new calligraphy in the contemporary art of Iran, what were the dual characteristics of the tendency to use traditional calligraphy and the tendency to use modern art in calligraphy?

Research Method

The present research was conducted based on the fundamental objectives utilizing a qualitative method, library resources, and expert views on modern works of art. In terms of ease of access and the visual nature of the problem, scientific and computer databases and images on websites and catalogs have also been used.

Research Background

In most studies related to the contemporary art of Iran, the categories of national identity, calligraphy, and calligram have been mentioned together. However, in this study,

calligraphy style has been selected as the subject of research, and the concept of national identity and its elements have been investigated in general with the Saqqakhane movement. Therefore, in addition to examining identity in contemporary artworks, attention has also been paid to their diversity and classification. "Sharifi Zindashti and Oji's" (2009) article entitled "Calligram in the emergent and original school of contemporary Iranian art", deals with the process of the formation of calligraphy style. In this article, the background of calligram is also examined, and then it ends with the introduction of some artists. In the history of the arrival of modern thought in Iran, this article's reflection reached Iran approximately seventy years after the beginning of the modern art movement in the West. It was that Iranian painters, according to thinkers, took inspiration from traditional and outdated European and Iranian schools. The article's authors have also introduced calligram as an emergent and original school and identified calligraphic elements as the main aspect of these works based on their visual aspects. "Hosseinirad and Khalili's" article entitled "Investigation of the role of intellectual and government movements in the nationalist approach of modernist painting during the Pahlavi period" (2012) has stated the leftist, nationalist, and Islam-oriented views and their influencing trend on the formulation of contemporary Iranian art during the Pahlavi II period. They also discussed the anti-Western approaches to search for national identity, religious identitism, and final developments towards the formation of the Saqqakhane movement, as well as the identitism of the painters of this period and the formation of the Calligram style from within the Saqqakhane movement. The article entitled "Globalization in calligraphy: The analysis and review of modern calligraphy in Iran with an emphasis on Calligram" by "Razavifard" (2014), in which localism and attention to national identity are examined to promote the art of calligram as much as possible in the world arena. The book "Pioneers of Iran's Modern Art, Hossein Zenderoodi" by "Pakbaz and Emdadian" (2011) deals with experts' opinions in the description and analysis of Zenderoodi's works and the Saqqakhane movement. In this book, the authors point to the approach of identity representation in the neo-traditionalist works of Zenderoodi and discuss the formation process of Iranian identity with the cultural support of the governments of the time in the works of Saqqakhana artists, especially Hossein Zenderoodi. The book entitled "Iranian Contemporary Art: Roots, New Perspectives," written by "Keshmirshakan" (2014), is about the analytical history of the past 150 years of Iranian art in the transition from tradition to modernity, which has a research and analytical approach and is not similar to other art history books. In dividing this book into chapters, the author has followed the historical sequence of events and artists in them, but the important topics of each historical period have also been presented as the subject of the book chapters. "Rezaei" published the book entitled "From the confusion of Calligram to a dialect called Khatashik" (2018), with the subject of research in the field of calligram, which according to him, is the result of his 30 years of writings and practical and theoretical experiences in the field of Khatashik (Calligram). In this book, he considers the roots of Khatashik school (Calligram) in abstract art. Therefore, the definition of script and Khatashik (Calligram) would be very complicated. Relying on the visual expression of the letters, the visual energy of the letters of the alphabet has been the focus of calligraphy enthusiasts in previous periods in Iran. The article entitled "Analysis of the process of modernist painting in the biennials of Tehran painting from 1337 to 1345 (SH)" was written by "Shad Qazvini" (2009). With the analysis of the process of modernist painting biennials of the 1330s and 1340s (SH) in Iran, she has a critical approach to the evolution of this art. The author considers biennales to be unsuccessful in meeting the needs of a large part of

society, and as a result, they would be failures. She brings the discussion to the non-alignment of biennials with the origins and social needs and considers the holding of biennales to introduce the trend of modern painting to the society unable to provide a thorough and deep effort, which does not necessarily gain acceptance by the people. "Teimouri" (2012), in the article entitled "Grandee of Iran's Calligram, Reza Mafi" considers Reza Mafi's main motive for using calligraphy in painting to be his interest in coffee-house paintings and the Saqqakhane movement. Moreover, he always enthusiastically followed Zenderoodi, Pilaram, Mansoureh Hosseini, and Iran Doroudi's Calligram works. Mafi has continued his artistic work with mystical strains, a fascinating sense of traditional calligraphy, and a tendency towards calligram. "Ghelichkhani" (2009) published a text in Mahe Honar magazine entitled "Calligram in a conversation with master Seyyed Mohammad Ahsaei", which indicates the quality of calligram works and their relationship with the audience. In this interview, Mohammad Ahsaei, one of the first and most prominent Calligram artists, talks about the qualities and role of the script in contemporary art. "Ali Mohammadi Ardakani and Pajouheshfar" (2015), in the article entitled "Analysis of the representation of the traditionalist approach in Calligram works of the 1980s (SH) of Iran", deal with the style of Iranian calligram in the 1980s (SH), which is an art with a traditionalist approach. The conditions of the art market influenced the Calligram movement, and the burst in the sale of calligram works in Middle Eastern auctions in the 80s (SH) has added to its tendency and acceptance. It should be noted that the framework limitations in the traditionalist approach, based on the ideas of traditionalists² regarding the theory of returning to oneself and cultural possessions, make effects necessary in terms of the form and application of the work. Most works are devoid of meaning and are content to create a decorative and beautiful visual work. The message of these works is only to the extent of conveying traditional concepts and is failed to recount the social fluctuation with the capacity to influence society. The examination of the backgrounds presented in this article makes it clear that before the prosperity and elaboration of the Saqqakhane movement, thinkers paid attention to national and cultural identity, and the visual interpretation of the thoughts of returning to oneself and relying on cultural assets was reflected in the works artists. In their artistic creations, modernist artists of Iran have focused on calligraphy and letter characters in search of elements of identity in folklore, mythology, literature, methods, and conceptual subjects of Iranian art.

Saqqakhane movement and populist tendencies

At the end of the reign of Reza Shah Pahlavi and the establishment of social freedoms, the cultural policies implemented by the government underwent a drastic change. Iran's cultural connection with the West and the reflection of artistic movements of the West were also presented in Iran. In this situation and after the social frustrations due to peoples' failures and relative freedoms, suitable conditions for new movements emerged, which provided the basis for the Saqqakhane movement. "Almost seventy years after the beginning of the modernism art movement in the West, its echo reached Iran. This was in a situation where Iranian painters were still drawing inspiration from traditional and outdated European and Iranian schools. The expansion of World War II to Iran, the departure of Reza Shah, and the brief establishment of social freedoms created an opportunity for artistic innovation" (Pakbaz, 2005, p. 202). Since then, the modernist artists of Iran, who were often influenced by the art of the West, have been fascinated by the works of Western artists and the Western worldview. But in Iran, with its ancient and rich traditional culture, the following of modern

artists was not accepted as it should be under the cultural conditions and its main purpose in the West. The establishment of the Faculty of Fine Arts with studying in Europe and European professors in 1319 (SH) played a significant role in the growth of this trend and caused more communication and familiarity with Western culture and art. Since in the beginning, Iranian artists looked at their colleagues in the West from the bottom up, a sense of obedience and self-defeat can be found in their works. This issue strengthened the political and cultural discourse of returning to oneself and honoring national and religious cultural assets. This issue is evident in establishing biennials of Iran's contemporary art courses during the second Pahlavi period. In the 1940s (SH), a new movement began in Iranian painting, which was practically achieved by mixing the experiences of folk and traditional painters with the experiences of educated and modern artists, as well as skill in modern techniques in a new language in visual arts. The result of these efforts is known as the Saqqakhane school. The tendencies of artists toward the Saqqakhane movement to achieve a language with a new method is one of the most important artistic movements in the modernization process after the constitutional revolution, which was formed in the 40s (SH). Therefore, the reconciliatory approach of tradition and modernity discourse can be considered in this use of traditional elements in modern application in contemporary Iranian painting. Distancing from the traditional world and its wishes, the growth of Western thinking, and the spread of modern patterns have been factors in the emergence and development of the Saqqakhane movement. In other words, creating a new and attractive language for artistic expression by feeding traditional elements in a modern way is considered one of the main and influential factors of the Saqqakhane school in contemporary Iranian painting. The formation of the Saqqakhane movement was an attempt to create a fusion between the modernist and modernity of Western art and traditional elements and symbols in Iranian art with an abstract and figurative artistic approach. In this school, artists attention was paid attention to the repetition of architectural elements, traditional tiling, and the use of traditional calligraphy methods with a modern approach. They participated in the 1st and 2nd Biennials (1337 and 1339 (SH)), and registered the Saqqakhane school as an art school in the 3rd Biennale of Tehran painting (1341(SH)). "...New calligraphy took root in the Saqqakhane movement and soon resulted in two main trends: the first one included Saqqakhane artists who extracted calligraphy forms as their main visual material from primary sources; And the other "painting-calligraphy (Calligram)" which included a group of professional calligraphers who were interested in using calligraphy differently from purely classical and traditional works. These two types of new calligraphy were developed with distinctive formal expressions. Saqqakhane artists and their followers moved towards a type of "Letterism," and the works of Calligram artists became recognizable with different forms, in contrast to the first group" (Keshmirshakan, 2012, p. 29). In terms of social science and anthropological studies, the works of the Saqqakhane movement have an approach to people-friendly and common elements, including the fields of artists' favoring of popular elements such as script, charms, amulets, locks, etc., the use of those elements in artistic application and the formal influence on Iranian painting. Among the pioneers of the Saqqakhane movement, famous figures can be mentioned such as "Mohammad Ahsaei", "Hossein Zenderoodi", "Parviz Tanavoli", "Faramarz Pilaram", "Jazeh Tabatabaee", "Sadeq Tabrizi", "Reza Mafi", "Masoud Arabshahi" , and "Mansour Qandriz".

Restoring identity with the script symbol in the works of the Saqqakhane movement

The painting and teaching method of "Kamal-ol Molk" in the "fine arts school³" was done in a classical way with a naturalistic method. Training in fine arts was the end point of traditional Iranian painting and opened a new way in contemporary Iranian art. Further, with the establishment of the Faculty of Fine Arts and art education by European professors, the return of art graduates to Iran, and the spread of art materials in the press, familiarity with modern styles was established. In other words, setting up exhibitions and publishing specialized books and magazines facilitated this. The society was driven to an authoritarian identity following the propaganda of the first Pahlavi archaism. But modern art was still incompatible with the Iranian audience's desire, national taste, and nature that had a traditional shape. On the other hand, the artists who were in tune with the thinkers sought to find an independent cultural and national identity appropriate to Iranian society. Artists were looking for elements of identity and symbols of Iranian art. Hence, they utilized the geometrical elements and visual motifs of folk art that were present in the normal life of people, to decorative folk motifs, charms, amulets and prayers, motifs of Qalamkar fabrics, carpets, rugs, and tiles. Also, they used traditional elements such as calligraphy, painting, and traditional icons in their works. This approach combined traditional folkloric elements with their modern method of working to emphasize their identity and attract the audience. In this method, a movement was started that, according to the rich resources of folk visual arts, was moving towards inserting national and cultural identity in its work using Iranian forms, textures, and colors. It was then that it met with the favor of art lovers and audiences. "The Saqqakhane movement was formed as the first attempt of contemporary artists to search and use the appearance of the characters, symbols, and writings of the national heritage on the one hand and on the other hand to familiarize themselves with the modern language of painting. In forming Saqqakhane by contemporary experimentalist artists, a group in their works, in addition to traditional forms, also turned to calligraphy, mixed it with traditional elements, and reached new manifestations of contemporary Iranian art. The lack of familiarity of many artists with spiritual knowledge and understanding of ancient Iranian symbolic values and concepts made this movement silent" (Khazaie, 2016, p. 20). Many artists and painters who used the traditional forms of Iranian art as elements of identity in their work, as it was said, showed great interest in using script and calligraphy. In the third biennale of Tehran painting in 1341 (SH), painters such as "Sadegh Tabrizi", "Hossein Zenderoodi", "Nasser Oweysi", "Parviz Tanavoli", "Faramarz Pil Aram", and "Mansour Qandriz" used a mixture of calligraphic elements in their works. The artistic view of Saqqakhane painters on form, color, and space was from the same point of view as their western counterparts looked at the painting. However, by mixing traditional and modern elements, Iranian artists created compositions that were new and related to Iranian identity. Moreover, by having a new language, it could appear in the world markets as modern Iranian art and communicate with the Iranian audience. "Contemporary artistic experiences in agreement with international artistic movements on the one hand, and national artistic construction on the other hand; what is emphasized here (and it was very common in those years) is the importance of the issue of contemporary language and awareness of what was happening in the artistic fields - often referring to European-American art. On the other hand, the issue of "national" identity was also an issue that cultural managers emphasized and, of course, was a motivation for artists individually and collectively" (Keshmirshakan, 2012, p. 30). There were two trends in the artists of the Saqqakhane movement, which tried

to represent calligraphy in their work: the first trend was the group of calligraphers who used calligraphy in painting without interfering with its traditional principles and rules. The second trend was the painters who used the elements of calligraphy and alphabetic signs and wrote scripts in the application of their artwork. Both tendencies tried to create works of art abstractly. "Perhaps there are two types of encounters: either it is a literary encounter, in which the artist is depicting the literary text, or it is a formal encounter, that is, the script is dealt with regarding its face and appearance. The Kufic script is a brilliant example in this field" (Mohajer, 2011, p. 122).

Investigating the methods and works of the first trend in creating Calligram works

In examining calligram works in contemporary Iranian art, the artists who pay attention to calligraphy as the main element of their artwork emerged. These calligraphic artists do not deviate from the limitations of the principles and rules of calligraphy, such as sacred limits and rules, and their works have elaborated despite observing the principles and rules of traditional calligraphy. Outside of creating Calligram works, they are engaged in the profession of calligraphy. Among the leaders of the first category, "Mohammad Ahsae", "Reza Mafi", "Jalil Rasouli", "Ali Shirazi", and "Amir Sadeq Tehrani" can be mentioned. The working method of these artists is based on the creation of calligram works with the prior acceptance of the rules and principles of calligraphy presented in the educational treatises of calligraphy, and they rely on the historical background of calligraphy. "Mohammad Ahasae" (born in 1318 SH), the oldest artist in this field, has been inspired by the Iranian mystical literature, verses of the Qur'an, and hadiths, in creating works of calligram. For Ahasae, it is very important to follow the principles and rules of calligraphy and pay attention to the content of words. With his rich intelligence and powerful hand, he takes the viewer of his works to a mesmerizing atmosphere and the balance in the Black (savad) and White (bayaz) spaces. He believes that the reflection of the Holy Word in his works is formed through the presence of calligraphy, which is called "Holy Art" (See Figures 1 & 2). As mentioned earlier, calligraphers such as Reza Mafi, Jalil Rasouli, Amir Sadeq Tehrani, etc., have also accepted the approach of Mohammad Ahsae as their pioneer in this artistic approach and have followed the same model and style. "Reza Mafi", who was infatuated with the works of "Mirza Gholamreza Esfahani's⁴" Siahmashq, followed the contemporary modernist painters in calligraphy and sought the spiritual entity that prevails in calligraphy, believing that calligraphy, especially Nastaliq script, is a self-sufficient and saturated art (See Figure 3).

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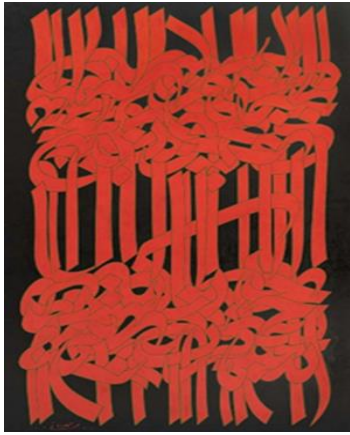


Figure 1. Mohammad Ahsae, untitled from the collection of whispers of love (Navaye Eshq), acrylic on canvas, 195×300 cm, date of work: 2008. Source: <https://tehranauction.com>.



Figure 2. Mohammad Ahsae, untitled, acrylic on canvas, 170×133 cm, date of work: 2007. Source: <https://tehranauction.com>.

In the works of "Jalil Rasouli" (born in 1326 SH), it seems that he created the work by respecting the concepts of the calligraphy text in honoring the rules and principles of calligraphy along with traditional space makers (See Figure 4).



Figure 3. Reza Mafi, untitled, oil on cardboard glued on fiber, 40×60 cm, date of work: 1972. Source: <https://tehranauction.com>



Figure 4. Jalil Rasouli, untitled, composition of materials on paper, 67×97 cm, date of work: 2013. Source: <https://tehranauction.com>.

"Ali Shirazi" (born in 1340 SH) is one of the prominent professors of the Iran calligraphers association, who has turned to calligraphy for some time. He thinks about applying artwork in the form of traditional calligraphy rules and principles and does not go beyond the principles of writing Nastaliq calligraphy (See Figure 5). Amir Sadegh Tehrani (born in 1338 SH), who studied graphics at the University of Tehran and is a professor at the calligraphers' association, seeks to create graphic attractions in the contrast of background

spaces and calligraphic elements and tries to use the possibilities of space and color consciously. He also does not deviate from the principles of Shikasta script, which is one of the main materials of his work, and his calligrapher character has kept him steadfast in maintaining the boundaries of this sacred art (See Figure 6).



Figure 5. Ali Shirazi, untitled, acrylic on canvas, 260×160 cm, date of work: 2013. Source: <https://tehranauction.com>.



Figure 6. Amir Sadegh Tehrani, Title: Through love thorns become roses (Az Mohabat kharha gol mishavad), acrylic on canvas, 204×207, date of work: 2013. Source: <https://tehranauction.com>.

The emergence of secular art in the works of Zenderoodi, one of the pioneers of the Saqqakhane movement

The introduction of "Hossein Zenderoodi" (born in 1316 SH) as an avant-garde artist who is a representative of the second trend makes it easy to explain the artistic idea of this group of artists. He is one of the talented artists who create works of art with a deep understanding of contemporary modernist art strains that feed on traditional elements. Zenderoodi, knowing the style of letterism in the West, plants the seeds of traditional art in the cradle of modern art, and considering the decorative nature of Iranian art, he goes beyond the concepts of words and deals with the form of calligraphic letters. He is a leading artist in the field of contemporary art, and with his searches, he consciously moves away from common imitations to flowing calligraphic elements and, in this way, helps the dynamics of the viewer's eye in going back and forth between empty and full spaces. Zenderoodi has a visual look at the letters and elements of calligraphy, and mastering the creative process produces abstract viewpoints, from eye-catching deception to creating colored textures. Writing calligraphic elements leads to the spirituality of images and letters. The application of his artwork leaves an impression on the audience with the subtle variety of colors and the abstract thought arising from the Islamic spirit. By ignoring the literary aspect of calligraphy, Zenderoodi pays attention to the formal and mundane aspects of calligraphy and turns to the secular and worldly features of holy art. "As a capable and prolific letterist, Zenderoodi extended his art to calligraphy after the initial experiences using local religious art. In Zenderoodi's canvases, unlike many other works in this movement, calligraphy has lost its decorative function and religious-literary content and has turned into an element that is used to create abstract and rhythmic spaces; while there are similarities, it is sometimes used with the Dadaist approach. Zenderoodi, under the influence of the mid-twentieth century modernists, believes in the absolute freedom of the artist, which enables him to give

his absolute commitment only to his art without any external pressure being imposed on him. This belief, which is a part of the radical manifest announced by abstract art (especially in the French formless art in the 1950s), can be seen in all his working periods" (Keshmirshakan, 2012, p. 35). Considering a kind of spiritual letterism that contains the inner chanson of his people, religion, and land, Zenderoodi also represents the spirit that governs his works along with the poetic atmosphere and the mystical spirituality of many centuries in the eastern spirit of this culture (See Figures 7 & 8).



Figure 7. Hossein Zenderoodi, Untitled: La+La+Ser (لا+لا+سر), silk print on paper, 108×212 cm, date of work: 1973. Source: <https://tehranauction.com>.



Figure 8. Hossein Zenderoodi, untitled, acrylic on paper, 98×149 cm, date of work: 1971. Source: <https://tehranauction.com>.

Examining the methods and works of the second trend in creating calligraphic works

The second trend belongs to the group of artists, which "Hossein Zenderoodi" is considered a pioneer in that field. He was one of the founders of the Saqqakhane movement and one of the pioneers of calligraphic painting (Calligram), using calligraphy as a symbol of traditional arts opened a new way in the modern visual arts of Iran. The second method was a trend that is considered the approach of contemporary painters to calligraphy as a traditional visual element in the application of modern art. In other words, these artists are modernist painters who created works by using calligraphy elements as visual elements and using them in the background, texture, or main form. While digging into the national and cultural identity, they tried to create capabilities for public appeal. The artists of the second group tried to make calligraphy secular by emptying and separating the external and figurative form from the concepts and content of calligraphy. In this category, artists such as "Sadegh Tabrizi", "Faramarz Pilaram", "Nasser Owaisi", "Jazeh Tabatabai", etc. can be mentioned who, by examining and analyzing their works, they have created a new spiritual space by removing the literary aspect from the written elements and attending the aesthetic aspect of the work in contrast with the background space. "Faramarz Pilaram" (1316-1362 SH), with architectural ideas and a deep understanding of calligraphy, tried to create solid and perfect works in composition by emptying calligraphy of literary concepts. Color contrast in Pilaram's work is done in a high divergence (See Figure 9). "Sadegh Tabrizi", one of the creators of applying calligraphy in his works, specially created folk paintings and calligram. In addition, in those non-figurative works of his, the rhythm and melody of his

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writings created a fantastic atmosphere in the eyes of the audience, which can be attributed to the intensification of the separation of concepts from the physicality and figure of the letters (See Figure 10).



Figure 9. Faramarz Pilaram, untitled, acrylic and ink on canvas, 50×70 cm, date of work: 1971. Source: <https://tehranauction.com>.



Figure 10. Sadegh Tabrizi, untitled, ink on leather, 70×70 cm, date of creation: 2010. Source: <https://tehranauction.com>.



Figure 11. Parviz Tanavoli, title: Master and student, bronze, 24×40×90 cm, date of work: 2011. Source: <https://tehranauction.com>.

"Parviz Tanavoli" (born in 1316 SH) started using traditional elements such as calligraphy in his sculptures from the development of the Saqqakhane school and Tehran Biennales. His attempt to represent mythological meanings was formed using folk themes and rhythmic calligraphy. Tanavoli has reached the limit of magical themes of Eastern mysticism to decorate and create texture in objects. In his work, there is no imitation of the stereotypes of using traditional calligraphy, his "nothings" (هیچ) confirm this (See Figure 11). "Nasser Owaisi" (born in 1313 SH) and "Zhazeh Tabatabai" (1309-1386 SH) do not have independent works with the persuasive element of calligraphy in the modernist art of Saqqakhane. Therefore, their efforts have resulted in creating works that use scripts in the background and decoration of the forms and objects in the frame or sculptures (See Figures 12 & 13).



Figure 12. Jazah Tebatbai, untitled, oil on canvas, 93×140 cm, date of work: 1964. Source: <https://tehranauction.com>.



Figure 13. Nasser Owaisi, title: What happened to the riders?, acrylic on canvas, 197×86 cm, date of work: 2018. Source: <https://tehranauction.com>.

In the works of contemporary painters and artists who tried to represent the spirit of the traditional society through modern methods, there have been various confrontations with elements of traditional identity. In all the works, an effort has been made to apply and

combine the works using the abstract method, giving more importance to the decoration than the technical construction. In fact, calligraphic elements contribute to the structural concept of space. Calligraphy gets its decorative aspect in the second category by taking advantage of its graphic features and visual possibilities. But in the first category, calligraphy is like a cultural loan from its predecessors, in terms of observing the principles and rules, it should show itself in work, so the artist no longer has the opportunity to deal with the aesthetic aspects in the composition of form and color.

Conclusion

The Saqqakhane movement in the form of modern Iranian art began in the 1340s (SH) with a tendency to "think back to oneself" and show national identity through traditional elements. Saqqakhane was intended to fill the gap created by the traditional art of painting, which was created in the late Qajar period by the efforts of Mohammad Ghafari (Kamal-ol Molk) and the School of Fine Arts, which was created to teach Western art. In the process of its growth, this modernist movement gave more scope to calligraphy with the experience of using Iranian visual elements in creating works of art. This movement, which was initially influenced by the western letterism movement (a movement that was formed based on the use of elements, signs, and symbols of typography and calligraphy in the 20th century), later conquered the Iranian taste. The use of calligraphic fonts for a combination of the graphic form of letters and words started seriously from the wonderful works of Mirza Gholamreza Esfahani. Therefore, with the motive of creating a new style and using traditional folk elements, calligraphy has been continued in two ways until today. First, it was a method by calligraphers such as Mohammad Ahsaei, Reza Mafi, Jalil Rasouli, etc., who brought painting techniques with the help of calligraphic forms and did not deviate from the principles and rules of traditional calligraphy. In a second method, some painters used calligraphic elements in their modern visual experiences, and they did not pay attention to the principles of calligraphy, concepts, and literary meanings of the words used in work and only paid attention to the external form and figure of the elements. Therefore, the modern thought hidden in the secular art of painting and calligraphy gave a mundane effect to the use of these works where calligraphy, devoid of literary concepts, was satisfied with its aesthetic form. This is despite the fact that in the first method, it becomes possible for the audience to encounter calligraphy, which, in addition to the formalistic character of letters and symbols, also has a glimpse of the concepts behind the words. In other words, the calligraphy in the first part directs the attention to the lexical concepts of the modern work of Saqqakhane Calligram to the traditional approach. In the concept and style of the second type, which was formed by artists such as Hossein Zenderoodi, Sadegh Tabrizi, Faramarz Pilaram, etc., the visual aspect of words and letters was formed without the concepts behind them and showed a worldly and secular aspect. The use of calligraphic or text-oriented elements in modern Iranian artists' works is now faced with various approaches. From considering the importance of national identity to social concerns, even with traditional and inverse approaches to the use of calligraphy and criticism of modernism in idea-oriented artistic forms and elements, ideas related to linguistics and structuralism have always existed. In any case, calligraphy with a painting approach in the two mentioned formats is still strong, and the researcher's attitude is that it will continue its challenging position in the future. The Saqqakhane movement itself precedes painting and calligraphy. What is important is the recovery of the cultural identity to which the discourse of Saqqakhane was given, and still, this discourse continues with enthusiasm. In two trends,

the work of art remains only in the form of decorative art. All creative actions in Saqqakhane, from calligraphy to figurative paintings and folk elements, are all signs of dynamism and movement. But it is necessary to remove it from the general field of culture and give it dual credit, and indeed this matter requires special attention from critics and researchers.

Appendix

1. Sultan Ali Mashhadi: (841-926 AH) nicknamed "Sultan Al-Khatatin" was one of the prominent Iranian calligraphers of the Herat school and one of the famous Nastaliq writers of the ninth and tenth centuries.
2. Traditionalists: Traditionalism is presented as a movement with the approach and goal of traditional thinking against modern thinking. Thinkers like Rene Gunon, Burkhart, Kumaraswamy, Shawan, Seyed Hossein Nasr, etc. are traditionalists.
3. Fine Arts School: This school was founded by Mohammad Ghafari (Kamal ol-Molk) in 1289 (SH) in Hozkhaneh mansion in Bagh Nagaristan to teach and promote the art of painting. In this school, in addition to painting, sculpture, handicrafts such as wood carving, mosaic making, and carpet weaving were also taught.
4. Mirza Gholamreza Esfahani: (1246-1304 AH) was one of the prominent masters of Iranian calligraphy in Nastaliq and Shikasta Nastaliq calligraphy. He was one of the most famous calligraphers of the Qajar period, who changed the siahmashq from an educational form to an artistic form.

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