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Examining the ‘Cultural Diamond Model’ in the Architecture of Government Buildings during the First Pahlavi Era A Critical Approach to the Sociology of Art*

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Abstract

Problem statement: Architecture as the most social art is a phenomenon that represents various social, cultural, ritual, and political meanings, through its content and visual form, as it can influence the organization of human perceptions and behavior at the same time. The discipline of architecture has always been the focus of ruling powers and dominating systems to manifest their authority and legitimize their rule. In this research, the sociological model of the “cultural diamond” in generating and constructing government buildings during the first Pahlavi era has been studied.

Research objective: The research attempts to analyze the main role of architecture in representing the ideological concepts and regenerating the power of the ruling power in a general view, and to study the way of controlling the process of generating, propagating, and exploiting the art of architecture during the first Pahlavi era as a case study.

Research method: The study is fundamental research in case of purpose, in which the data was collected based on the qualitative approach by using reliable documented and first-hand field observations. The collected data was analyzed based on a critical approach in an interpretive-explanatory structure. An attempt has been made to study the place of findings in the cultural diamond model and to explore their relationship with the power management and ruling system during the first Pahlavi era.

Conclusion: The results indicate that the government of the first Pahlavi, by controlling and monitoring the regeneration and propagation of architecture, and supporting kind of art that represents the ideologies of the government- through the discourse of Nationalism and Archaism- tried to control the audience’s interpretation of architectural works by integrating the society, and by the mediation of architecture institutionalize its legitimacy in society and consolidate, empower and regenerate its power as a hegemonic matter.

Keywords: *Cultural Diamond, Critical Sociology of Art, First Pahlavi Era, Power Regeneration, Architecture, Nationalism.*

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Introduction & Problem Statement

Art is a kind of production that, despite being experienced with a sort of epicurean intent, has an expressive form that describes a particular interpretation of an idea, which has a communicative entity, and is defined according to its context, whether physically or socially (Alexander, 2017, 30). It cannot represent the expression or manifestation of any sensual or social self-determination, as it addresses individuals similar to philosophical discipline (Badiou, 2014, 505).

This communicative and social characteristic is the focus of the sociology of art, which deals with 1. the relationship between the artwork and society, and 2. the influence of social factors on art and artists. In the sociology of art, artworks are considered cultural products that can influence society and its future developments (Ravadrad, 2005, 52). Definitely, architecture is the most social area among various arts. Nearly, all human actions and social relations are realized directly in a context called 'space', and consequently in a defined structure as 'architecture'. Although architecture is defined as an art with a significant functional aspect, its special communicative feature of transferring and receiving the concepts has made it a social phenomenon beyond a merely functional or aesthetic view, which represents social, cultural, and ritual content and connotations through its visual form and symbolic features. In this regard, Umberto Eco (1977, 182) believes that architecture is generally experienced as a social connection, even if it manifests a functional feature.

The multilayered features of architecture demonstrate its ability to incorporate abstract cultural, social, and political concepts. Since architecture is an art that encounters a huge mass, Benjamin (1998, 255) necessarily considers it as an entity with a political nature. Lefebvre (2016, 78) by emphasizing the significance of space position, believes the coherence of ideology occurs when the physical body is positioned in space and mediating in its production. He believes that the domination of

church and state remain abstract concepts, without spaces in which they can represent themselves and rule their power. Architecture can act as a political action to achieve ideological goals; it is a political act that can achieve ideological goals; A broad political action that is representative of social values, which normalizes the authority of certain groups and determines political and social boundaries.

Relying on such visions and approaches, the subject of this study is a critical analysis of the architectural manifestation in the context of the sociological approach to art. Therefore, the research is grounded on the "Art Critical Sociology" which, by passing through the mere description, focuses mostly on analyzing, interpreting, and explanation of the reason (why) and the way (how) of generating and presenting an artwork (architecture), and also on its objective connection with the promotion and propagation of ideology and consolidation of power. The sociological reviewed model in this study is based on the idea of a "cultural diamond". This model deals with the role and close connection between five contributors 1. Art (artwork), 2. Creator, 3. Distributor, 4. Audience and 5. Social world (society) in the process from production to the consumption of an artwork. Therefore, in this study, the model is the basis of sociological analysis and interpretation of architecture according to the research objectives and capabilities of this model.

The selected case study addresses the architecture of the first Pahlavi Era, which despite covering a short time of political and social characteristics, it is one of the most influential political eras in generating and developing a modern society of Iran, in which the discipline of architecture has grounded many changes and transformation in the field of space production. The main purpose of this study is to analyze critically the architecture of the government buildings during the first Pahlavi era based on the sociological model of cultural diamonds, to review the mechanism of producing architectural works, and study their association with the ruling system and the political and social contexts of that time.

Therefore, the main research questions of this study are as follows:

- What effect did the construction of power have on the production of space and architecture during the first Pahlavi era?
- Based on the sociological and critical analysis of the architecture during this historical time, what kind of characteristic, position, and relationship is established between the constituent factors of the cultural diamond model?

Regarding the research background and the “cultural diamond” model, the only research in this field was the study of metalworking during the Seljuk era (Zavieh & Moradi, 2017), in which historical context with a descriptive and analytical method was adopted to find the reason for flourishing the metalwork in this time. The researchers by examining the cultural diamond model, have addressed some factors such as increased demand of the upper and middle classes, the role of distributors, and, the support of the Seljuk Islamic government for producers and metalworkers due to the practical, scientific, and artistic needs of that society as the main reasons for the prosperity of metalworking during that time.

Although several studies have addressed the architecture of the first Pahlavi, mostly in a descriptive or stylistic structure, however, some studies have also referred to social, economic, and rather political contexts. For example, Marefat (1988) dealt with the spatial alterations during the first Pahlavi dynasty and the transformation of Tehran city from the Qajar caliphate to a new capital one. Bemanian believes that the most significant factors in the formation of architecture and urban planning during this time are infrastructure issues such as administrative, economic, population, the educational, scientific, and industrial revolution, together with evolving real estate brokerage, expansion of international relations, the anti-religious nature of the regime, the emergence of new social groups as well as the growth of urbanization (Bemanian, 2006). Zarkesh (2009) has reviewed the impact of government factors on the architecture

of private buildings at this time. He has classified these effects in parameters such as administrative, political, economic, cultural, and social programs, in addition to the technical and physical dimensions. Kiani (2000) has thoroughly studied this issue with a historical, social, and analytical view, in a valuable work to address the revolution of ideas and structural changes in society and government, and their impact on spatial changes in the architecture of the first Pahlavi era. Although each of the mentioned studies has addressed the role of social, cultural, or political factors in a unique way, however, what distinguishes the present study are the following factors such as 1. the analysis of power relations and space production, 2. looking for the reason behind the ruling system in creating an architectural work, and 3. determining the significance of this purposeful intervention in a process from space production to space consumption (architecture) in that time. The research is based on a critical analysis of a sociological model (cultural diamond) that due to the absence or rather few studies with such an approach on the sociology of architecture in the country, is of great importance, as the necessity of such research becomes more apparent.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical structure of the research is directly related to areas of study including sociology, politics, art, and architecture. Such interdisciplinary studies, by dealing with various levels of manifestations, can get closer to their multidimensional and real existence, as they are very effective in facilitating the comprehension of subjects in various dimensions and assisting the cognitive and epistemological reconstruction of researchers (Rege Colet, 2009,11). Considering that the view of “Critical Sociology of Art” has emerged from the integration of the critical approach with the sociology of art, it is necessary to define some main concepts that are recognized as epistemic and driving factors in the analysis process of the case study, which targets the architecture of the first Pahlavi era, to better interpret the dimensions

and components of the “Cultural Diamond” model by applying this approach.

Sociology of Art

In the sociological view of art, the perceptions of the audience, the process of transmitting and receiving concepts, the influencing factors, and the dimensions of the environment on the artist and the artwork are highly considered (Ravadrad, 2005, 52). In the world of contemporary art, there are generally two various kinds of investigation: 1. descriptive analysis and 2. causal analysis based on the work of art that is supposed to be evaluated either based on an independent phenomenon and essentialist view, or as a part of a whole and in a sociological and broad-based context; in the first approach there is a formal examination of the artwork without considering the influence of social frameworks on art, while in the second one the reason (why) and the way (how) an art is produced in the heart of a society is going to be considered (ibid., 5); in other words, it is kind of method in which the researcher achieve the analysis of the artwork by establishing causal relationships between the artistic phenomena and social conditions. According to Howard Becker, the world of art is connected to social activities, and thereby, an artwork is related to common public perceptions and the common practices of society. According to him, there should not be any separation between art and society, as the world of art, like other commercials, economic and cultural dimensions, is a part of a bigger social order (Becker, 1982, 34, 35).

This part-to-whole relationship between art and society creates a kind of dialectical relationship. On this basis, the two general approaches presented in the sociology of art known as the “reflection approach” and “shaping approach” address this dialectical relationship in different ways. The reflection approach considers art as a mirror, which reflects and narrates the situation and conditions of society, while the “shaping

approach” considers the ability of art to create or establish values and shape certain ideas in society (Alexander, 2017, 53-84).

In confirmation of the social aspect of art and these two approaches, Fig. 1 is an example of this claim. The mural “Guernica” by Picasso is not a mere work of art - but a reflection of the despair and disgust of the artist, which represents a space full of confusion, suffering, and disorder of the Spanish society during the civil war; As an architectural example, the manifestation of the medieval society under the absolute domination of religion can be observed in the Notre-Dame church in Paris. The construction of this kind of magnificent work by visual domination over the audience and iconic representation of the authority of religion resulted in the reproduction of church supremacy.

Although the two characteristics of reflection and shaping of art cannot be considered as the two only definitive and absolute functions in contemporary times to analyze an artwork, due to the spread of



Fig. 1. The association of art and social act, and its forming and reflective characteristic in the sociology of art. Source: Authors archive .

post-structuralism viewpoints or the existence of attitudes like “art for art’s sake”, however, it is still possible in most cases to explore a part of the culture and essence of society through this dialectical relationship by studying and analyzing the art of that society, especially in fields of studies with social and critical attitudes.

Critical Approach

In this research, a critical approach to art, and critical analysis of an artwork (as an analyzing method) have been adopted, in which the criticism and evaluation of artworks go beyond the mere reviewing of the work, which includes a wide and complicated territory called the social totality. One of the main goals of this approach targets the interdisciplinary analysis that is a combination of sociology, psychology, cultural studies, art, politics, and political economy (Kellner, 2013, 15).

The critical analysis of art exactly addresses the famous manifest of Karl Marx that according to it, the general ideology at any time is the same ideology

of the ruling power who possesses the material and spiritual power of that society (Marx, 2007, 331). Therefore, from a methodological point of view, the critical studies are mainly focused on detecting the power relations in spreading the ideology of the ruling class, which is usually covered by the normalization of issues. Although describing the full characteristics of this critical approach is beyond the scope of this article, however, the most significant features and theoretical foundations which are related to the thematic analysis of the research are presented in Table 1.

In this attitude, the artworks are formed in a dialectical relationship, under the effect of “social totality” and they have a determining, active and constructive role in the continuity and regeneration of this totality. It refers to both approaches in art, the ‘reflection approach’ and the ‘shaping approach’, so that, the study of art (architecture) is accomplished as a reflection of social and political conditions and the ‘will’ derived by the ruling power, and simultaneously as a mediation, shaping

Table 1. The characteristics of critical attitude according to the ideas of critical scholars. Source: Authors.

Characteristics & Functionality	Theoretical Perspectives
Social Totality	Totality is a combination of entangled parts which means the domination of the ‘whole’ over the compartments/parts. Specifically, by recognizing the whole, the obvious and hidden factors which are forming a phenomenon can be perceived (Lukacs, 1999, 121 & 127).
Opposition to Reductionism	Reductionism and insularity lead to objectification and fragmentation of reality, and leads to an incomplete understanding of an entity and perceiving the relationships between phenomena (Merrifield, 2014, 245). Reductionism is a means for ruling power and coverage for ideology (Lefebvre, 2016, 149).
A dialectical view of the Part-Whole relation/ Entirety-Particularity	The world is built by a set of forces and relationships that, besides having a plural entity, are mutually relevant (Smith, 2008, 92). The totality of the society determines the interactions between the parts, which in turn create an inseparable unity within this whole (Meszaros, 2011, 34).
The importance of “mediation”	Mediation provides the possibility of communicating between the macro-totality and the partial totality (such as art and literature), and also between the formal practices of artworks and their social infrastructure (Jameson, 1994, 39, quoted by Habibi, 2013, 40).
The revelation of ideology and opposition to normalization	The world never turns towards us with a legible face, there are many deciphers behind the appearance (Foucault, 1981, 67).

the perception and minds of the society, through which the power comes from an abstract form to a concrete appearance, to ensure the domination and hegemony of the ruling power or system.

The critical approach to art does not follow a neutralized interpretation or analysis in facing a text or an artwork, but since it looks for revealing the inclination in the process of art production, inevitably has a bias in this process of uncovering (Sojoodi, 2014, 177).

Explaining and Critical Analysing of the Cultural Diamond Model

According to the sociological view of art, the relationship between an artwork or artist with the audience and society should not be considered a direct and one-way relationship, but a process in which there are determining factors. Wendy Griswold (1994) presented a sociological model called "Cultural Diamond", which consists of four factors including 1. production, 2. artwork, 3. society, and 4. audience as four effective pillars in this process of production to consumption; she believes that the full understanding of art depends on recognizing their relationship, which following are among the most important characteristics of this model: the effect of the artist and artwork on the mind of the audience, and the influence of the society and social conditions on the artist and the process of artwork production.

Alexander by emphasizing the significance of distributors added another factor to this model with the argument that not only artists but also contracts, techniques, and even the content of the artworks are affected by the distribution system. He added that it is important what type of product and how much of it is supplied and distributed in forming the process of 'production to consumption' of art (Alexander, 2017, 113).

The advantage of this modified model introduced by Alexander (the Quintet (five-fold) Model) deals with the distribution system which is placed at the center of it as a focal point, which, unlike the

Griswold model, it rejects the direct and immediate connection between an artwork and society, thereby it gives broader and deeper views to the relations of the art social world (sociology of art).

One of the characteristics of the cultural diamond model which has been shown in Fig. 2 is a double-sided connection between all five components of this model in a communicative and interactive network. For example, producers or distributors, as able to direct the perception and beliefs of the society and the audience, are mutually influenced by the priorities, preferences, and beliefs of the society as well; in other words, similar to a society, which is made up of individual people- and so it can lead to the formation of certain groups or classes with different tendencies- the manner of collective beliefs and public reception of a certain issue or style (such as the stylistic trends in art) can also affect the individual perception (the audience of an artwork); Thereby this interaction is also applicable to the artworks and its double-sided relationship with production, distribution, society, and the audience. The cultural diamond model leads to a more complete understanding of art and its relationships with the surrounding social world. This model emphasizes the concept that the social understanding of art requires to be considered as a product of a process in which art is created, distributed, and consumed, as it can be said that, social relations affect this process and are mutually influenced by it.

The relevant point to the subject and approach of this research is the manner of production, supply, and consumption of art and the intention behind it for directing the relationships addressed in the cultural diamond model. Griswold (1987) by emphasizing the significance of social relations, connects the constructive intention and the audience's interpretation of the work of art to the discipline of sociology. She believes that although there is an intention behind every production, however, sociologists should not reduce it simply to an individual self-awareness or subjectivity, as

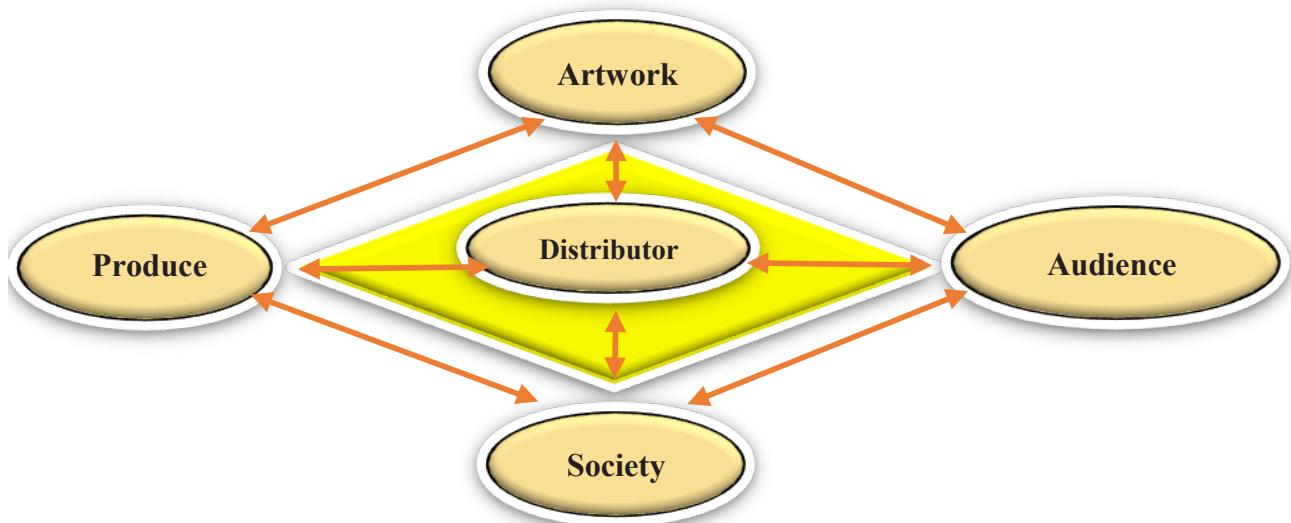


Fig. 2. The components of the cultural diamond model and the relationships between them. Source: Authors.

these intentions can be influenced by social factors and mutually affected by them.

It describes how the critical sociology of art deals with the contribution of art in controlling social issues, and organizing ideological, perceptual, and even behavioral activities in society – in the thought of the dominant and superior classes - which is essential for the continuation of hegemony and legitimacy of power by using art as a mediator. The outstanding point in this mediating role is the statement of critical thinkers such as Henri Giroux in politics as a dominant rule: the invisibility of power manifestation under the cover of the normalization of time-based, place-based, and imprinted common sense (Giroux, 2017, 249).

The critical analysis of the cultural diamond model evaluates the five dimensions of this model according to the political goals of the ruling power - in the continuation of their authority - and by considering the effect of this viewpoint on the position of each dimension, which is described in detail, and their association is presented in this critical re-interpretation.

• Producers

A critical approach to art is inevitably a political approach, as one of its significant mission is to analyze and interpret the artwork, and to interpret it through politics and power relations. Rorty (1992, 2) considers

politics as the ability to influence the conditions in an appropriate and desired direction. In the vast majority of definitions of politics, the concept of power has a clear connection with it, as politics is known as the art of strengthening power and its influencing mechanisms on society (Hay, 2007, 61).

The involvement of politics in the process of art production is an action on the road to “power management” which is exercised to obtain the ability for changing the motivational structure of individuals (Dowding, 2011, 9) and representing a specific ideology and legitimacy of the power holder (s).

Carl Schmitt (2014, 17) in describing totalitarian states addressed the thorough coexistence of government and society’s issues, as according to him in this kind of government, the apparently neutral and social phenomena such as education and art are not neutral affairs at all; thereby, the conquer of all territories by this kind of totalitarian governments cause the full adaptation of them with social activities. Similarly, Hillman Charter & Mc Caughey (1989) in the case of support and intervention of governments in the process of art production pointed to a specific kind of support called the “Engineer State”, which is the usual characteristics of totalitarian structures in which the meaning of any artistic production is important for the government which possessively supports kind of art that is influenced by the

government political training and by controlling the whole energy and creativity of artists, to have production consistent with the desired political goals of the ruling system; and consequently, these systems marginalize or even eliminate kind of art that is not consistent with their desired ideology. The involvement of totalitarian governments in the process of art production is a way that implementing all policies, schemes, and concepts and even providing discipline and criteria in detail are prescribed and imposed by such governments; as these interventions is very evident in prominent and national artworks such as the architecture of government buildings. Therefore, according to the critical analysis of the cultural diamond model, it has appeared that the artworks and artist's producers have limited authority and freedom of action, as their artistic productions are obliged to be in line with the dominant ideology of the governing political system.

• Art (Artwork)

Undoubtedly, the field of art, by influencing the whole aspects of society, is considered a significant area in the political, social, and cultural challenges the ruling regimes are faced with, to be able to fully expropriate it for their benefit. Inevitably, this kind of art that is in the service of such competition to be in a position of power represents a kind of political propaganda, which is not only reduced to the representation of power, but also intervenes in the power struggle, and supports the continuation of the existing and ruling system (Groys, 2017, 11). Moreover, art can induce and prompt violence and pressure psychologically and indirectly, as August Wittfogel (2013, 225) pointed to it as psychological intimidation through art. Among the most significant concepts of totalitarian regimes, the following can be mentioned: focusing on 1. the symbolic role and psychological effects of art, 2. its ability in shaping other events, 3. making history and myth, 4. representing the glory of the country, common values, nationalism and other

belongings of land, and 5. manifesting a weak appearance of the potential opponent.

For instance, during Stalin's rule, art was trying to represent the ideology of socialism by supporting the artistic style of 'socialist realism', to propagate the communal society and express the authority and sanctity of the country's leaders. In Fig. 3 there are two examples of paintings created according to this political style. The aesthetic aspects of art are critical for totalitarian governments to exploit them as an advertising tool in the service of the legitimacy of the ruling political system.

• Distributors

This aspect of the cultural diamond model deals with the significance of a network system in determining the type of artwork, audience, the scope of the publication, and the extent of supplying artworks in the society, which is defined as "distribution system".

In fact, through the distribution process, the producer is able to communicate with the audience of the artwork. The distribution system, as the title indicates, is founded based on an organized system that includes the mediation of governmental or non-governmental cultural and artistic institutions, organizations, art associations, media artists, and other agents, together with various distribution tools for implementing it.

The distribution system is a connector between production and consumption (artist/audience), as this role has given great significance to this aspect of the cultural diamond model.

Similar to the sociology of communication and in mass communication tools, where the presence of 'filters' and 'selections' play an important role in choosing media and broadcasting them, to decide which news needs to be marginalized and which one must be manifested (Sarokhani, 2015, 83), and by considering that the media can select and emphasize some specific issues and highlight them to make them appear important in the society (Ghadimi, 2016, 15), the art distribution systems are also able to act like the "Communication agents" and directly



Fig. 3. Paintings of 'socialist realism' style supported by the former Soviet Union government, and an implication of forming property of an artwork. The painting on the right by Grigory Shegel: a full-length portrait of the late leader (Lenin) and introducing Stalin as a leader, teacher and friend of the nation. The left painting by 'Arkady Plastov': shows threshing in a shared farm, which is the representation of collective work and the common values of the nation that were prevalent in the ideology of socialism. Source: Authors archive

play a role in highlighting or isolating any idea, style, or art flow by interacting or confronting the subjects and contents of artworks.

Slavoj Zizek (2013, 11) believes that political considerations have a significant role in deciding what people should initially be informed, and what things and to what extent should be published and distributed in society. With similar ideas, Jacques in one of his theses (Ranciere, 2013, 15) on politics deals with the importance of 'tangible

distribution' in politics - and pointing to things that are required to be seen and heard- which can be related to the importance of political considerations in the 'art distribution system'. According to the critical approach of the current research, it is believed that the distribution system of artworks and cultural works follow macro policies and the attitude of ruling power to art, as relying on them, they strengthen and propagate the ideology of 'in the service of power' through the mediation of art and with the intervention of the distribution system (Thompson, 1990, 8).

• Society

It is a complicated network of groups with different interests, in which a group or class benefits from social power that can exploit the social structure in line with its own class or group interest (Fiske, 2016, 118). One of the most significant ways to control social relations in any society is to control the social meanings and structures. The implication of this issue creates a kind of determination for stabilizing the meaning in the dominant system, to be able to project power relations persistently by producing and stabilizing their own desired meanings, by having the tools of violence and power in their hands (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2015, 65). Given the possibility of various, contradictory and dissident interpretations in such ruling powers, it is always an issue that which of these opposite sides of the society is admitted especially from the lower classes in case of producing and constructing meaning and will be manifested in the society. According to Fiske (1997, 8), the power block has a strong desire to control and limit social differences and variations, and to integrate the requests of the society with their own ones. This intention to unify the public needs is one of the main goals and missions of authoritarian governments. Basically, 'Discourse' comprises propositions that deal with a unique subject, and generate the same effects due to a kind of connection resulting from their common origin or actions (Mills, 2013, 108). Discourse, by representing social practices, participates in generating social actions

and changing society in an active way (Potter, 1996, 105). Fairclough (1992, 3) points to the productive role of discourse in three areas: 1. social identity and subject positioning, 2. social relations, and 3. system of knowledge and belief; so it can influence the individual, society, and social norms and values altogether.

Art has always been one of the significant structures in constructing political discourses. In totalitarian governments, artworks are generated and reorganized in a specific and purposeful order, in an articulated manner, as the components of a unified discourse. The artworks of a common discourse constitute a unified specific sphere in a coherent way, which generates the concepts arising from these works (Sha'iri, 2013, 12&244), which ultimately stabilizes this meaning. The ruling systems try to achieve their "preferred interpretation" and "consolidated meaning" through art and its special signs within the process of audience interpretation of these artworks to consolidate the dominant ideology by the mediation of art. Though, their ultimate goal is to manifest the ideological meaning through the artwork's appearance, which is only achieved by establishing their desired discourse in society and using the rhetorical and persuasive characteristics of these artworks to follow their desires, which are required to be outstanding and indicative artworks, which represent the dexterity of the dominant discourse.

• Audience

The final dimension of the cultural diamond model points to the audience of art. The significance of this issue is due to the struggle of ruling systems to ensure the compatibility of the determined meanings of artworks with the interpretation and production of those in the audience's mind from art production to its consumption. This process of making meaning, which is rather a kind of "imposition of meaning", occurs by converting and transforming the audience from self-based subjects to subjugated ones, as according to 'Carl Gustav Jung', this supremacy ruins the possibility of any

growth and prosperous of independent thought (Odajnyk, 2000, 72). The subjugation of people is even a broader and deeper issue than slavery, as relying on the attraction and absorption of the dominant discourse, the individuals get dissolved in the social order of the ruling power (Moren, 2005, 231). With the help of this mental influence and dominance, the authority of the ruling power will be expanded from an external compulsion on the physical body (material force) to the interior obedience of individuals, as Noam Chomsky pointed to this 'mental slavery' (Chomsky, 2016, 117) as "the new method of control" which is replaced by direct repression. Certainly, the field of art is one of the most appropriate areas for dominating this type of profound and inner subjugation of people in society. Resorting to the realm of art and using it as mediation in making discourse, and exploiting its persuasive, propaganda and soft power characteristics can even convert this resistance into satisfaction that 'Michel Foucault' considered as the force to confront the ruling power. In this condition, art is a tool to define a specific "hegemony", which Antonio Gramsci pointed to it as a concept that society, specifically those belonging to the lower classes voluntarily admits these moral, political, and cultural values of the ruling power (Joll, 1977, 99). Following the establishment of this hegemony, as the highest political goal of the ruling power, violence is replaced by satisfaction and persuasion, as it will become a much more complicated way of ruling supremacy in society. Therefore, in the process of generating and exploiting ideological art, to be in the service of power, the audience is the whole society, and the field of art is surrounded by the territory of politics and power.

Theoretical Foundation

The functions and methodology of the critical attitude point to this practical requirement that in the process of analyzing artworks, their roles are required to be examined in line with the continuation

of the supremacy of ruling power and in generating the hegemony of the producers (supporters), to not only being trapped in the process of “Naturalization” and “Fetishism” as kind of art but also to explore the usually hidden intentions in producing these works and to find out their position in power relations beyond just the observable concepts. In the critical analysis of the components of the cultural diamond model, the following outcomes have been acquired:

A totalitarian government tends to impress the production of artworks, as the main influencer and key designer, in which the artists act as the agents of the ruling system to implement their concepts and main ideas.

The distribution system, in full coordination with the ruling power, is responsible for controlling the distribution, propagation, and transmission of ideological concepts to the audiences in the form and content of artworks.

Artwork is considered a commercial product whose mission is to regenerate the ruling power through its ideological representations and give legitimacy to the ruling system.

The ruling power, by establishing its macro-discourse in the society, considers art as a significant part of the leading discourse to dominate both individual wills and the interpretation of the audience through the regulation of relations and social activities.

Contrary to the Griswold and Alexander models with two-way relationships between the components, the critical analysis of this model has a one-way relationship; it means, the ruling system looking for influencing the distributor, artwork, society, and the audience unilaterally. The theoretical foundation of this research study has been presented in [Fig. 4](#).

The Analysis of the Cultural Diamond Model in Architecture of the 1st Pahlavi Era

In the years 1921 to 1941 many political, social, and cultural developments have occurred. The rise to power of a common soldier and turning into the absolute power of the country of Iran was arising from many outside and inside influences as follows:

The occurrence of the Russian Revolution in 1917,

2. The consequences after the First World War, 3. the collapse and disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, 4. the emergence of England as the dominant power in the region, 4. Anarchy in the country during the time of Ahmad Shah Qajar, 5. The presence of ethnic riots in the country and 6. The emergence of a kind of despair toward the Qajar Dynasty and other related happenings. All of these proceedings turned Reza Shah into an inevitable alternative for gaining power with the slogan of “National Resurrection” and the promise of saving the country from those situations. During that time, in most parts of the world, there was a kind of public willpower for the manifestation of political forms close to totalitarian states. The Iranian society of that time was mentally looking for the reign of a powerful and strong person on par with Mussolini or Hitler ([Abrahamian, 2013, 155](#)). Necessarily, this time a government came into power that was able to establish its own structure based on a bureaucratic and totalitarian organization consisting of exclusive ownership and strong political, economic, administrative, and military centralism ([Habibi, 2005, 150](#)). The exclusive supremacy of the emerging power was exercised in all fields, even in the everyday life of the people. Implementing the plans such as 1. composing the ideological concepts of textbooks, 2. making the uniform clothes, 3. unveiling the hijab, 3. the creation of the ‘thought-training organization’ (Sazeman-e Parvaresh-e Afkar), and many other related programs were examples of the totalitarian actions of this regime in controlling whole and specific activities of all areas.

In the following, the various dimensions of the cultural diamond model with regard to the architecture of this time, especially in government buildings have been interpreted and critically analyzed.

The Production of Space and Architecture

Regarding the first dimension of the cultural diamond model, which points to the producers, the famous declaration of Mokhber ol-Saltaneh about Reza Shah is a proper reference saying “every country has a government and, our government is ruled by a single one” ([Taherian, 2014, 96](#)). This authoritarian

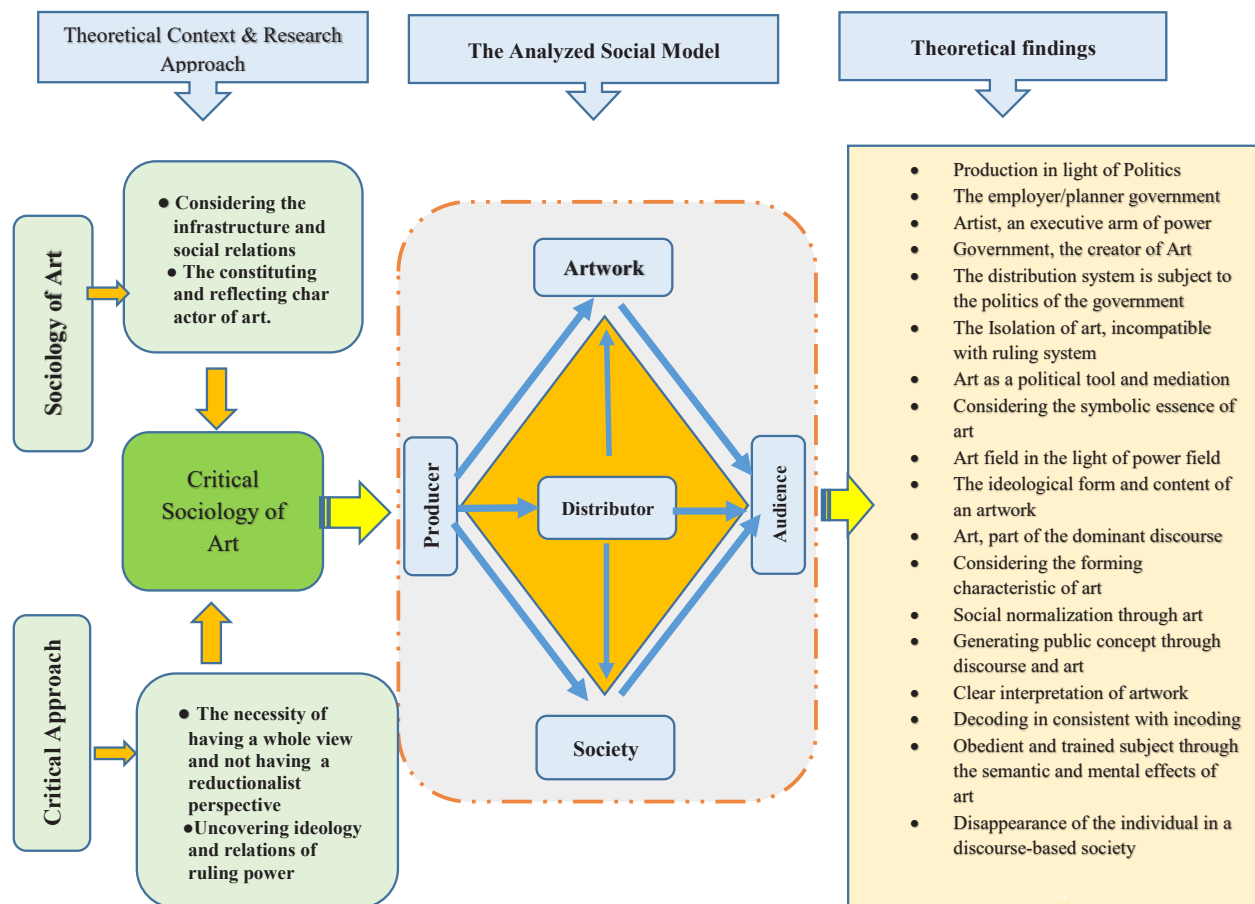


Fig. 4. The Structure and Theoretical Findings Source: Authors.

tendency of the government led to totalitarianism and the desire to interfere in any areas, including art and architecture, to implement their political plans through these mediations.

Basically, all governments strive for the continuation of their state, as their mission is to govern and dominate all areas of activities (Waltz, 1979, 118). This ultimate goal is often pursued at the commencement of the formation of any ruling power, from trying to obliterate or weaken the presence of the previous government to creating a new space, inconsistent with their ideological aims. The military background of Reza Shah's government made any modification and formation of emerging spaces possible by providing the authoritarian and imposed context. During this time, the Ministry of War, as the most critical ministry, was controlling the civil activities, as the mayor-ship of military figures such as Brigadier Generals Buzarjomehri, Gholi

Hooshmand, and Colonel Bahrami in Tehran, affirms the authoritarian and militaristic nature of this regime, even in the field of architecture for generating public spaces.

Many modifications, construction of new streets replaced the old contexts, and the implementation of new rules in the architecture of the private and public buildings made the urban spatial developments of this time more impressive than the other previous eras: the city of Tehran during Tahmasbi (Safavid) and Tehran during Naseri (Qajar) era (Kiani, 1996, 280).

Reza Shah was supervising many construction projects personally, as there was an ordered process similar to military rules in project management. One of the other features of this government was considering the speed of the construction, which was consistent with the regime's military vision that the building construction must be completed in the shortest possible time, just like a military operation. Fakouhi (2004, 477)

believes that the construction speed is in line with the vision of fascist states, in which they were looking for inducing god-like thoughts by rapidly creating occurrences. Imposing and propagating an extroverted architecture in opposition to the introverted attitude- which has been governing the architecture of Iran for many years- is a significant implication of direct interference of the government in the architectural space of the country, as Vartan Avanesian, one of the prominent architects of that time, by affirming and accompanying this policy, related some occurrences in the continuation of that spatial-architectural planning of Reza Shah for unveiling the hijab, including the occurrence of extroversion activities, and exposing the facades of the buildings to the public (Bani Masoud, 2009, 188). The emergence of a bureaucratic system in the administrative structure of the country required the construction of many government buildings with various applications. In this regard, the security and military application had great significance to the government, and dissimilar to the past eras, the religious and social structure of governments had an influence on the construction of urban squares and public spaces with cultural and social content, this new government manifested another definition of space by highlighting the presence of security and military buildings. For instance, the construction of some buildings such as 'Mashgh Square Complex' is an example of the regime's desire for centralism based on the military and security attitude and the attempt to represent its authority by paying attention to these buildings. The regime policies in implementing various rules and regulations related to the construction activities, and controlling these projects by special emphasis on the construction of government buildings as the symbol of the authoritarian nature of the government to represent its political and ideological goals, make the good implication for the "engineer State" in areas of art and architecture.

Distribution of Architecture

During the first Pahlavi government, architecture had a significant role in representing the ruling power,

therefore, the government supervised the process of distribution and propagation of architecture at the same time. Supporting the distribution and propagation of art and architecture aligned with ideological goals was performed through the intervention of media, communities, artists, architects, academics, and cultural & artistic associations and organizations.

For instance, the three prominent publications of that time, 'Iranshahr', 'Farangestan', and 'Ayandeh' were adopting almost all of their topics according to the policies of the ruling system (Abrahamian, 2013, 154). The need of implementing Nationalism, the disadvantages of ethnicism, considering Persian literature, and admiring ancient Iran, specifically the art and architecture of that time were among the most prevalent topics.

The state journals, publications, and bulletins in the field of architecture, such as 'Baladieh' (Municipality) were published to justify the architectural and urban planning activities of the government and municipality of that time, and the journal of Bastanshenasi (Archeology) was published to identify and admire the architecture of ancient times, which both had executive and advertising role in the distribution system of the country.

The establishment of the 'Society for the National Heritage of Iran' in 1925, the construction of buildings such as the 'National Museum of Iran' and The 'Tomb of Ferdowsi' - under the influence of the approvals of this society – and the holding of the national and international congresses on art and architecture of ancient Iran (for example, 1927 in the United States and 1935 in Leningrad) was indicative of the government's effort in adopting and propagating kind of architecture that could consolidate its authority in a better way. For instance, the political mission of this foundation- as the most imperative ideology of propagating the issues of art and literature – by establishing the tomb of Ferdowsi and celebrating his millennium was to build up the spirit of Nationalism and give identity to the government. According to the political system of the first Pahlavi, the character of Ferdowsi had been introduced as the representation of the

Nationalism of Iran against the Arabs, Muslims, and Turks; for that reason, relying on such characters and personalities, as a bridge to cross the gap of the Islamic era, the government expected to connect themselves to Iran before the advent of Islam (Esma'ili, 2006, 101). Exactly for these reasons, the political mission of Reza Shah to attend the opening ceremony was to inherit the history and literature of Persian territory and was kind of attempt to induce the idea of "the government as the representative and protector of national and mythological values", to relate the Pahlavi regime to the dynasty of ancient Persian kings to acquire legitimacy.

The state distribution system was extensively trying to bring this legitimacy to the society as much as possible by representing and linking the figures of the Shah with the epic characters and architectural works of ancient Iran - in commonly seen items such as textbooks, stamps, and banknotes (Fig. 5). Therefore, during the first Pahlavi era, similar to other totalitarian governments, the distribution system was responsible for advertising and propagating architecture according to the desired ideology of the government.

The Role of Society: As was mentioned earlier, in almost all political systems, especially totalitarian governments, the integration of any plurality, controlling the various interpretation, and constructing concepts in society, are among the main strategies of these governments; as establishing related discourse and trying to consolidate it has always been an effective way to achieve this goal. The dominant discourse during the first Pahlavi era was the discourse of Nationalism; a kind of matter that was addressing the public consciousness of the individual's belonging to the people and created a sense of fidelity of individuals to the constituent components of the nation (including ethnicity, language, social values, and culture in common concept), which sometimes leads to the belief in the superiority of a nation over other nations (Ashoori, 2014, 319). The emergence of nationalism tendencies in Turkey, Iraq, Afghanistan,

and the expansion of the ideologies of Fascism and Nazism at that time were among the most significant external reasons for the propagation of nationalism in Iran and the opportunistic attitude of Reza Shah towards the social frustration of Iran after the 'The Persian Constitutional Revolution' was an internal reason for the spread of this happening, while there is no documentary proof of this claim to show the previous interest of Reza Shah in nationalism (Kiani, 2000, 100). Since he was lacking a reliable public and religious position to rule, resorted to Nationalism to consolidate his legitimacy by connecting his government to the dynasty of ancient Persian kings; therefore, the discourse of Nationalism became the dominant discourse of the regime. Among the outcome of making this kind of discourse, which directly affected the "distribution regime" of artworks, the following can be mentioned: 1. Establishing the 'Society for the National Heritage of Iran', 2. Establishing the 'Academy of Persian Language and Literature' 3. Publication of various books on Persian archaism, 4. Expanding the archaeological excavations, 5. Valuing the ancient rituals 6. Establishing the Millennium (Hazare) celebration 7. Establishing tomb of Ferdowsi, 8. Official changing of the country's name from Pars to Iran, 9. Providing textbooks on Persian history and 10. Entering ancient subjects into literature, art, and architecture of Iran.

Language has always played an essential role in unifying a nation, but it is insufficient to form an identical nation by itself, and undoubtedly, other cultural factors are also influential, together with various arts including architecture (Meskoob, 2006, 20). So it can be said that architecture has always had a vital role in the discourse arrangements of the first Pahlavi regime. During this time, with reference to architecture and space production, several government buildings were constructed in the capital, such as the 'Shahrbani Palace', 'National Museum of Iran', 'Anoushiravan Dadgar High School', 'Bank Melli Iran (Iranian National Bank) on Ferdowsi street, that were manifesting archaism elements of Iran, especially those in the Achaemenid and the Sassanid



Fig. 5. The presence of Reza Shah in the opening ceremony of establishing the tomb of Ferdowsi and the representation of ancient Iran symbols and characters in banknotes. Source: Authors archive

eras, which all represented the strong tendency of the government to propagate and stabilize this kind of discourse. This way of viewing architecture was resulting from the macro- discourse of the regime, as a kind of uniformity and repetition in the construction facades and formal structures of the government buildings can be observed. The uniformity in the architecture of the first Pahlavi era under the influence of this dominant unified discourse has been shown (Fig. 6). Essentially, the desired discourse obtains its identity and significance in confrontation with other opposite discourse (s) in a discursive struggle. The presence of difference and distinction is a prerequisite for the existence of any identity; In the field of politics, similarly, making a specific “Us”, identically requires a definite border with “Them” (Mouffe, 2016, 187). During the first Pahlavi era, the Islamic-Arabic discourse was considered an opponent of Nationalism tendencies. Therefore, it is clear that the construction and development of mosques and similar religious spaces which had been the main focus of the architectural developments of that time, and as the most significant built environments - were not supported by the new government and the emerged “distribution system” at all; as the art and architecture of ancient Persian represented under the influence of the emerging ruling power to stabilize the discourse

of Nationalism and control the thoughts of the society in order to legitimize its new political regime.

Artwork (Architecture): In a critical approach to art, an artwork is a product that conveys a political or ideological meaning and content. According to the medium approach of the first Pahlavi regime to the construction of government buildings, the statement of “art for art’s sake” had no place, as the function of aesthetic characteristics, and decorative elements and motifs were obliged to represent ideological and discursive concepts. The architectural works of this time were originating from the political ideas and concepts, that can be observed in almost all totalitarian governments: a kind of spatial manifestation of the regime’s authority and power through the mediation of architectural structure.

In this type of architecture, the main emphasis is on the building façade in which ‘form’ dominates ‘content’, and a kind of ‘Spectacularization’ in the volume and exterior form of the architecture was evident. For instance, these tendencies and emphasis are quite obvious in the Shahr bani Palace building, which is about 200 meters long and has 80 meters long arms, and presents visual strength and the possibility of psychological dominance over the audience. The symbolic aspects of architectural works of this time represent spiritual and ideological

contents. The huge dimensions, visual stability, and their placement on a platform (Sofeh) indicate the desire to induce a sense of inferiority of the populace against the authority and prominence of the government. A kind of ultimate that according to the French philosopher, Miguel Abensour (2018, 18-21), is pursued to destroy the “social bond between people” and create ‘absolute cohesion with no divisions’ in the social body of totalitarian systems. Among the architectural principles of government buildings during this time, the following can be mentioned: having symmetry, balance, and using repetitive and rhythmic elements; extreme repetition which according to Charles Jencks can bring a hypnotic trance (Kurt Grutter, 2007, 380).

This kind of buildings, by inducing a sort of militaristic order, and having several columns with archaic decorations on the façade, which were representing ‘powerful standing soldiers in line’, were trying to legitimize and manifest the power and authority of the government. During this time, making architecture was based on an idea that was addressing the significance of art in its “forming the characteristic” and as “engineering of the human soul” which is planned to influence the thought of society and regenerate the ruling power.

According to Fig. 6, in the government buildings of this time such as the Post Office, the National Museum of Iran, and Bank Melli Iran (Iranian National Bank), apart from the visual qualities such as rhythm, symmetry, balance, and similar fabric, in terms of quantity, it also represent large dimensions, high height, sprawl, and expansion

of the building and creating urban edges which all have added the glory and visual dominance to these works, that bring a mental and emotional effect on the perception of the audience.

The significant point here refers to the holistic view of “conceptualization” that was induced and imposed on the society through making discourse, the propaganda apparatuses of the regime, and the professed intellectuals of the ruling power. For instance, the concept of “Nationalism” was reduced to everything that was the reminiscence of the pure soul of being Iranian, which was resembling the common historical memories and the honored past of the Iranian people. This approach in the field of art and architecture was also spreading to a deliberate and conscious selection of historical eras of Iranian architecture.

Thereby, although in making the architecture of government buildings, its priority idea was to adopt the ancient model of Persian architecture, whether in case of form and elements, or in added decorations, there are notable examples of using some architectural characteristics and expressions of Islamic eras, even some cases of historical times that by addressing the mentioned conceptualizations, were attached to those glorious historical eras and could similarly bring unity, supremacy, and identity of that ancient times. For instance, in the Safavid era due to its similarity to the Achaemenid era in case of unification and empowerment the territory of Iran was considered a valuable time, under the Nationalism title and was recognized as the national architectural heritage of Iran (Khademzade



Fig. 6. The characteristics of greatness, height, rhythm, symmetry, balance, visual continuity, symbolism and visual dominance are considered as distinctive feature of the government buildings during 1st Pahlavi era. Source: Authors archive

& Mahmoudi Asle Hamadani, 2020). Therefore, the adaptation of the architectural features of that time was partially carried out, which was the representation of the political strategies of the government in selecting and applying a kind of art and architecture, in line with the desired discourse and concepts of the regime.

The Audiences of Artwork

Principally, in totalitarian governments, by denying uniqueness, individualism is disappeared and so the independent social classes are dissolved in a collective and public identity (Bataille, 2012, 82). Therefore, the presentation of architecture is not allocated to a certain social class, but it is exposed to the common public. Making the architectural subjects aligned with the desired ideology of the regime is quite evident in representing the architectural works of government buildings by considering the audience and public classes.

The government was trying to make a clear and controlled representation of artworks by people and by connecting them to the macro-discourse of the regime (Nationalism), to make them in line with the interests of the ruling class. A tendency for kind of symbolic, strong, stable, organized, rhythmic and massive architecture products during this time was regenerating type of “symbolic power” that had a mental effect in an obscure manner dissimilar to physical and coercive violence. According to ‘Pierre Bourdieu’ the symbolic ‘power and violence’ is much more effective than military violence in some cases, as it affects the more fundamental practices of public perception (Bourdieu, 2014, 67). The architectural works such as ‘Shahr bani Palace’ and the National Museum of Iran could induce the feeling of inferiority of the individual in front of the ruling power in terms of psychological dominance, and regenerate the supremacy of the government through the mental effects of these architectural works or the created urban landscape, to reduce the possibility of any kind of resistance to the government and social activism. This mental effect

resulted in “passive emotions” whose outcome for the ruling power was to disrupt, lead and absorb the public and individuals in a passive way to govern them without any resistance (Gordillo, 2014, 34).

Conclusion

The main focus of this research was to consider the necessity of having a comprehensive view and analyzing all social and political contexts in the formation of a phenomenon such as architecture. By adopting a critical approach to the sociology of art it would be possible to identify the usually hidden and influential relations and factors in constituting architectural works, to analyze the role of the dominant political order in the process of space production to legitimize, gain authority, and regenerate the power. By reviewing the architecture of the government buildings in the first Pahlavi era, and by acquiring the critical analysis of the cultural diamond model, it is concluded that making architectural work was following the “production system” which was directly connected to the main core of the power, by interfering the process of generating an idea and providing discipline to supervising the construction of buildings. Consequently, the architects and artists had a limited choice in making the design of these works. So, the distribution system was totally in line with the production process, which, was supporting the class of architects and artists who were aligned with the ruling system, besides the propagation of the strategies of the government in art and architecture. According to the holistic view of this government, the function of art and architecture, as production was to represent and regenerate the legitimacy and power of the government; so an architectural work was not produced merely based on the functional needs, rather it was required to convey the significance and symbols that were highly consolidating this legitimacy and power.

According to this view, emphasis was on the following areas: 1. imposed discourse, 2. integration and unifying the perceptions of society, and 3.

stabilization of meaning in interpreting manifestations such as architecture, to represent the ideological aspects of governance in the minds of society. At this time, architecture was in line with the macro discourse of ruling power, which was known as 'Archaic Nationalism'. Therefore, the ruling power was trying to characterize the discourse of Nationalism and generate architectural works in accordance with this organized discourse, to normalize its legitimacy and its connection to the ancient Persian Empire in a natural process and inconsistent with the established 'common sense' of the society.

Their emphasis on characteristics of 'symbolism', 'strength', 'visual dominance', 'rhythm', 'organized elements', 'greatness', and 'uniqueness' in making the architecture of government buildings of this time - especially in military and security functions (such as city police which was called Shahrbanī) - was inducing a sense of inferiority in the audience compared to the greatness of the ruling power, to acquire the public agreement and accompaniment with the dominant authority (hegemony), and also to eliminate the possibility of any confrontation and protest against this supremacy.

The art of architecture in this time was exploited as mediation to concrete the abstract concept of power; consequently, the manifestation of the regime in the field of space production and making architecture was a conscious and political practice to regenerate its supremacy by means of controlling the spatial representations and audience interpretation to govern the space and architecture and to tackle the public minds, perceptions and behaviors.

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